

## ***GENDER INEQUALITY, UNPAID CARE WORK, AND WORKING WOMEN: STRENGTHENING INDONESIAN WOMEN'S ROLE WITHIN THE FAMILY ECONOMY***

**Ruth Meilianna, Marya Yenita Sitohang, Yulinda Nurul Aini**  
*National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia (BRIN)*  
[yulinda.nurul.aini@brin.go.id](mailto:yulinda.nurul.aini@brin.go.id)

### **Abstrak**

Data statistik seringkali menunjukkan kontribusi laki-laki yang lebih tinggi terhadap perekonomian di tingkat keluarga dan nasional dibandingkan dengan perempuan. Pendapatan menjadi variabel utama yang menunjukkan bahwa laki-laki memiliki kontribusi yang lebih tinggi terhadap perekonomian dibandingkan perempuan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kontribusi perempuan terhadap perekonomian dan bagaimana kontribusi mereka seringkali tidak dapat diukur secara langsung dengan jumlah pendapatan. Pendekatan mixed-method diterapkan dalam penelitian ini dengan data kuantitatif menggunakan data dari Survei Angkatan Kerja Nasional (SAKERNAS) dan pendekatan kualitatif melalui wawancara mendalam pada beberapa perempuan di Makassar. Penelitian ini menggunakan konsep pendekatan feminis dalam metodologi kualitatif. Temuan dalam penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa peran perempuan dan kontribusinya dalam ekonomi keluarga lebih tinggi daripada laki-laki meskipun terkadang kontribusi tersebut tidak dapat diukur menggunakan statistik atau pengukuran ekonomi secara umum. Perempuan memainkan peran penting dalam produksi rumah tangga melalui pekerjaan mereka yang seringkali tidak dibayar (unpaid works) untuk mendukung kesejahteraan keluarga, termasuk mengasuh anak, mengasuh orang tua, pekerjaan rumah tangga, dan menyiapkan makanan. Dampak ekonomi dunia dari tenaga kerja yang tidak dibayar telah diukur, namun tidak ada data yang menggambarkan situasi tersebut di Indonesia. Lebih banyak penelitian dibutuhkan untuk menganalisis dampak pekerjaan tidak dibayar terhadap kesejahteraan perempuan dan strategi untuk memperkuat peran mereka dalam ekonomi keluarga.

**Kata kunci:** ekonomi keluarga, kontribusi, pekerjaan tidak dibayar, perempuan.

### **Abstract**

*Statistics in Indonesia often show a higher contribution of men to the economy at the family and national level compared to women. Incomes become the primary variable indicating that men have higher contributions to the economy than women. This article aims to examine women's contribution to the economy and how their contribution often cannot be measured directly with their amount of income. A mixed method approach was applied in this study with quantitative data using data from National Labour Force Survey and qualitative approach in Makassar. This study employs a feminist approach within the framework of qualitative methodology. Findings showed that the role of women and their contribution in the family economy are higher than men although sometimes the contribution cannot be examined using statistics or general economic measurements. Women play an integral role in household production through their work in unpaid work to support family well-being, including child rearing, eldercare, housework, and food preparation. The worldwide economic impact of unpaid labour has been measured, but there is no data that describe the situation in Indonesia. This study suggests more research to investigate the impact of unpaid work to women's well-being and strategies to strengthen their roles within the family economy.*

**Keyword:** contribution; family economy; unpaid care work; women.

## INTRODUCTION

Pendahuluan harus secara singkat Statistics can convey a strong message and they are often used to inform policy<sup>1</sup>. Unfortunately, without reliable and accurate data that takes into account the diversity of situations in the informal economy and other activities in the economy that are not measurable in statistics, it will make it difficult to develop effective policy solutions to address the challenges of informality<sup>2</sup>. In addition, half of the jobs in the world are unpaid and not measured by national statistics<sup>3</sup>. This can lead to inaccurate statistical data. Though the statistical data is used for many purposes.

One issue that is quite important is the role of women in the economy. Although currently some national statistical data show that in general, the contribution of women in the economy is not greater than that of men, there are several explanations and other studies which show that women bear a greater burden than men in the family economy and in a larger scope for economy broadly<sup>4,5,6</sup>. In reality, women's contributions to their families, communities, and countries extend far beyond their economic status. Despite the fact that women earn less than men, their "unpaid" roles and contributions are enormous. Indonesia has a nearly equal number of men and women, but more women than men (about a third) stay at home<sup>7</sup>.

Working is more than just making money. There are various crucial family jobs that go unrecognised economically since they are not compensated. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), about 2 billion people worldwide labour 8 hours every day as carers for no compensation<sup>8</sup>. Cooking, cleaning, and caring for children, the elderly, or sick family members are sometimes overlooked and unmeasured. Domestic work and caregiving tasks in a family, on the other hand, are inherently more gendered, with women frequently

occupying the roles compared to males<sup>8,9</sup>. Women spend between 3 and 6 hours per day on unpaid care duties in all parts of the world, while males only spend between 1/2 and 2 hours. Statistics also revealed that males in high-income countries are more active in caring activities than men in low-income ones<sup>10</sup>.

Unpaid care provides significant advantages to economic and healthcare systems, with an estimated value of 9% of the global gross domestic product (GDP)<sup>8</sup>. Although the role of informal caregivers has been economically measured globally, data about it in the low-middle income countries is limited. The role of Indonesian women as informal carers is not yet economically assessed or recognised. There are no official statistics on the percentage of informal carers in Indonesia, the proportion of men and women in that job, or the economic consequences of informal carers.

Yet, in Indonesia, informal carers are typically seen as women's obligations, especially if the patients are parents. Daughters are required to care for their parents who are in poor health<sup>11</sup>. In caring for family members, women frequently have a lot of work to perform, such as providing physical care (hygiene, medication, and food), emotional support, and essential decision-making for a person they are taking care of<sup>9</sup>. Despite domestic and care responsibilities, some women carry double burdens since they also contribute financially to the family economy by doing paid employment. Due to a lack of statistics on this topic, women's roles in the home economy were undermined and they were perceived as unproductive, despite the fact that their working hours as carers may surpass their normal working hours in the labour market.

