



RAPAT ANGGOTA TAHUNAN KOPERASI SEGARE HARAPAN JAYA

Lombok Timur, Nusa Tenggara Barat

Revisiting Gender Roles in Fisheries: A Case Study of the Segare Harapan Jaya Cooperative

Muhammad Alzaki Tristi; M. Anisa Indira Prameswari; Yunita Mardiani
Yayasan Masyarakat dan Perikanan Indonesia



Research Background

The women of fishery cooperative business in Indonesia has stepped forward to strengthen its bargaining power in supply chain, reflecting coastal communities' shared economic goals.

Women's participation in the cooperative underscores their role as active economic actors beyond household support. It reveals shifting gender dynamics in fishers' organizations, highlighting women's contribution to coastal household economies and showing how cooperatives can advance gender equity and sustainable fisheries management.



Problems Highlight

Women's participation in fishery cooperatives still faces major barriers:

- Cultural norms that frame fisheries as a male domain
- Limited representation in leadership and management
- Poor access to technology and markets.



This underscores the need to reassess women's contributions not only economically but also socially and institutionally, to design more inclusive empowerment strategies.

Research Questions

- How does gender role division shape participation, access, and decision-making processes in the Segare Harapan Jaya Cooperative?
- How do these gendered roles influence the economic resilience and sustainability of coastal livelihood?

