

LESSONS LEARNED FROM EARTHQUAKE-AFFECTED WOMEN: INPUTS FOR RECOVERY PLANNING

Case Study: Pottery Industries in Kasongan in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Mila Karmilah¹ and Wiendu Nuryanti,²

¹ Sultan Agung Islamic University (Unissula) PO. Box 50012, Semarang, Indonesia, alim_kar@yahoo.com
Student in Post Graduate of Architecture and Planning Faculty, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta,
Indonesia

² Gadjah Mada University, PO. Box 55281, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, wiendu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper is a case study that describes the impact on small enterprises in an earthquake-prone area after a catastrophic earthquake hit the area in May 2006. Kasongan is a small village near Yogyakarta, Indonesia that specializes in pottery and consists of small, family-owned enterprises that produce pottery for the domestic and export markets.

This article highlights the importance of gender as a crucial aspect in the recovery process of small enterprises in disaster-affected regions and argues that by ignoring this important factor it can significantly affected the success of the recovery process.

The pottery-making skills of the inhabitants of Kasongan have developed through generations and have gender-specific tasks. The earthquake that destroyed the hundreds of houses in Kasongan therefore not only affected the women in their traditional role as mothers, wives and homemakers but also those managing businesses in the pottery industries as well.

This analysis examines the role, access, and control of women in the full recovery process - planning, implementation, and aid distribution. Traditionally, women had not played a leading role in public affairs in Kasongan but the seriousness of the earthquake affected all aspects of women's lives – whether rebuilding their homes or restarting their businesses.

This study concludes that not enough was done to include women in the recovery process and recommends the gender role of recovery should be use as a local wisdom approach and will an explicit part of future programs development.

KEYWORDS: Women in development, disaster recovery programs, women and small enterprises, Indonesian development

1. INTRODUCTION

Following the catastrophic earthquake striking Java island, Indonesia in May 2006, blue collar women all together with the men reorganized their communities without a help from outside. While the women were running temporary shelters, community kitchens and aid distribution, some other communities had to run their own shelters for a month before receiving an external assistance. For most of the women here, it was the first time they participated in making decisions and played public roles on community issues to support their life.

The role of the women for their family and business in the region was very important due to their position as the last resources to protect their households psychologically and economically. The cultural mindset that pointed women as homemakers and helpmates to their spouse (“the farmer and his wife”) still existed. In fact, women's daily lives around the world are structured in complex house chores and

responsibility, supposing to be ready in any kind of conditions, in family, community, and work, and caring the poorest women and environment that supported them.

While slightly conducted with an explicit gender analysis, the case studies cited below demonstrated that women are indeed main actor in economical, social, and political area in the social crisis due to extremely environmental events called natural disaster, which were the hardest and least able to recover. But how did this happen?

2. METHODS

The current research explores the experience of women and men in a natural context by adopting phenomenological approach. In particular the author visited Kasongan in several times. At the first visit took place in Mei 2007. No formal preparation were made at that time since the visit was not undertaken for research purposes. Only when the author arrived at Kasongan she started observing with more professional eye, participating in activity and venturing to talk with people that make the pottery especially for women. The visit offered the opportunity to gain clarity from her own preconditions and to design the methodology

Phenomenology is designed to consider participant subjective perception of the main focus of inquiry by shedding light on the meaning assigned to their lived experience, and discovering the common meaning underlying empirical variations of a given phenomenon, rather than with the mere application of methodology (Casmir 1983; Mac Dermott 2002). In phenomenology the researcher attempts to taking account of its psychological origin and casual explanations which the scientist may be able to provide (Merleau Ponty 1962). Thus phenomenological approaches can be applied to those disciplines, such as tourism where the focus in on understanding human experience (Casmir 1983).

This study was not such a special research that directly related to the experience of women recovery after the earthquake but this study was a part of the study concerning about gender and spaces, so there was not too much giving picture concerning the experience of women facing disaster, only the number of small experience of woman in their role to recover from disaster. Extensively detailed semi-structure interviews with women to obtain an deep knowledge of the issues being faced and observations in the field were then conducted. Interviews with women from both the areas were held. Interviewees were purposely selected to represent different circumstances.

The primary data was then analyzed and the findings were illustrated with testimonies representing the real situations and issues faced by women and children in the earthquake-prone area.

