

# ACHIEVING GENDER JUSTICE IN INDONESIA'S FOREST AND LAND GOVERNANCE SECTOR

How civil society organisations can respond to mining  
and plantation industry impacts



Author: Lies Marcoes

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**The Asia Foundation**

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SETAPAK, The Asia Foundation's Environmental Governance Program

SETAPAK has been working to improve forest and land governance in Indonesia since 2011. The program promotes good forest and land governance as fundamental to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and ensuring that the benefits of natural resources are distributed sustainably and equitably. Gender justice is an overarching objective of the SETAPAK program. The program recognizes that good forest and land governance is gender sensitive, and that gender justice needs to be prioritized in all governance processes, institutions and mechanisms in order to promote and safeguard women's engagement and rights.

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## Overview

Land based industries, most significantly palm oil plantations, timber concessions and mining operations, are expanding quickly in Indonesia. With approximately 840,000 ha of forest loss per year (Margono et al 2014), Indonesia suffers the world's highest rate of deforestation. As civil society organizations (CSOs) implement forest conservation strategies and programs to respond to the issue of forest loss, there is a growing concern that they lack the ability to address gender justice, or more specifically, Gender, Environment and Development, one field of Gender and Development.<sup>1</sup> This weakness may undermine CSO's ability to ameliorate the gendered injustices that limit women and marginalized communities' participation in forest governance. It also limits CSO's ability to build grassroots constituencies, which are crucial for driving reform. Drawing on the Gender, Environment and Development literature, and a gender assessment of selected Indonesian environmental CSOs, this paper provides a brief overview of the major gender issues relevant to forest and land governance, and makes six recommendations to help CSOs develop more gender sensitive advocacy and programming. The paper aims to contribute to the overall objective of improving gender justice (including women's participation) in forest governance.

The impacts of land based and extractive industry expansion are experienced in different and more pronounced ways by women than by men. Women frequently bear the brunt of industry developments without enjoying the potential benefits. Issues commonly introduced by land based and extractive industry operations include displacement, loss of land and livelihood, environmental impacts, the availability of formal employment to community members, and an influx of a transient male workforce. These issues may result in different impacts on men and women, which can be called gendered impacts.

Drawing on a report by Hill and Newell (2009), and complemented by a study by the World Rainforest Movement (2007) and Marcoes et al (2014), the ways in which mining operations and palm oil production can and often does impact on women include:

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<sup>1</sup> For the sake of brevity, this paper has not included an exploration of gender theory. Gender and Development is considered here to be an approach that addresses gender as 'a social construct that is created and reinforced by social practices and frequent interaction' (Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin 1999: 192).

- The failure to consult with women when negotiating a community's free, prior and informed consent to develop an industry, access to land, compensation and royalties disempowers women, and may go against traditional decision making structures.
- The payment of compensation and royalties to men 'on behalf of' families and communities denies women access to and control over the financial benefits of development. This encourages women's economic dependence on men, disempowering them, skewing gender relations or exacerbating existing inequalities. Additionally, female-headed households may not receive payments if they do not have a male representative.
- Direct and indirectly forcing communities to sell their land. Women may be pressured to sell their land after, for example, land investors excavate residential areas, clear trees or pollute water supplies. Pests introduced by palm oil plantations such as boars, monkeys, rats and grasshoppers may also move in that over-run the gardens of inhabitants and reduce or destroy plant harvests such as fruit. Without social preparations, support in managing funds and lacking skills, resources and sustainable economic resources, a sudden move from a sustainable farm based income to cash compensation from a land sale may be the first step towards systematic impoverishment.
- Loss of land and displacement can lead to loss of livelihoods and increased work burdens for women in providing for their families. Where women are traditionally responsible for meeting the subsistence needs of families, and can no longer do so due to loss of land, they can be forced to become economically dependent on men and income derived from formal employment.
- Displacement and the shift from a traditional subsistence economy to a cash-based economy can lead to the loss of traditional values and ways of life. This includes the isolation of women's knowledge from their sources of livelihoods, including the loss of knowledge of traditional medicine. This can diminish women's traditional status in society, particularly where newly-created gender roles emphasize women's work in the domestic sphere and their reproductive roles, and undermine their productive and leadership roles.
- The effects of environmental damage and degradation can undermine women's capacity to provide food and clean water for their families, and subsequently lead to an increase in their workload. They may have to walk greater distances to access water, fuel/wood, forest products and land to plant food crops, for example, or environmental pollution from mine tailings or waste from palm oil operations in water ways, may make it difficult to source once plentiful fish.
- Environmental damage and degradation can undermine quality of farmland. When farm work is lost, men may become workers in mines or plantations, or move to cities or to rural areas to become illegal loggers. The withdrawal of male labour from traditional subsistence activities can result in an increased work burden for women who become solely responsible for subsistence activities and providing for families.
- Due to the decline of traditional mechanisms of social control and the influx of a transient male workforce, social and health problems can become more prevalent in communities. These problems can include increased alcohol use, domestic violence, sexual violence (including sexual harassment, rape and forced marriage), sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS, and prostitution. Citizens often see sex workers as the root of the problem, but a gender analysis explains how women become sexual commodities or exchange instruments.
- Women can experience discrimination in the mine or plantation workplace. Employment and training opportunities are often prioritised for men, and women may only be allowed to work in the most menial, low-paid positions. In plantations this can involve handling agrochemicals without adequate safety instruction or equipment.
- Maternity leave may not be provided and women returning from childbirth or caring for children may struggle to regain employment.