Women contribute to household production in many ways, including child rearing, caregiving for elderly relatives, housework, food preparation, and many other roles<sup>12</sup>. In several cases, women often have multiple responsibilities in

<sup>1</sup> Schouten, B., Calinescu, M. and Luiten, A. *Optimizing quality of response through adaptive survey designs 11 0*. Heerlen: Statistics Netherlands, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> International Monetary Fund. *The Economic Cost of Devaluing Women's Work*, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Schaner, S. and Das, S. "Female Labour Force Participation in Asia: Indonesia Country Study." *Asian Development Bank Economics Working Paper Series*, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Chen, M. A. "Rethinking the informal economy: Linkages with the formal economy and the formal regulatory environment." *DESA Working Paper*, 46 (2007).

<sup>5</sup> ILO. *Women and men in the informal economy: a statistical picture*. Geneva: International Labour Organization, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Du, H., King, R. B. and Chi, P. "Income inequality is detrimental to long-term well-being: A large-scale longitudinal investigation in China." *Social Science and Medicine*, 232 (2019): 120–128.

<sup>7</sup> Kemenkes. *Public Health Program Action Plan*. Indonesia: Ministry of Health, Republik of Indonesia, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> ILO. *Care work and Care Jobs For the Future of Decent Works*. In ILO International Labour Organization, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Ervin, J., Taouk, Y., Alfonzo, L. F., Hewitt, B., & King, T. "Gender differences in the association between unpaid labour and mental health in employed adults: a systematic review." *The Lancet Public Health* 7, no 9 (2022): 775–786.

<sup>10</sup> Ferrant, G., Pesando, L. M., & Nowacka, K. *Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes*. OECD Development Centre, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Wardana, A. W., Arum, S. A., & Saripah. "Peranan perempuan pesisir terhadap perekonomian keluarga." *Social Issues Quarterly* 1, no 1 (2022): 45–57.

<sup>12</sup> Kashyap, A. et al. "Gender issues in the fisheries sector of India." *Aquaculture* 23, no 4 (2019): 30–31.

managing the household, both taking care of children and household affairs, as well as working to meet household needs<sup>13</sup>. Women typically have to juggle paid work and household responsibilities, while men are less likely to be responsible for either<sup>14</sup>.

Taking care of children and taking care of household affairs are relatively difficult to measure so this work is not included in the statistical calculations. However, women's unpaid work is not less important to economic growth as a result of this circumstance; on the contrary, it is essential to the success of the economy in the long run<sup>15,16</sup>. Even though the role of women in this contribution is very large in addition to more working hours borne by women. This is of course very unfortunate. Statistical data may not match reality. By depicting that women's contribution is not high, it will create conditions where women will not get resource opportunities to increase their business<sup>17</sup>.

Even though gender inequality occurs in almost all sectors in Indonesia, this paper will focus on a case study from the agricultural sector because Indonesia has the world's greatest fishery potential despite widespread gender inequality there<sup>18</sup>. According to research conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and WorldFish, more than forty percent of women in developing countries like Indonesia participate in freshwater and cage aquaculture activities, as well as household-based aquaculture<sup>19,20</sup>. More women are engaged in consumer-facing roles, such as the sale and distribution of fish and fish products, according to ILO<sup>21</sup>. As a result of this norm, women are relegated to supporting roles, while men shoulder the bulk of leadership and decision-making responsibilities<sup>22</sup>. However, other study claims that women are intellectually and physically capable of performing the same tasks as men<sup>23</sup>.

Describing the role of women in the economy is very important to do. Providing a perspective on the role of women in the economy, which cannot be described from statistical data, will provide benefits for women in order to obtain acceptable resources to be able to increase business activities in order to improve the family economy as well as the economy on a larger scale. Besides that, perspective from survey results that directly examine the contribution of fisherwomen in Indonesia which directly measures their activities and measures their income more deeply, is needed. A comparison is needed between national statistical data and data from case study surveys in several regions in Indonesia which directly examine the lives of fisherwomen in several regions in Indonesia.

This paper will provide a perspective on the contribution of women to the economy and family from several perspectives versus statistical data which shows that women's contribution is not too large. This research will also discuss several issues related to the role of women in the family and the economy, such as unpaid care work and examples of women who are not recognized in the family economy. Then this research will also discuss families headed by women who live in poverty, and will discuss the implications of women's unpaid work. Finally, this paper will discuss ways to increase women's contribution to the family economy and empower them into the labour market.

## Unpaid Work and Macroeconomic

Unpaid work encompasses all tasks that are not compensated and lack social recognition<sup>24</sup>. The United Nations System of National Accounts (1993) classifies some unpaid work as economic and some as non-economic<sup>24</sup>. Non-economic or unpaid work includes activities such as cooking, shopping, maintaining the household, caring for children, and other voluntary tasks<sup>24</sup>. These tasks are predominantly carried

<sup>13</sup> Freitas, C. T. et al. "Resource co-management as a step towards gender equity in fisheries." *Ecological Economics*, 176 (2020).

<sup>14</sup> Raymo, J. M. et al. "Marriage and Family in East Asia: Continuity and Change." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 41 (2015): 471–492.

<sup>15</sup> Caous, E. Le and Huarng, F. "Economic complexity and the mediating effects of income inequality: Reaching sustainable development in developing countries." *Sustainability* 12, no 5 (2017).

<sup>16</sup> Chandrika, A. M. M. "Feminism and Emancipation: Influence of Feminist Ideas on Women's Socio-Economic and Political Liberation in Sri Lanka." *Sociology Mind* 09, no 04 (2019): 302–315.

<sup>17</sup> Benjamin, N. et al. "Informal Economy and the World Bank." *Policy Research Working Paper Series*, (2014): 1–36.