Feminism perspective views gender equality from three main aspects namely role, access, and control. On paper, most programs had included the gender mainstream in their planning. However, patriarchal culture had been so strongly planted in Indonesian community. The concept was not enough to push the access and control of the women to be involved.

Nash (1989) concluded that the persistence of women in the subsistence sector of Latin American societies defies the assumptions contained in both the Marxist and developmental models of Latin American society. These models predicted that these traditional activities would gradually disappear with the increasing penetration of capitalism. Dalla Costa (1972) was among the early feminist scholars who theorized about the interdependence of capitalist exploitation and women's oppression. Alice Little field (1979) commented that women's handicraft products in weaving, pottery, and knitting have won a place in national and international markets which is beginning to overcome some of the devaluation of women's work in the indigenous economy. The work of Annis (1987) in Guatemala and Buechler (1986) with women in La Paz, Bolivia, indicated that persistence of craft production may function to satisfy other needs, extra-economic ones, such as preservation of cultural lifeways. Women operated as the keepers of tradition (see Elmendorf, 1976; Billie Jean Isabe I, 1978; Silverblatt, 1987) and seemed to resist, in part, the penetration of capitalism and the destruction of the traditional economy.

3. FINDINGS

Women are deprived of the capacity to cope with disasters by being kept in dependent positions in terms of accessing information from the world outside the bari, and by being denied their right to take major

decisions. In this respect, RELIEF as an institution which prevents women from engaging in socio-economic roles outside the household directly prescribes women's vulnerability to disaster.

3.1. ROLE, ACCESS AND CONTROL OF WOMEN AFTER EARTHQUAKE

Many meetings that do not involve the women in particular restricted women's access to information of house construction program comprehensively. The lack of information forced women not to involve optimally in the program implementation. Women only understand that they receive aids. They were just grateful to get house aid and workshop without understanding that it was their right which even should be fought when they had not received it fully.

This would influence women's awareness that women also had same right in making decision and taking action related to their house construction. When there was a problem, women tend to let their house constructed. In recent years, women's access to control over land, and their property rights had received considerable attention internationally, regionally, and locally (the United Nation Development Fund for Women, 2001:8). Internationally and regionally a growing interest hds develop to address the impediments of women access to and control over resources as witnessed in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995).

3.1.1. Role

Just as the earthquake occurred, almost all the resources including economic resources ruined, even on small micro business in Kasongan. The earthquake definitely raptured economic sectors from upstream to downstream. The role of the women in awakening micro scale business showed the women strongthness in facing any difficulty such as natural disaster.

That meant there was a big desire to awake as soon as possible from misery owing to earthquake even though all earning for years plunged when earthquake appeared like a number of entrepreneurs experienced. They were even still packing the product to meet a demand but the earthquake destroyed anything.

After the earthquake millions of people became homeless. In the cultural context of kasongan and in the earthquake area, it is not only the home where women, young girls and children and considered to be safe and secure but home is based for women to start the business in pottery making. Earthquake left them without home and shelter. Although the government and other organizations responded by providing tent villages for these people, many families and women felt highly insecure in moving away from their ancestral homes and the familiar environment in which they have spent all their lives. This situation precipitated hundreds of citizens and women to rebuild their shops that also functioned as houses as soon as possible. Possible efforts conducted by the women suffering from earthquake in order to keep their business were....

A. Renegotiating with customers

.....what do we can do?.....the business is supposed to be exist..... so we tell to the customers to pay in front so we can buy clay.....

Besides doing renegotiation, other possible effort were,

B. Relying on existing remained materials

A interviewee stated that they could only commence their business by relying on the existing remained materials such as clay since the first aids they got was any kinds of foods. Whereas what they needed at that time were material such as clay and other aids to support their business so that they used the existing clay materials. Though the clay was drying, they tried to fix it by watering it in order to be easily shaped.

..... what we can do are splitting the drying clay, choosing the part we can reuse watering it then covering it with plastic to not be dry..... then in the following earlier day we shape it and sell it in the limited number until now.

C. Borrowing material in front

Besides using existing material, the other option was borrowing materials in front from landlords. With the loan of material, the women could commence their business up to now. Like what Ms. Purwanti said:

.....Before the earthquake strike in the night,..... I just sold my motorbike at noon for my son's school registration,not for my business so the motorbike was safe because it was not trapped by collapsed house.