The arrival of these impacts into a community can cause changes in social relations and roles, and have a detrimental effect on community values and ways of life. To be effective,

environmental CSOs must be able to understand and respond to these gendered impacts in ways that align with and strengthen their advocacy and program strategies. Diagnostic gender analysis tools can help to understand and even predict the direct and indirect impacts these industry developments have on men and women. CSOs also need strategies that link with grassroots communities most affected by these changes. A gender sensitive approach will ensure that the most vulnerable groups worst affected by the environmental damage from forest and land use changes are supported to ensure their voices are heard, and that their gendered needs are factored into decision making processes.

#### **Understanding gender issues**

One basic problem in gender relations is the structurally unequal power relations between women and men. Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and relationships between women and men. These are learned, change over time, and vary according to social, religious, historical and economic factors. Gender contrasts with sex, which is the set of biological differences between men and women. Gender roles and responsibilities lead to different development impacts for women and men. Power is directly related to gender because gender is a primary way of distributing and using resources.

A gender analysis requires an understanding of context specific and intersecting circumstances. That is, gender in reality 'is always mediated by other factors such as race, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation' (Hawkesworth 1997 cited in McDougall 2001: 52). This means that a gender analysis that does not consider other forms of diversity is flawed. Diversity in this context refers to ethnicity as well as to other significant dimensions of social and biological difference that crosscut gender and ethnicity, including wealth, age, status, class and caste (McDougall 2001). Gender combines with these other forms of diversity to establish roles, relationships, and power structures. Hence, gender analysis in forest governance must also observe other variables that determine power relations to understand how these determine women's control and relationships in the context of forest, land and resource management.

#### **Why does gender justice matter to forests?**

While the benefits of women's participation is well established in Gender, Environment and Development theory, the exclusion of women and other gender-based injustices in forest tenure and forest governance has not been adequately addressed in Indonesia (Siscawati and Mahaningtyas 2012). Compared to men, women have less involvement in decision making processes that define their access to the forest land and resources on which their livelihoods depend (Gurung et al 2011). Increasing women's participation in forest and land resource management has been determined to improve governance, resource allocation and the sustainability of forest resources. Specifically, enhancing women's participation in decision making committees in community forest institutions has been shown to improve forest governance and resource sustainability (Agarwal 2009). For example, research in Nepal found that when women are involved in community forest user groups, and have decision making positions in those groups, the outcomes lead to more sustainable forest management (Acharya and Gentle 2006). Forest governance also has the ability to increase women's participation in informal markets, which has welfare benefits. Women's participation in forest governance was also found to mitigate the capture of benefits by elites during Indonesia's process of decentralization, and to improve access to district level budgeting processes (Manfre and Rubin 2012).

#### **Gender roles, responsibilities and knowledge in managing natural resources**

As men and women's day-to-day economic roles differ, the effect of industrial development is also felt differently. Gender divisions of labour and roles and responsibilities influence women's and other marginalized groups' ability to participate in forest governance processes. Frequently, women's responsibilities and workloads limits access to decision making processes. Women, for example, often work in the evenings when *adat* (customary) forest use decision making meetings are held (de Vries and Sutarti 2009). Socio-cultural factors may also limit women's mobility and participation in forest governance decision making (Gurung et al 2011). A forest conservation REDD+ pilot project in Ulu Masen, Aceh Province was

found to have not succeeded in engaging women meaningfully, in part due to a lack of a strategy for addressing the strong patriarchal character of the *mukim* (local administration) structure that effectively denies women access to public meetings (Gurung et al 2009). Colfer (2013) found that intra-household decision making is central to involve women effectively in broader government and management concerns. The implications are that in order to ensure a gender sensitive approach, CSOs must consider household level gender differences.