<sup>18</sup> FAO. *Fishery Country Profile for Indonesia*, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006.

<sup>19</sup> WorldFish. *Why Gender Equality Matters in Fisheries and Aquaculture*. France, 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Williams, M. J., Williams, S. B. and Choo, P. S. "From women in fisheries to gender and fisheries", Global Symposium on Women in Fisheries." *6th Asian Fisheries Forum*, Taiwan, (2002): 13–18.

<sup>21</sup> ILO. *World Employment and Social Outlook - Trends for Women*, International Labour Organization. Geneva: International Labour Organization, 2017.

<sup>22</sup> Jabeen, S. et al. "Impacts of rural women's traditional economic activities on household economy: Changing economic contributions through empowered women in rural Pakistan." *Sustainability* 12, no 07 (2020):1–23.

<sup>23</sup> Deaton, A., Attanasio, Orazio, A., Banks, J. Berkman, L, Besley, T., Blundell, R., Goldberg, P. K., Johnson, P., Joyce, R., Kiernan, K., Platt, L, Rasul, I., Satz, D., Tirole, J. "Woman and men at work." *Oxford Open Economics* 3, no 1 (2024): 294–322.

<sup>24</sup> Antonopoulos, R. The unpaid care work-paid work connection. *International Labour Organizations Working Paper No.86*, 2009.

out by women. Other studies also highlight a disparity in the hours dedicated to unpaid work between men and women, especially in developing countries, where women tend to bear a much larger share of this work<sup>23,24</sup>.

From a macroeconomic perspective, households are typically viewed as labor suppliers for the business sector. However, it is argued that households contribute to the economy through unpaid services as well. A study suggested that GDP should be expanded to account for the value of unpaid economic work and emphasized that economic studies should include the unmonetized household sector<sup>24</sup>.

Moreover, unpaid household labor can be seen as a "subsidy" to the business sector, as individuals, particularly women, allocate time to household duties that could otherwise be spent on paid employment<sup>24</sup>. According to a study, women who devote their time to unpaid household tasks have less time available for paid work<sup>25</sup>. This "subsidy" leads to lower labor force participation rates and reduces the potential income generation and demand for goods and services, which in turn can contribute to unemployment. Research confirms that women's unpaid domestic responsibilities often hinder their ability to seek or retain paid employment<sup>24</sup>.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the gender dynamics within the Indonesian economy. The quantitative aspect utilized data from the 2018 Indonesian Labor Force Survey (ILFS), encompassing 179,299,713 individuals aged 15-64 years to provide a comprehensive overview of men and women's contributions to the economy. Furthermore, a survey conducted in Makassar City focused on gathering specific employment details, including work type, hours worked, average monthly income, and other attributes, particularly among individuals engaged in the fisheries sector. Employing a multi-stage sampling method, ten villages were purposively selected based on their reliance on the sea for fisheries-related activities. In consultation with the Makassar City Maritime and Fisheries Service, ten villages were chosen, and within each village, specific neighborhood units were identified for data collection. A total of 200 families participated in the survey.

Simultaneously, a qualitative approach using interviews was carried out in Makassar City to explore the role of women in both the family economy and the broader

economic landscape, considering income and unpaid work. In our research, we adopt the concept of feminist methodology within the framework of qualitative in-depth interviews. Feminist methodology is an approach that seeks to thoroughly document women's experiences and enhance their visibility, allowing research to uncover scientific truths while advocating for women's liberation from oppressive structures<sup>26</sup>. Shulamit Reinharz, a key figure in this field, argues that feminist methods help uncover missing information, particularly about women's lives, whether in specific or general contexts. This approach enables researchers to gain insights into the perspectives that shape women's experiences, while also working to reduce women's marginalization<sup>27</sup>. By utilizing this methodology, we incorporate several practices into our in-depth interviews, including involving female researchers in the process, highlighting women's work experiences, and analyzing the knowledge they share based on their lived experiences.

Interviews were conducted with the Fatimah Az-Zahra's fisheries group, a community-oriented initiative empowering women, particularly wives of fishermen, to produce processed fishery goods and craft items from marine resources. The interview findings were supplemented by a desk study for a more profound analysis of gender roles and their contributions to the family economy. The data analysis involved cross-tabulation to present the frequency and percentage distribution of men and women, encompassing sociodemographic aspects such as age, education level, household size, type of work, job status, and working hours.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Men and women contribution in economy: evidence from statistics of Indonesia

ILO and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimate that women's labour accounts for as much as 66% of total global employment, 50% of food production, but only 10% of income and 1% of property ownership<sup>28</sup>. The GDP contribution of women is also underestimated because primary product processing for personal use is not included in

<sup>25</sup> Hirway, I. Unpaid work and economy linkages and their implications. *Levy Economics Institute Working Paper No 838*, 2015.

<sup>26</sup> Gray, P. S., Williamson, J. B., Karp, D. A., Dalphin, J. R. *Feminist Method*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

<sup>27</sup> Nursida, I. "Isu gender dan sastra feminis dalam karya sastra arab." *Alfaz* 3, no 1 (2015): 3-35.

<sup>28</sup> Baum, T. *International Perspectives on Women and Work in Hotels, Catering, and Tourism, International Labour Office*. Geneva: International Labour Office, 2012.



the definition of economic activity<sup>29</sup>. This is because women face obstacles when trying to gain financial independence. To this point, women's economic contributions and the results of their labour have been undervalued and underappreciated<sup>30</sup>. Because of this issue, the wage gap between men and women in the workforce is exacerbated. Overall, women's earnings are 23% lower than men's, according to the ILO, and for equal

work of the same type and status, they are 30%-40% lower<sup>31,32</sup>. In addition, men are overrepresented in positions of power and wealth. When controlling for factors like level of education, years of experience, and pay grade, the European Study finds that women still earn 31% less than men<sup>33</sup>. There are also many women working there who are treated differently from their male counterparts<sup>34</sup>.