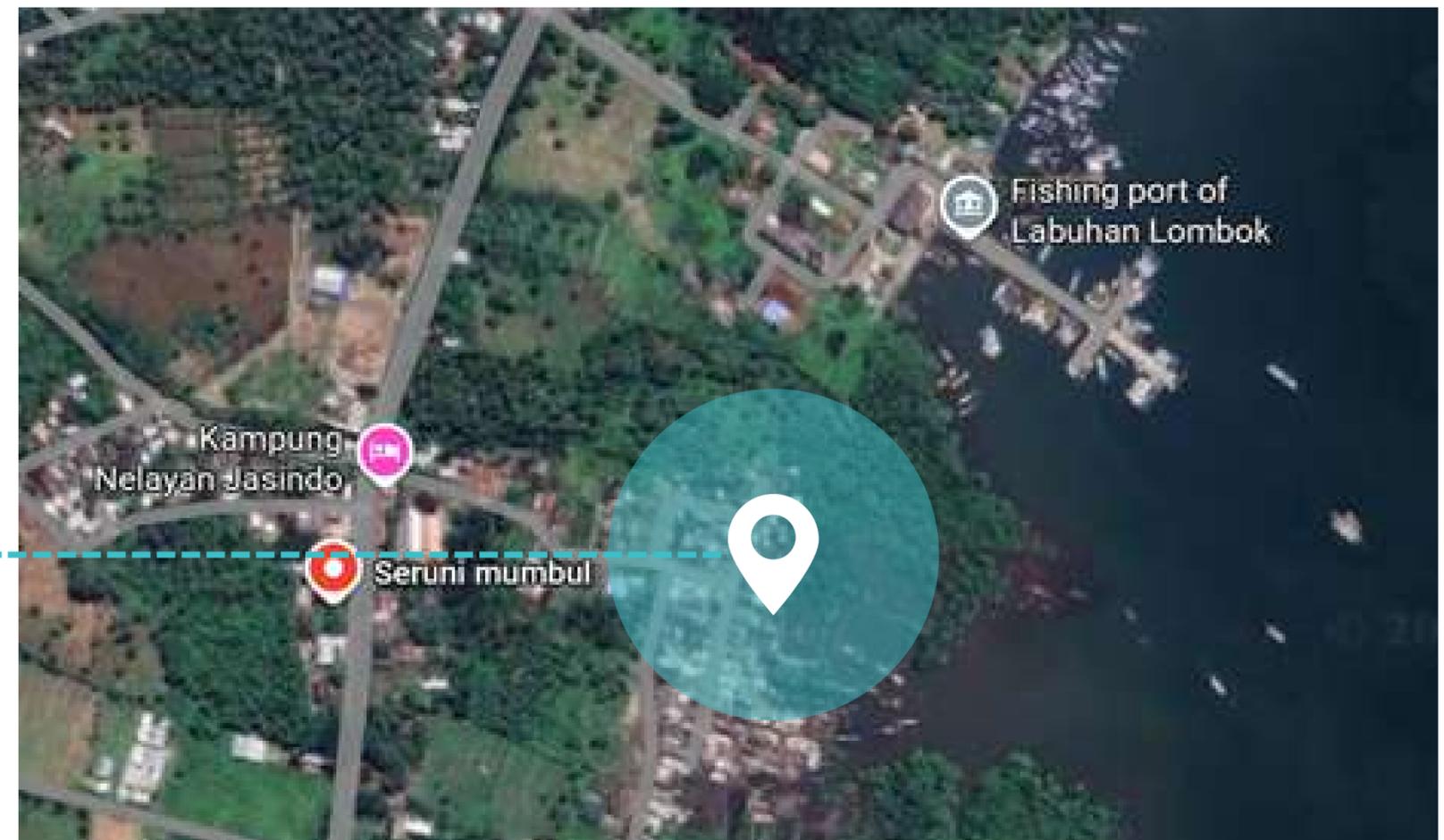
Methods

Qualitative case study:

- In-depth interviews with the members of the cooperative (female and male);
- Participant observation; and
- Analysis of the cooperative's operational records (membership list, financial reports, meeting minutes).

The study highlights how gender roles shape the division of labor, decision-making, community dynamics, and perceptions of roles.

The subject is located in Seruni Mumbul Village in East Lombok Regency. The village lies 31.7 km from the nearest city (Selong) and 750 m from the main fishing port. Founded on 21 October 2021, this consumer cooperative operates several units; however, this study focuses on seafood trading (fish and octopus)—the largest and most gender-inclusive activity. Another key consideration is that the Segare Harapan Jaya Cooperative is the only fishers' cooperative in the sub-district with active female involvement (Syafari, 2022). Between 2021 and 2024, it had 31–35 active members, including 12–14 women, most of whom are housewives.