A number of gender injustices limit women's involvement in forest governance in Indonesia. Women's roles in the forest sector are invisible and informal, leading to poor working conditions and lower remuneration (World Bank 2009). In many community forestry projects in Indonesia, women are significantly involved in propagation, planting, maintenance, replanting trees, harvesting non-timber forest products (NTFP)<sup>2</sup> and connecting these products to market. Yet women's participation in the forest farmers groups that form a key forest governance function is non-existent (Gurung et al 2011). Support from government or civil society is necessary to assist women to access markets for NTFP, including information on certification schemes and support to access credit (Marshall, Schreckenberg and Newton 2006).

Having no education also has a strong negative effect on women's participation in community organizations. Education and literacy levels are factors inhibiting women's involvement in forest governance. Two-thirds (66.44 per cent) of Indonesian women have only primary education or less, while half (52.27 per cent) of Indonesian men have similarly low levels of education (Beard and Cartmill 2007: 206). However community governance institutions for forest lands and resources in Indonesia often require that participants are literate, to the detriment of poorer women who often have only some primary education (Beard and Cartmill 2007). For example, only women deemed to have sufficient levels of literacy were able to participate in the community forestry program in Gunung Kidul, Yogyakarta Province (Siscawati and Mahaningtyas 2012).

Due to their different social and work roles and responsibilities, significant gender differences are evident in forest related knowledge. Women's knowledge of the same area of forest land and resources can vary significantly from men's (Colfer 2013). Men and women may also organize, receive and transmit their knowledge in different ways. Literature on forest management has emphasized women's knowledge of forest products and resources and how to use them. For example, in a study on Dayak people in East Kalimantan, women typically perform a wider range of tasks than men in forest garden systems, although much of their work, interests and knowledge remain unknown to those outside the community (Mulyoutami et al 2009). Women's knowledge and skills, such as in seed selection and propagation, provides a crucial function for forest garden development and conservation in East Kalimantan. Women are also often tasked with the role of meeting a family's NTFP needs, such as food, fuel or fodder (Gurung et al 2011). Due to their dependence on NTFP, women are also often skilled at cultivating and preserving these resources, which can support sustainable forest management. Frequently however, gender differences in knowledge are not accounted for in forest governance decision making.

Gendered differences all affect the attainment of gender justice, which has consequential effects on the ability of women and other vulnerable groups to participate in and influence formal and informal decision making processes at all levels of forest governance in Indonesia.

In 2011 women comprised 22 per cent of the technical and administrative staff of the Forestry Department at the national level (Gurung et al 2011). This is less than the one-third

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<sup>2</sup> Non-timber forest products can be food additives (edible nuts, mushrooms, honey, fruits, herbs, spices and condiments, aromatic plants, game); fibres (used in construction, furniture, clothing or utensils); resins and gums; and plant and animal products (used for medicine, cosmetic or cultural purposes) (Carr 2008).

representation minimum prescribed by Agarwal (2010) as necessary for women to begin to have an influence ('threshold representation') in decision making. Women's participation in forest governance at the district government level is also very low, as observed in Bungo and Tanjabbar in Jambi province. Almost 80 per cent of the female staff in Bungo and Tanjabbar regional government agencies had never been involved in decision making or project implementation. Instead women are largely assigned roles in administration or finance (de Vries and Sutarti 2009).

At a local level, women's absence from committees and associations, the formal spaces for decision making in forest governance, is often explained as a result of their lack of power in relation to, and subjugation by, men in those committees. These formal spaces are seen as centres of power and decision making (Arora-Jonsson 2013). Women's networks and actions related to their villages tend to address multiple issues, and often do not take on the recognizable, more permanent forms that are seen as the viable cooperative organizations associated with development work. Women's deliberations on environment and development decision making may take place outside of public spaces, with a range of people, but without the legitimacy accorded by actors within or outside of their communities to more visible, male dominated organizations.

An example of how diversity variables influence participation within gender was evident in an all-women discussion group in Long Loreh, in the district of Bulungan, East Kalimantan, where the women of the dominant ethnic groups spoke frequently, and women from the less dominant group Punan spoke very rarely. However in a group of all Punan women, women who had not spoken in the ethnically mixed group were very vocal (McDougall 2001). These social factors demonstrate that research on gender inclusion in forest governance must extend beyond sex disaggregated data in order to understand the drivers of gendered relationships (Mai, Mwangi and Wan 2011).