**Table 1.**  
The Socio-demographic Statistics of Men and Women Income

Variables	Men		Women		Total	
	%	Mean Income	%	Mean Income	%	Mean Income
<b>Age Group</b>						
15-24	14.61	1,121,118	14.67	865,133	14.63	1,024,362
25-34	26.12	1,746,252	23.99	1,091,386	25.29	1,476,857
35-44	25.82	1,845,360	26.25	1,032,945	25.99	1,502,656
45-54	21.08	1,875,798	22.38	1,109,293	21.59	1,553,953
55-64	12.36	1,340,980	12.70	833,796	12.49	1,134,783
<b>Education</b>						
No Schooling	11.67	856,787	15.96	372,161	13.34	625,635
Elementary school	24.63	1,144,422	24.80	513,140	24.70	883,288
Junior High School	19.62	1,301,411	17.67	632,801	18.86	1,047,438
Senior High School	33.31	1,954,148	25.90	1,132,672	30.42	1,670,029
Diploma	2.20	3,131,940	3.92	2,245,728	2.87	2,620,422
Bachelor+	8.58	4,060,547	11.75	3,105,274	9.82	3,588,232
<b>Household Size</b>						
1 - 2 person/s	10.68	1,579,888	14.24	1,047,993	12.07	1,324,067
3 - 5 persons	70.85	1,707,507	68.36	1,027,942	69.87	1,433,154
6 - 8 persons	16.62	1,567,528	15.74	951,936	16.28	1,324,101
More than 8 persons	1.85	1,482,999	1.66	989,900	1.77	1,293,738
<b>Job Status</b>						
Informal	52.12	979,873	60.92	450,570	55.56	743,297
Formal	47.88	2,590,465	39.08	2,147,234	44.44	2,433,101
<b>Hours Worked</b>						
<30	20.52	769,234	36.15	438,088	26.62	591,820
30-34	6.65	1,299,977	6.84	1,095,582	6.72	1,215,273
35-39	9.13	1,628,571	10.36	1,337,435	9.61	1,502,912
40-44	17.80	2,266,122	14.70	1,829,587	16.59	2,108,647
45-49	21.18	2,053,703	12.50	1,642,329	17.79	1,938,635
50-54	5.91	2,018,789	3.39	1,341,365	4.92	1,835,595
>54	18.81	2,003,188	16.07	1,056,571	17.74	1,655,473
<b>N</b>		<b>90,087,701</b>		<b>89,212,012</b>		<b>179,299,713</b>

Source: processed from the 2018 ILFS Data

The 2018 ILFS data backs up this claim as well. As shown in Table 1, the median income of women is consistently lower than that of men regardless of their age, level of education, employment, or number of hours worked. This disparity in wages is evidence that those with similar qualifications and experience in the labour market are paid more for their efforts. In addition, according to the Indonesia Demographic and Health Survey 2017, more than half women who were working earned less than their husbands. Only 17%

of women in a household earned about the same income as their husbands while 18% of them earned more than their husband. Other studies found similar outcomes, demonstrating that in nearly all countries, women who have higher levels of education and work longer hours than men

<sup>29</sup> G. Raveendran. *Contribution of Women to the National Economy*. New Delhi: International Labour Organization, 2010.

<sup>30</sup> Maiti, D. and Bhattacharyya, C. "Informality, enforcement and growth." *Economic Modelling* 84, (2020): 259–274.

<sup>31</sup> ILO. *Equality in Employment: Key Concepts And Principles*. Jakarta, 2013.

<sup>32</sup> ILO and ADB. *Good Global Economic and Social Practices*. Mandaluyong City: Asian Development Bank, 2013.

<sup>33</sup> Triventi, M. "The gender wage gap and its institutional context: A comparative analysis of European graduates." *Work, Employment and Society* 27, no 4, (2013): 563–580.

<sup>34</sup> Duflo, E. (2012). "Women's empowerment and economic development." *Journal of Economic Literature* 50, no 4 (2012): 1051–1079.

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earn less money<sup>35,36</sup>. For the sake of providing for their families, low-income women often take on unpaid work or work long hours in unsafe conditions. More men than women held professional positions, while most women worked in low-paying jobs typical of the informal economy<sup>37,38</sup>. Other study argue that women are limited in their ability to pursue careers of their own choosing<sup>39</sup>. The traditional role of men as breadwinners is seen as threatened by the rise of women in the workforce<sup>40</sup>.

As a result, these women have fewer chances for advancement, which compounds their poverty. Among the many conventions published by the ILO to promote gender parity in the workplace is Convention No. 100 (1951) on equal pay for equal work between men and women. Convention No. 111 of the International Labour Organization prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender, or sexual orientation<sup>41</sup>. Also, in accordance with Law No. 13 of 2003 on Labour in Indonesia, both men and women are guaranteed equal access to and protection under the labour market, including equal pay for equal work<sup>42</sup>.

### Are women always inferior to men in economy? Comparing statistics and reality

One metric that can be used to illustrate the value of labour is income. In reviewing the information presented thus far, men make a greater financial contribution to society than women do. Here, this paper takes a different tack and talks about how the results of some studies and polls can paint a picture that differs slightly from the overall statistical picture. In some situations, and especially in some fields, women

contribute more than men do to supporting the household and, by extension, the economy.

WorldFish's gender team leader Dr. Cynthia McDougall cites a wide range of factors—including social, economic, policy, and ecological factors, as well as wealth and poverty, ethnic and caste affiliation, and level of education for the continued under-representation of women in this field<sup>43,20</sup>. This is supported by the 2018 ILFS data processing results as shown in Table 2 below. The average male earns more than the average female. The same conclusion can be drawn from a comparison of demographic variables such as age group, education level, family size, employment status, and hours worked. Across the board, male contributors generate greater revenue income than female ones.