..... Fortunately I can borrow the material from Mr. Simrih although only a little amount. Because business uses a booking system..... I only make it if there is an order. Due to earthquake, if in the past I could only make it in the limited shapes and colors, but now I can make it in various shapes and colors.....

Similar with the words stated by female entrepreneurs, it was also said by Mrs. Kun as The Head of Pottery Technic:

.....Economic and business sectors, at that time, stopped almost 2-3 weeks,but afterward they can run again. This movement is generated by an assumption that the spots in which is let empty, they will be taken by other people,so the existing spot owner consciously want to fix their spots.

From various sources, it could be seen that women roles in galvanizing economic sectors in Kasongan had proved the strongness of women. Furthermore, the proof also denoted micro scale business does not require a lot of capitals to establish it. In any situations owing to such as natural disasters or disputes demonstrated female groups quickly responded and be rescuers for their family and community small groups. It was believed that women had big roles particularly in economic sector such as micro scale businesses which were very flexible because of not requiring a lot of capitals to survive. Adapted from George Samuel, social developments through female group can be intended as establishing real social capitals.

D. Increased Workload for Women

Almost all of the respondents, both women, said that their workload had greatly increased. While the men were keeping their collapsed houses to save the remained assets, the women had burdens doubled, not only taking care of their family and their assets but also thinking of the pottery business which was also destroyed.

3.1.2. Access

In relation to access to community activities, there were some interesting differences. The activities examined included the opportunity to participate in community meetings, in training and in study tours. Among the *Kasongan* participants there were more men than women involved in skill development training. In relation to community meetings, an important indicator of decision making power at the local level, men predominated, with no women being able to attend a meeting alone. Access means owning opportunities to use important resources (for instance earnings, lands, houses, rice field, etc) without having any authorities to make decisions related to their results. Such as farm

workers (male or female) whose no lands/rice fields can manage other people's land/rice fields, as consequence, they deserved an amount of pay.

In this article, access is the participation of women in resources to accelerate the improvement of economic area in pottery handicraft sectors. Just as the earthquake ruined the regions, all the aids were focused to meet daily needs, not the businesses, so that many entrepreneurs depended on their own bank savings.

Aids for workshop would be realized one month later, on the contrary, handicraft businesses had already commenced. Fifteen million aids accepted by every single citizen was addressed to rebuild houses and work tools. The women assumed to be involved in managing the aids.

It was informed that Kasongan village, one of villages in Kajen region, experienced the most damaging, like what The Head of village of Kajen, Mr Nangsib:

*..... After earthquake, how to manage only 15 million-aid from either government or LSM?
.....Kajen region obtains the aids for only 344 family.....*

Aids given by government to rebuild citizens' houses is 15 millions, besides getting aids from government, aids was also from dozens of LSM/NGO, one of them is RELIEF. Initially RELIEF gave aid in order to cure of disaster, all aids only addressed to repair of job appliance. According to an information, some woman members who now became co-operation member of efforts, that their participation was not because of their joining by proportional in order to involve women but it was just coincidence, so that the men were supposed to attend but it was delegated by their sister, such as those said by a member women of KUB, and now women became the member of KUB.

*.....tiba-tiba ada undangan yaa...yo mangkat terus...., yaa macem-macem, yo di kasi pelajaran finishing, komputer.., tapi saya gak bisa ngikuti.....
.....awalnya sebenarnya mas saya yang dapet undangan pertemuan-pertemuan itu, khan awalnya cuma pertemuan pokoknya pertemuan-pertemuan itu saya ngelanjutin mas saya.....*

Aids given by other financial sources and also relief altogether is in the form of aid equipments of job, clay, workshop, but the workshop, according to citizen, cannot be used because it was under the demanded size (only 2.5 m x 1.2 m) so that if it would be used, it require to be enhanced with additional building. Some citizen did not use it and only use as repository of pottery, like said by a citizen getting the aid of workshop construction.



Many meetings that did not involve the women in particular restricted women's access to information and forced the women not to involve optimally in the program implementation. Because of infrequent involvement in the meeting of program socialization, the women less understood their rights and obligation that they could do in supervising the implementation of house construction. Women only understood that they received aids. They were just grateful to get house aid without understanding that it was their own right which even should be fought when they did not fully receive it.