Land rights, which are largely determined by marital status, are another significant variable. Women frequently have fewer land ownership rights than men. Often, women will have *de facto* land use rights as compared with men's *de jure* ownership rights (World Bank 2009). Furthermore, women's rights are often mediated by their relationship with men. Thus, of all individual characteristics, marital status is one of the most important in terms of women's participation in community-based organizations (Beard and Cartmill 2007). Participation in organizations is typically viewed as household participation, where women participate as their husband's marital counterparts. Female household heads, especially women that have no husbands, therefore experience significant social and cultural obstacles. Interestingly however widows can be positioned differently from other female household heads. They often have greater personal endowments and mobility than married women, and are able to speak more freely (Manfre and Rubin 2012).

Environmental CSOs play an important role in contributing to improvements in forest and land governance. Efforts to achieve good forest and land governance without addressing gender injustice will invariably fail to benefit the most vulnerable forest actors – women and marginalized people. CSOs working on forest and land governance must have an understanding of gender issues to ensure their advocacy efforts achieve gender just forest and land use and management. While these skills are crucial, gender analysis skills remain an area of weakness for environmental CSOs in Indonesia.

### **Gender-blindness in Indonesia's forest governance civil society organizations**

Indonesian environmental CSOs currently lack a framework for gender analysis, accurate sex disaggregated data, and gender expertise, resulting in negotiated forms of gender mainstreaming (Marcoes and Sirimorok 2014; Siscawati and Mahaningtyas 2012). Gender mainstreaming refers to 'strategies for program/policy design, implementation, monitoring

and evaluation in addressing gender issues within all sectoral programs' (Siscawati and Mahaningtyas 2012: 14). The most common gender issues identified with environmental CSOs is rooted in assumptions that advocacy work to improve environmental policies does not have relevance to gender. This gender-blindness affects many forestry programs. It is based on male-centric experiences as the 'norm' and on the assumption that women and men have the same needs and preferences. Siscawati and Mahaningtyas (2012: 9) suggest that gender-blindness means 'ignoring the existence of gender injustices and neglecting efforts to eliminate marginalization, discrimination, multiple-burdens, stereotyping and violence against women and other marginalized members of community as well as other forms of gender injustice'.

Gender-blindness in Indonesia is related to the construction of gender through state ideology, which has played a significant role in creating beliefs about women's status, competencies and their appropriate role in the household, the community and the development process (Beard and Cartmill 2007). As a result, women's roles, knowledge and contribution to development are frequently perceived to be less valuable than those of men. For example in Jambi Province, a woman's daily wage (US\$2.20) is lower than a man's daily wage US(\$3.30) for the same agricultural work, despite the fact that woman's work is no different from men's (de Vries and Sutarti 2009). This wage differentiation is founded on a perception that women's work is lighter than men's, and that as women are only supplementary breadwinners, they do not need to be paid as chief breadwinners.

Collaboration between Indonesian CSOs who work in forest tenure and forest governance and those who work towards achieving gender justice is still very limited (Siscawati and Mahaningtyas 2012). Gender justice mainstreaming amongst CSOs who work in forest tenure and forest governance has been slow, due in part to limited understanding of gender-related aspects of forest land and resources management. Low awareness of gender justice issues means that gender justice is not prioritized – or is often not considered at all – by CSOs working in forest governance. Understandings of gender are very limited, and gender is considered to pertain to women rather than the more cross-cutting factors of race, class and sex. The gender analysis tools CSOs do use are treated as a fixed formula used in organizations, programs and projects in ways that neglect diversity and do not consider local or contextualised factors. CSOs take shortcuts to overcome this gender blindness by holding ad-hoc gender sensitive events (Marcoes and Sirimorok 2014). While these efforts are important, they should be viewed as only one stage of gender mainstreaming.

Many CSOs working on forest tenure and forest governance have no gender justice policy to guide their planning, monitoring and evaluation processes (Siscawati and Mahaningtyas 2012). A large part of the work of Indonesian environmental CSOs is to reform policy content. In this policy work, CSOs often overlook gender factors, both in terms of considering the ways in which environmental safeguards can be gender sensitive, and the ways in which women and vulnerable communities are affected by environmental issues. Insufficient focus is paid to developing knowledge and strengthening grassroots communities to engage in forest governance. As a result, the policies supported and enacted by environmental CSOs tend to be gender neutral, or even gender-blind, meaning that the interests of women are not considered explicitly in forming forest governance related policies.