Women in the fisheries industry face unique challenges, including being overworked and having their contributions to the industry go unacknowledged and undervalued<sup>44</sup>. Furthermore, women in the fisheries sector receive lower yields and income than men and are left in a poor position, despite women being actively engaged in their role and making a significant contribution within the context of the household and community economy<sup>45</sup>. There's also the stereotype that women don't fish since they're often preoccupied with housework and children after the harvest<sup>46</sup>. Male workers are generally viewed as more capable physically. As a result, they frequently engage in physically demanding occupations related to fishing and related fields. Women, on the other hand, are stereotyped as being better suited to post-production tasks like processing fishery products, packaging, etc., because of their greater dexterity, diligence, and attention to detail<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> Otohe, N. *Resource guide on Gender issues in employment and labour market policies, Pharmaceutical Manufacturing*. Italy: International Labour Organization, 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Surbakti, S. and Devasahayam, T. *Women and Girls in Indonesia: Progress and Challenges*. Jakarta: UNFPA, 2015.

<sup>37</sup> Chongvilaivan, A. and Kim, J. "Individual Income Inequality and Its Drivers in Indonesia: A Theil Decomposition Reassessment." *The Handbook of Social Security in Southeast Asia*, (2015): 1–30.

<sup>38</sup> Blau, F. D. and Khan, L. M. "The Gender Wage Gap: Extent, Trends, and Explanations, *Journal of Economic Literature*." 55, no 3 (2017): 789–865

<sup>39</sup> Ford, M. and Parker, L. *Women and work in Indonesia*. London: Routledge, 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Baker, S. M., Gentry, J. W. and Rittenburg, T. L. "Building understanding of the domain of consumer vulnerability." *Journal of Macromarketing* 25, no 2 (2005): 128–139.

<sup>41</sup> ILO. *ILO Conventions on Gender Equality in the Labour Market*. Jakarta: International Labour Organization, 2006.

<sup>42</sup> Secretary of State. *Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 13 of 2003*. Jakarta: Republic of Indonesia, 2003.

<sup>43</sup> KP3A and Bappenas. *Gender Equality in Indonesia, Policy Brief*. Jakarta: The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 2011.

<sup>44</sup> Siles, J. et al. *Advancing Gender in the Environment: Gender in Fisheries—a Sea of Opportunities*. Washington, USA: IUCN and USAID, 2019.

<sup>45</sup> Elmhirst, R. et al. *Gender issues in large scale land acquisition: Insights from oil palm in Indonesia*. Washington, USA, 2017.

<sup>46</sup> ADB. *Gender equality in the labour market in the Philippines*. Manila: Asian Development Bank, International Labour Organization, 2013.

<sup>47</sup> Ngadi, N. et al. "Gender Inequality in the Indonesian Labour Market." (2020): 24–44.

**Table 2.**  
The Socio-demographic Statistics of Men and Women Income in the Fisheries Sector

Variables	Men		Women		Total	
	%	Mean Income	%	Mean Income	%	Mean Income
<b>Age Group</b>						
15-24	16,56	1.668.889	9,18	932.709	15,41	1.610.029
25-34	24,46	2.014.240	17,95	1.426.657	23,45	1.966.421
35-44	26,82	2.323.068	30,08	1.553.520	27,33	2.221.799
45-54	19,49	1.991.831	24,47	1.396.719	20,26	1.900.787
55-64	9,87	1.991.864	12,93	1.420.964	10,35	1.902.934
>64	2,79	1.519.658	5,38	1.309.950	3,2	1.463.564
<b>Education</b>						
No Schooling	24,16	1.861.665	34,31	1.308.048	25,74	1.762.112
Elementary school	37,20	1.888.280	33,02	1.332.349	36,55	1.836.419
Junior High School	20,37	3.867.927	16,21	1.935.092	19,73	3.520.356
Senior High School	17,15	2.174.740	14,95	1.582.743	16,8	2.104.990
Diploma	0,27	5.429.183	0,52	1.117.336	0,31	4.356.736
Bachelor+	0,85	2.940.830	0,99	2.502.566	0,87	2.832.034
<b>Household Size</b>						
1 - 2 person/s	8,66	1.630.827	13,17	881.455	9,36	1.428.363
3 - 5 persons	63,96	1.531.885	62,06	671.598	63,67	1.393.208
6 - 8 persons	23,93	1.352.384	22,73	824.648	23,74	1.267.633
More than 8 persons	3,45	1.153.285	2,04	821.222	3,23	1.118.529
<b>Job Status</b>						
Informal	38,53	1.439.889	17,45	726.033	35,25	1.082.961
Formal	61,47	1.495.665	82,55	749.163	64,75	1.122.414
<b>Hours Worked</b>						
<30	24,81	1.109.428	48,82	448.478	28,54	935.142
30-34	7,50	1.247.845	8,05	730.080	7,59	1.165.808
35-39	10,12	1.393.103	10,83	1.010.606	10,23	1.328.373
40-44	11,41	1.619.610	10,98	1.043.823	11,35	1.533.581
45-49	12,25	1.605.276	7,14	1.075.781	11,45	1.544.656
50-54	4,87	1.489.683	2,10	1.118.654	4,44	1.460.887
>54	29,03	1.878.090	12,09	1.271.630	26,40	1.829.119
<b>N</b>		<b>1.477.714</b>		<b>271.970</b>		<b>1.749.684</b>

Source: processed from the 2018 ILFS Data

A study details the ways in which women in coastal areas contribute to society, both as mothers and as unpaid workers who support their families<sup>11</sup>. This part plays a significant part in the development of a community, nation, or state. The long-term impact of mothers' influence on their children's productivity is difficult to quantify, but it is undeniable. Another study emphasizes women's non-economic contributions to the household<sup>48</sup>. They claim that their wives in Cambaya Subdistrict, in addition to working as coastal women, also play reproductive roles that cannot be measured in monetary or material terms. This has to do with people staying alive. Women in coastal areas are more likely to be married, and once married, they take on responsibilities like running a household and raising a family. This contribution cannot be quantified in monetary terms, but its long-term effects on the economy are significant. Children in the coastal area have no chance of improving their financial situation without these opportunities. Creating a good

generation requires thinking about various factors, including education at home.