3.1.3. Control

Control is means the authority to make decision about the resources (land, capital, home etc). In the past Kasongan women did not have an authority to make a decision about the land, capital either their homes. As we know that the main job of Kasongan people are a pottery maker. After the tourism developing in 1988, many women not only became a house wife but they became a good marketing and helping their husband to sell the pottery. And after the earthquake the responsibility of women to make a decision bigger than before. But almost half of the household now more prefer to use joint control to make a decision. Women, in Kasongan did not have good access to formal financial institutions such as banks but had good access to money lenders and greater access to savings than did men. From reported of the women there we know that now women have a freedom to make a decision about their enterprised

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the affected areas, apart from their traditional responsibilities, women had limited access to control resources, often played a more role in community development. The revised appeal would include support to communities to address social imbalances (where they existed) in targeted communities and encouraged women's participation.

The earthquake had a disproportionately greater impact on women and children, in terms of death toll, injuries, homelessness and psychological and emotional shock. The extensive financial, infrastructural, agricultural, and productivity losses as well as losses of loved one had seriously set back the overall condition (physically and mentally) of women. The role and responsibilities of women and men had also been shifted.

Understanding the kinds of work and employment issues facing women is vital for full economic recovery, but many questions remain unasked and unanswered. Gender-specific data at the household level and across sectors and occupational groups are sorely needed. Regarding women's vulnerability, local planners and disaster agencies also need basic information about household structure, gender divisions of labor, specific factors increasing women's economic insecurity, working conditions for women in major industries and occupations, barriers to women's control over land and other economic assets, and the particular needs of home-based workers, women with disabilities, migrant workers, sole providers, and women operating small businesses. Regarding women's capacities, information is needed about women's work skills, their social and organizational networks, and the resources of women workers' associations and cooperatives. Planners should identify the key groups of women whose local knowledge, community languages, social networks, and insight into community history will be useful after disasters. Hard-won lessons from parallel situations such as refugee camps must be appreciated, for example the need to avoid disempowering women by according men control over traditionally-female tasks and resources (E. Enarson, 2000)

REFERNCES

1. Abdullah. I, *Sangkan Paran Gender*, Yogyakarta Pustaka Pelajar, 1997.
2. Anonimous,. "*Profil Sentra Industri Kecil Keramik Kasongan Desa Bangunjiwo Kecamatan Kasihan Kabupaten Bantul*". (Yogyakarta: Dinas Perindustrian Perdagangan dan Koperasi Kabupaten Bantul, 2007.
3. Dalla Costa, et all.,. "*The Power of Women and the Subversion of Community*" Falling Wall Press Bristol England, 1972.
4. Enarson., E., "*Gender and Natural Disaster*" IPCRR Working Paper No 1 International Labour Organization <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/publ/index/html>, 2000.
5. Fakh, Mansour., *Analisis Gender dan Transformasi Sosial*, Yogyakarta Insist Press, 2000.
6. Ikeda Keiko. "*Gender differences in Human Loss and Vulnerability in Natural Disaster: A Case Study from Bangladesh*". Indian Journal of Gender Studies 2 (2), 1995.
7. Julia. Mosser., , *Gender dan Pembangunan*, Pustaka Pelajar Yogyakarta, 1997.
8. Merleau Ponty, "*Phenomenology of Perception*" Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1962.
9. P. Delaney and E. Shrader,, "*Gender and Post-Disaster Reconstruction: The Case of Hurricane Mitch in Honduras and Nicaragua*": 21, 2000.
10. P.J. Suwarna, dkk., "*Latar Belakang Sosio Historis Pengrajin Tanah Liat Kasongan,*" (Yogyakarta: Basis, Desember, XXVII-3, 1997), p. 68.
11. Pristiwati Y, "*Pemulihan Usaha Kecil-Mikro sdan Penguatan Perempuan di Wilayah Bencana*, Jurnal Analisis Sosial Vol 12 No 1 Yogyakarta, 2007.
12. Saptari. R & Holzner, "*Perempuan Kerja dan Perubahan Sosial: Sebuah Pengantar Studi Perempuan*". Jakarta Grafiti, 1997.
13. SP Gustami, et. all.",. *Pola Hidup dan Produk Kerajinan Keramik Kasongan Yogyakarta,*" Departemen Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan Proyek Penelitian dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Nusantara, 1985.