Fostering a gender perspective within CSOs is an important way to address discrimination and social disparities based on gender differences. Gender mainstreaming in environmental CSOs can help to eliminate gender-based disparities in various aspects of gender related organising. Environmental CSOs need tools to help them to identify and better respond to the gendered impacts of environmental damage. CSOs need to take into account differences amongst women, due to ethnicity, social status, age, geographical location, and other factors. Diverse and interacting factors that limit equality must be considered.

## Tools for understanding gendered impacts

Understanding and diagnosing the gendered impacts of land based industry developments requires gender analysis. A number of tools or approaches exist to support gender analyses. These include gender impact analysis, and ethnographic research approaches. In order for environmental CSOs to better understand the potential or current gendered impacts from land based industry development, sex disaggregated data are required. However often data on the role of women in forestry are lacking. This includes data on their participation in the paid workforce, and on their social, economic and environmental contributions and the impacts of their forest use. The absence of the latter data in particular makes it difficult to obtain an accurate picture of their involvement (Collaborative Partnership on Forests 2012).

**Sex disaggregated data.** Collecting sex disaggregated data is essential to develop gender sensitive program design, and to identify indicators for sustainable development that can inform and develop policy. Collecting data on gendered impacts can benefit environmental CSOs in their advocacy and organising. These benefits include:

- increased understanding of gendered disparities and power relationships;
- increased understanding of models of resistance and resilience in response to discrimination and exclusion that women experience;
- documenting women's interests in arenas of struggle not related to gender issues, but which need to be read through women's perspectives;
- strategies to interact with women to form a constituency supportive of environmental reforms to respond to these issues identified.

**Gender impact assessment.** Gender impact assessment (GIA) is a diagnostic tool that aids understanding of the direct and indirect gender consequences of the development of land based industry. A GIA can help to identify and potentially prevent unintended negative consequences from a development. For environmental CSOs, a GIA can help to strengthen advocacy as it provides insight into the gendered implications and supports the design and implementation of strategies that align with women's needs, and are therefore more likely to succeed. A GIA can be undertaken alongside an environmental impact assessment. It allows CSOs to

## Considering gender as a tool of analysis: learning from the success of JATAM's use of litigation as an advocacy approach

JATAM East Kalimantan played a leading role in supporting the documentation of the impacts of mining on people, as part of the Samarina Lawsuit Movement (*Gerakan Samarinda Menggugat*). The GSM used litigation as an advocacy approach to respond to government negligence in all aspects of mining governance, and its violation of existing environmental laws through excessive issuing of permits, a lack of adequate monitoring of mining sites, and insufficient clean up and reclamation of former mining sites resulting in dangerous abandoned mining pits.

In collecting evidence to support the GSM case, JATAM East Kalimantan used three types of closely connected and mutually reinforcing types of analysis – biophysical, social, and gender. A biophysical analysis was used to document the environmental degradation resulting from mining operations, such as changes to soil and drinking water indicated by changes in pH levels. However, in order to demonstrate the impacts that chemical changes to soil and water quality had on people, a social analysis was also required. JATAM East Kalimantan therefore conducted ethnographic observations and a gender analysis to identify the different impacts on women as compared with men as a result of their different social roles. This gender analysis aided an understanding of the gender impacts from mining, and the GSM was consequently able to identify key women farmers whose land bordered coal mines in the rice-belt of Makroman, near Samarinda, whose livelihoods had been detrimentally affected by mining without adequate consent or compensation.

These three different forms of analysis strengthened the GSM's case, and in July 2014 the court ruled that the government had been negligent in fulfilling their obligations under the 2009 Environmental Law, and that by not fulfilling this requirement the local government had detrimentally affected the lives of the inhabitants of Samarinda. The court also ruled that the government should revise public policies concerning coal mining. This included requirements to evaluate all allocated coal mining permits, monitor reclamation and post mining efforts, make environmental improvements, and strengthen strategic efforts to protect community farming and fishing areas from contamination from coal mining activities. JATAM's successful use of three types of analysis strengthened their litigation approach, and supported their success in court.



understand the impacts that a land development might have on women, men, boys and girls, and on the economic and social relations between them. More specifically, a GIA will examine how a land based industrial development interacts with and impacts on gender and power relations within a community. This includes women's access to and control over resource, the gender division of labour and women's workloads, women's participation in community management and decision making processes, and community well-being, including health, livelihoods and education (Schultz 2001). The framework for conducting gender responsive analysis (Aguilar 2013) offers a useful outline of the social and environmental factors to consider in conducting a GIA.