There are several reasons why women's economic contributions are measured as being less than men's, even though there are discrepancies between the results of national statistical data and survey data from previous studies in certain sectors. One of them is that women do the bulk of the world's unpaid work. Domestic work such as cooking, cleaning, fetching food or water, and taking care of children and the elderly is not included in GDP calculations. The IMF reports that the economic value of this work is very large, with estimates ranging from 10 to 60 percent of GDP, even though it appears to be a relatively easy job<sup>2</sup>. In addition to working longer hours than men, women are also expected to do unpaid work. There is some variation between countries, but on average it's about 4.4 hours longer than 1.7 hours. The economy will be tempted to misallocate resources and women will be denied economic opportunities if their work hours and full contributions are not included in the measurement of

<sup>48</sup> Juswati, J. & Amsal, B. "Analisis peran perempuan pesisir dalam usaha ekonomi produktif rumah tangga di kelurahan cambaya Kota Makassar." *Jurnal Commercium: Kajian Masyarakat Kontemporer* 2, no 2 (2019): 10-16.

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women's contribution to the economy in statistical data. Sections 5 and 6 provide further details on women's non-economic roles and contributions.

### Women and their role in family and economy: a case study of the fisheries sector in Makassar City

In 2019, a research team from the Population Research Center of BRIN conducted research (through surveys and in-depth interviews) in 6 provinces in Indonesia, one of which was South Sulawesi Province, which in this case was conducted in Makassar City. The inclusion of women's roles and contributions to the fisheries industry is a primary focus. Our survey results are presented in Table 3, which compares the median earnings of male and female fishermen. Women contribute more financially than men to the fishing and aquaculture industries. This is consistent with the findings of earlier studies that found women to contribute more than men. Men make more money than women do in the fishing/aquaculture industry. While previous research has shown that women make a sizable contribution to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) engaged in marine processing, this new data reveals that men make a greater economic contribution. Does this mean that men generate

more income than women do in this industry because they are more productive, even though women put in more hours per week? Nonetheless, previous studies have shown that women make a greater economic contribution to this field than men do. Similarly, men contribute more than women do in the seafood trading industry and among port workers. This contradicts the findings of prior research.

The research team also visited Ms. Nuraeni's company, KW Fatimah Az-Zahra, to conduct in-depth interviews in addition to the survey. Given the precarious nature of fishermen's incomes and the challenges they face, this group is dedicated to supporting the wives of fishermen and other women living along the coast. *Otak-otak*, shredded fish, tuna fish sauce, boneless milkfish, pickles, and processed seaweed products were all made by women after they were given the proper training. Women from the KWN Fatimah Az-zahra group have testified that the money made from their food processing business is a significant boon to family finances. Ms. Eni opened a school for the children of abused women in addition to assisting coastal women in learning food processing skills. They are taught new abilities to help them feel good about themselves again.

**Table 3.**  
Men and Women Income Based on Fisheries Occupational Status in Makassar City

Main Occupational Status	Men		Women		Total	
	%	Mean Income	%	Mean Income	%	Mean Income
- Entrepreneurs/Owners of fishing vessels	0.5	10,000,000	0.0		0.5	10,000,000
- Fishermen catch	59.1	2,481,941	12.0	3,283,333	56.1	2,492,650
- Aquaculture fishermen	5.3	2,172,000	8.0	2,437,500	5.5	2,196,136
- Fishery business/industry actors	9.1	3,495,588	14.0	1,514,286	9.4	3,310,667
- Seafood traders	15.2	2,680,702	48.0	2,544,167	17.3	2,656,957
- Harbor workers, fish auction places, or fish markets	10.8	2,095,309	18.0	1,455,556	11.3	2,031,333

Source: primary data analysis from the BRIN's survey

The women said that having KW Fatimah Az-Zahra there made a huge difference for them. Their experience with canned seafood processing will be useful in the workforce. They can provide for their families with this skill and the uncertain income from fishermen. The money made from processing food can be used to pay the bills and put kids through school. Some of the women have even come forward to say that the money they make from food processing is more consistent and higher than what they make from fishing. This may show how women's contributions to the household often outweigh men's. Long-term, this contribution affects the economy at large, fostering growth that benefits everyone.

Spending on children's education can inspire the next generation of workers to earn more money, which in turn can boost economic growth.

Statistical data on women's participation in the fisheries sector contradicts the findings of this survey (Table 3). Based on what has been discussed so far, women contribute more financially than men only in two subsets of the fishing and aquaculture fishing industries. In most other occupations, men earn more money than women do. However, this survey's findings corroborate those of previous studies that demonstrate



women make greater economic contributions than men<sup>49,48,49,50</sup>.

Our findings are supported by other literature that examines women's contributions to the home and the workplace. The contribution of women fishermen in the Ponjalae sub district of Palopo City claimed that women play a crucial role in the economic growth of coastal communities<sup>50</sup>. Women also reported that their income generation responsibilities increased as the male breadwinner's share of the household income decreased. Since fishermen tend to have an unstable income, a study notes that this motivates women to work toward financial stability for their families<sup>51</sup>. Women play an important role in society and the economy, and not just as wives and mothers who take care of the home and provide for their families. It can push women's roles to be larger than men's by showing how they shoulder the burden of providing for their families when their husbands' income from fishing is inconsistent. Coastal women bear a disproportionate share of the economic burden of supporting their families.

Women in Ponjalae Village work on the coast in a variety of occupations, including fish drying (40%), shredding tuna (30%), selling fresh fish (10%), and selling dried/salted fish (13.3%). In addition, the income contribution of both men and women in coastal areas demonstrate that women earn more money than their husbands or partners<sup>50</sup>. When it comes to fish drying workers, wives contribute 63.4% more to the household income than men do (36.5%). Meanwhile, the ratio of wives to husbands is 62.7% to 37.2% among those who work with shredded tuna. Wives make up 60.7% of the fresh fish trading workforce, while men make up 48.1%. The female partner contributes 51.8% to the household income when the husband earns 48.1% from selling dry or salted fish. Finally, in the field of shredded fish trading, the wife contributes 44.6% while the husband contributes 55.3%. Across the board, women contribute more to the household income than men do in about 80% of occupations. The 2018 ILFS data description does not match this result.

Furthermore, a study looked at how much women in Tempuran District made from various jobs in 2017 to determine average household income. Female workers make

up 40.6% of the salted fish processing workforce, while male partners make up 59.4%<sup>49</sup>. Then, women bring home 66.7% of the income in households where both partners work in the processing of salted fish and shrimp paste, while men contribute only 33.0%. The wife performs 71.4% of the work involved in making shrimp paste, while her husband contributes only 28.6%. Then, women make up 47.4 percent of the shrimp paste trading workforce, while men make up 52.6 percent. The wife contributes 67.5% more than the husband does in the fresh fish trading business. And in the field of salted fish trading, women contribute 32.8% to household income while men contribute 67.2%. The wife also does 80.6% of the work in the salted fish, shrimp paste, and fish trading industries, while the husband only does 19.4% of the work. Wives in seven different fishing communities contributed 64.9% to their households on average, while husbands contributed 35.1%.

### **Headed by women, some Indonesian families are living in poverty: is it women's fault?**

The national data on Indonesian women as household heads was found to underestimate the real situation. According to Indonesian statistics, women lead nearly two out of every ten households, while a survey performed in specific Indonesian regions revealed that women lead one out of every four households<sup>52</sup>. Women who become household heads may be perceived as resisting patriarchal restrictions and gaining greater assertiveness and autonomy<sup>53</sup>. However, the National Secretariat of the Women Headed Household Empowerment in Indonesia found that these households typically poor since data showed that 79% of families with the lowest social welfare ranking were women-headed families with an average daily income of IDR 10,000<sup>52</sup>. Even though human poverty is multifaceted and encompasses more than simply income, low income in female-headed families puts them vulnerable to catastrophic loss caused by unexpected unfavourable occurrences such as illness, accident, and more. However, poverty is a process, not a condition. The imbalance of power in society between men and women has resulted in increasingly unfavourable situations for women as family

<sup>49</sup> Djunaidah, I. S. & Nurmalia, N. "Peran produktif Wanita pesisir dalam menunjang usaha perikanan di Kecamatan Tempuran, Kabupaten Karawang." *Jurnal Sosial Ekonomi Kelautan dan Perikanan* 13, no 2 (2018): 229-237.

<sup>50</sup> Nirmasari, D., Bibin, M., & Suhendra, S. "Peran perempuan nelayan dalam meningkatkan perekonomian keluarga di Kelurahan Ponjalae Kota Palopo." *Jurnal Sains dan Teknologi Perikanan* 1, no 2 (2021): 36-45.

<sup>51</sup> Purwanto, H. *Peran Istri Nelayan Dalam Meningkatkan Ekonomi Keluarga Di Kelurahan Karangsari Kecamatan Tuban Kabupaten Tuban*. Universitas Negeri Semarang, 2020.

<sup>52</sup> Akhmadi, A., Yusrina, A., Budiati, S., & Yumna Athia. *Access to justice: Empowering female heads of households in Indonesia, Case Studies in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, West Java, West Kalimantan, and East Nusa Tenggara* (Issue October), 2010.

<sup>53</sup> Waite, L. "How is household vulnerability gendered? Female-headed households in the collectives of Suleimaniyah, Iraqi Kurdistan." *Disasters* 24, no 2 (2000).

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leaders. These adverse conditions frequently leave women vulnerable, leaving them defenceless and more vulnerable to the risk factors of poverty. These vulnerabilities may be the result of women's socioeconomic characteristics and societal norms.

Women who are heads of families frequently have a low level of education and may be unfamiliar with administrative documents. According to the data, more than half of women who are heads of households were illiterate and unfamiliar with administrative procedures, and only 41% had their marriages recorded. A study found that 30% of them married before the legal age of marriage in Indonesia which is 16 years<sup>52</sup>. As a result, women may drop out of school and not receive the necessary education to learn basic reading and writing skills. Illiterate women may be unaware of administrative paperwork, resulting in a lack of access to government remittances and the community health insurance program<sup>52</sup>. In Indonesia, holding administrative papers such as a family card, national identity card, birth certificate, and others is required for a household to be considered for government assistance.

Female-headed households are the outcome of a lack of male partners or spouses in a male-dominated country such as Indonesia<sup>53</sup>. The female leader of the household is frequently widowed, which is severely stigmatised in society. In contrast, records reveal that 78% of female-headed families have suffered domestic violence, which may force them to be separated from their partners<sup>52</sup>. Furthermore, the second negative circumstance arises from a societal culture that greatly stigmatises widower status. Women may have greater autonomy as household heads, but this does not guarantee that they will have more authority at the supra-household level<sup>53</sup>. Instead, women heads of homes who had been divorced faced social prejudice. For example, they are frequently excluded from communal decision-making and face discrimination in the labour market<sup>54</sup>.

### The implication of women's unpaid works

Gender disparity in unpaid care work is the missing link in the examination of gender differences in labour outcomes such as labour force participation, income, and job quality. Unpaid care work, which is typically imposed on women, is important to family economics and well-being<sup>10</sup>. The double

burden that women bear in their families has violated their rights and prevented them from becoming more empowered by participating in the labour market or other work possibilities that are open to them. The uneven contribution of unpaid care work within families weakens the favourable impact of greater female education and declining childbearing rates on women's labour-force participation. The more time women devote to unpaid care labour, the less opportunity they must participate in paid activities. It leads to women leaving the labour force or working part-time and earning less than males, resulting in gender wage disparities.