***Ethnographic approaches.*** In order to understand decision making processes we need to understand the value systems underlying those processes. A parallel, complementary diagnostic approach involves researching women's stories using ethnographic research tools. Ethnography is a methodology that is used to clarify interactions and identify links in social systems (e.g. the interplay among and between men and women in a group). One main method used in ethnographic research is participant observation, which is often supplemented by surveys, interviews and recordkeeping. Oral histories and community forest mapping are ethnographic techniques that attempt to understand local communities' perceptions of territory and land use rights. Careful, daily observation and note-taking creates a body of evidence that can be used to understand gender in the context of land management (Colfer 2013).

Through insights derived from gender sensitive data, GIAs and ethnographic research methods, environmental CSOs can understand how environmental degradation affects women and men differently, and consequently target their advocacy work to strengthen environmental reform outcomes. A community of practice that prioritizes gender sensitive research is one way to incorporate gender considerations into forest governance advocacy (Mai, Mwangi and Wan 2011).

## **Recommendations for CSOs working toward achieving gender justice**

***Strengthen the capacity of CSO staff.*** Gender analysis skills need to be developed internally within CSOs, in order for organizations to apply this approach in their advocacy and organising activities. This can be supported through capacity building that introduces the uses of gender analysis in the framework of organising and advocacy and provides ethnographic methods for researching women's experience in environmental issues.

***Increase awareness of gender injustices and adopt gender justice principles.*** Recognizing gender differences in forest use and management can lead to more effective policies, as demonstrated in the differences in success of climate change adaptation strategies (Manfre and Rubin 2012). An increased effort to recognize and protect women's rights as well as commit to eliminate all forms of gender injustices should inform the work of CSOs and public interest advocates as well as other development organizations. CSOs should adopt gender justice principles and practices and include gender sensitive program monitoring and evaluation indicators to track organizational gender integration and equity. CSO's policy advocacy needs to be able to build CSO awareness of gender as a mainstream strategy. The technical measures set out above explain the steps for CSOs to integrate the gender paradigm and perspective into their approaches.

***Conduct research to understand gendered impacts.*** Gender sensitive research can help to inform more gender sensitive CSO advocacy and programming. Capturing gender-disaggregated data is an important component of gender sensitive research, helping to explain differences in experiences, view points, and impacts related to gender roles and power relationships. This must also be supported by data on other diversity variables (such as

ethnicity, class and social status) in order to shed light on complex situations and highlight issues or dynamics that may need resolution. Gender disaggregated data can then be used to conduct a gender impact assessment, to develop ethnographical approaches to identify gendered impacts from industry development, and to identify gendered needs and responses. Applying learning from these studies can strengthen advocacy in ways that include demonstrating the gendered impacts of land based industry, and connecting more strategically with women's groups and local communities.

*Community organising.* Community organising is important to build a basis for policy advocacy aimed at promoting governance reforms. CSOs should prioritise community organising as part of their programs. To do this, CSOs can draw on their own experience and strengthen support for community activists who are already engaged at the grassroots level. The most basic element to consider when promoting community organising is that women's experience must become a primary reference for organising. A gender sensitive community organising approach can involve recruiting female community organizers and facilitators to empower women at the village level, and supporting increased participation of women in forest governance institutions.

*Increase the number and the capacity of paralegals.* Legal violations open opportunities for advocating for change. CSOs need to hold intensive programs to increase the number and capacity of community paralegals. This could be carried out by increasing insight into environmental issues among activists that understand and work on gender issues. Other approaches include providing environmental and gender training for paralegal litigators, particularly females. Supporting paralegals' understandings of gender issues in the environment can support legal approaches to achieve gender justice.

*Improve participation in governance decision making structures and improve market access.* Increasing the role of women and other marginalized groups in decision making related to forest governance can occur by increasing women's involvement in policy making at community, district and higher levels, and by supporting the participation of women in community organising processes. However, participation of women will not address gender issues if only women of higher status or higher literacy levels are able to participate. A gender analysis that captures other diversity values is essential to accurately identify and address the limitations on women and other marginalized groups from participating in forest governance.

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PO BOX 6793 JKSRB  
Jakarta 12067  
Indonesia

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