Furthermore, unpaid labour has been shown to have a detrimental impact on the mental health of women more than males. Many studies from different countries have been undertaken to investigate the impact of unpaid employment by women. A study employing systematic reviews on 19 papers looks at one of the effects of unpaid employment<sup>9</sup>. Empirical studies from Australia, the United States, Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and other European countries found that unpaid caregiving has a negative impact on the mental health of working age adults, both men and women. However, because there are significant gender inequalities in unpaid work and inequities in the distribution of unpaid carer duties, women were more affected by the work<sup>9</sup>. As informal carers, they were frequently subjected to various stresses, such as balancing several responsibilities, having limited time to relax and practise self-care, and being emotionally influenced by the condition of family members they were caring for. Unpaid work-related mental health issues included depressive symptoms and psychological anguish<sup>9</sup>. Another study found that the drudgery of unpaid chores might promote tiredness and stress in women. While wealthy women can outsource domestic work to spend more quality time with their children or participate in the labour market, poorer women will be burdened by repetitive, time-consuming, and physically demanding home activities<sup>55</sup>.

### The implication of women's unpaid works

One of the ways to achieve economic growth is through gender equality and women's empowerment<sup>56</sup>. Financial and material assets, as well as intangible assets like expertise, knowledge, and access to opportunities, are all part of what it means to be empowered<sup>57</sup>. There are three parts to women's

<sup>54</sup> Zulminarni, N. *Giving Indonesia's Women Head of Households A Fighting Chance - The Asia Foundation*. The Asia Foundation, 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Seedat, S., & Rondon, M. Women's wellbeing and the burden of unpaid work. *The BMJ* 374, (2021): 1–3.

<sup>56</sup> Beatty, C., Fothergill, S. and Gore, T. *The Real Level of Unemployment*. Sheffield, United Kingdom: Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Sohail, M. "Women Empowerment and Economic Development-an Exploratory Study in Pakistan." *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly* 5, no 4 (2014): 210–221.

empowerment: individual, collective, and societal. Boosting human capital through education and competitiveness can help women become more economically active, which in turn helps the economy broadly<sup>17</sup>. This effort can realise gender equality and help women secure their employment<sup>58</sup>. Women's rights, household decision making, self-confidence, respect for the advice and information of others, and the right to vote are just some of the many topics that can be addressed in a school context<sup>59</sup>. There is the formal education that occurs in schools and the informal education that occurs in everyday life. Informal education is crucial for fighting for women's rights, resources, increasing decision-making capacity, dignity, choices, opportunities, and power, while formal education can increase women's knowledge and prepare them to contribute economically. By gaining control over their own lives, women can work towards securing their legal rights and advancing their economic, social, and political well-being<sup>60</sup>.

Their economic rights, such as the right to work in a safe and supportive environment, to start and grow a business, to receive loans and other forms of financial assistance, and to have a stable and secure job, are at the core of the empowerment process<sup>39</sup>. According to a study, enabling women to participate in the economy requires creating markets in which their goods and services can be bought and sold<sup>39</sup>. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) identified several ways in which women's economic empowerment could be enhanced. These included: increasing identification and reducing unpaid work of women; supporting women's access to land and their participation in decision-making; training, skills, management of business and functional knowledge to women entrepreneurs; certifying businesses that support workplace equality; and supporting women's property rights<sup>61</sup>. The construction of new social norms and the redefining of traditional gender roles can help women and men share responsibilities at home and in the workplace. The productivity and income of families have benefited greatly from this shift<sup>62</sup>. The government and related NGOs/stakeholders in Indonesia recognise the importance of development projects that provide access to credit, training, and education in empowerment<sup>33</sup>. Ultimately, women's contributions and empowerment in economic activities that affect long-term economic growth will increase because of

gains in education, full-time labour market experience, increasing income, ability to negotiate, authority, and preference in functional and critical decisions, and higher-level occupations<sup>38</sup>. Women who can contribute financially to their households, communities, and economies all benefit.

## CONCLUSION

This study found that women have a large economic impact on their families and the surrounding economy although statistics show higher financial contribution from men than women. The majority of women worked in low-paying jobs typical of the informal economy, while a disproportionate number of men were in professional positions. Moreover, women are often burdened with unpaid work that is critical to support family well-being which is commonly neglected and unmeasured. This unpaid employment has restricted women's labour-force involvement and has a detrimental effect on their mental health and well-being as well as their participation in labor force.

Increasing the quality of women's education level should go in line with the changing in society level that viewed domestics and child caring roles as responsibility for both women and men. Gender equality at the family level will increase women's opportunity to participate in the labour market. Therefore, gains in education, full-time labour market experience, income, ability to negotiate, authority, and preference in functional and critical decisions, as well as higher-level occupations, will increase women's contributions to and empowerment in economic activities that affect long-term economic growth. Moreover, there is a need to conduct further investigation on women's unpaid works since the worldwide economic impact of unpaid labour has been measured, but there is no data that describe the situation in Indonesia

<sup>58</sup> Ford, L. "Two-thirds of world's illiterate adults are women, report finds." *The Guardian*, (2015): 20–22.

<sup>59</sup> Wilson, R. et al. *Working Futures 2017-2027 : Long-run labour market and skills projections for the UK Main report*. Warwick, 2020.

<sup>60</sup> Hendriks, S. "The role of financial inclusion in driving women's economic empowerment." *Development in Practice* 29, no 8 (2019): 1029–1038.

<sup>61</sup> UNDP. *New UNDP study urges law and policy reform to redistribute and reduce care burden of women*, UNDP. Bangkok: United Nations Development Programme, 2023.

<sup>62</sup> Dewi, D. C. "Agricultural Policies That Marginalize Farmers and Undermine Food Sovereignty." *Journal of Public Administration Science* 18, no 1 (2014): 44–58.

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