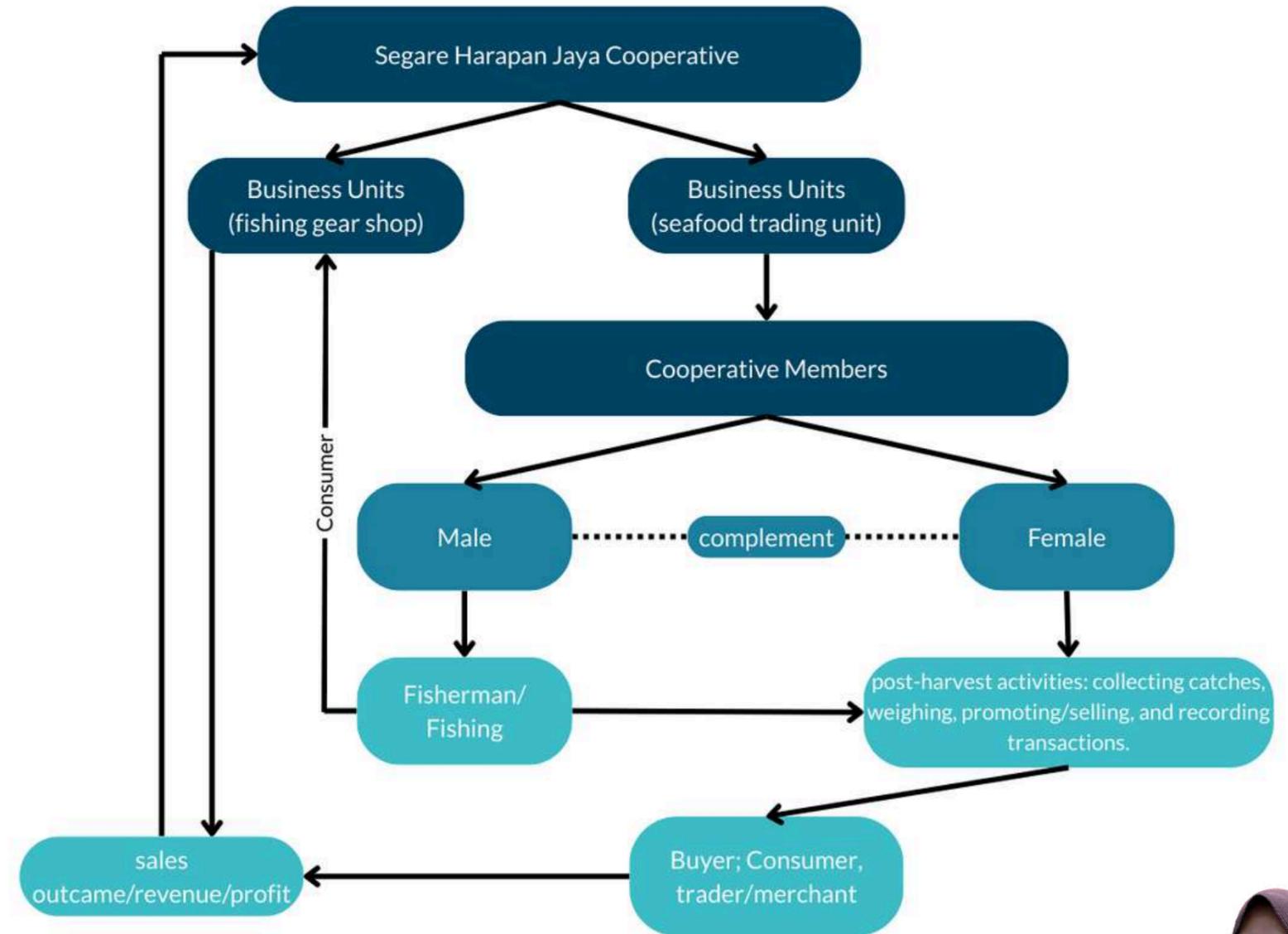
Results & Discussion

Women's Roles in Cooperative Management



Women in the Segare Harapan Jaya Cooperative play key roles in the seafood trading unit, especially in post-harvest tasks such as collecting, weighing, recording, and selling. Although they currently serve only as members and daily administrators, this reflects a conscious alignment with the skills and capacities of the members.

This challenges the conventional narrative that portrays women as passive participants in the fisheries sector.

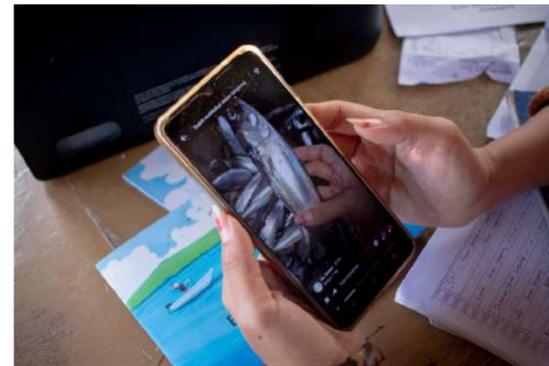
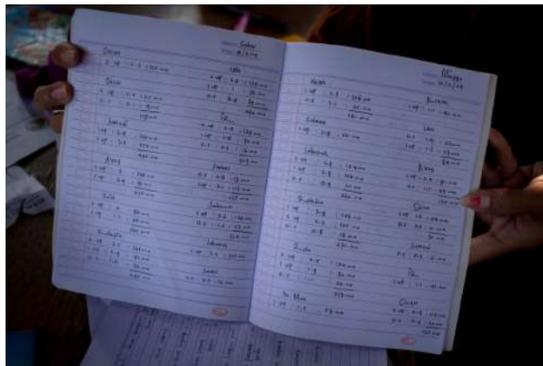


"I joined the cooperative to work. Before, I stayed at home and never knew the market price since my husband sold his catch directly. Now I can buy his fish through the cooperative and sell it myself at the best price."
-Nurhasanah (35)



Results & Discussion

Post-Harvest Work and Economic Contribution



Women in the Segare Harapan Jaya Cooperative are central to the post-harvest fish supply chain—collecting, sorting, and selling catches that generate significant income for both households and the cooperative, especially when male fishers' earnings fluctuate.

Balancing several hours of work in the cooperative with full domestic responsibilities, these women shoulder a double burden that limits their opportunities for training or education. This dual invisibility—economic and social—reveals a systemic gender gap: women sustain the cooperative's economy but are still viewed as merely extending “natural” domestic roles. Without targeted policies, such inequality will persist and hinder progress toward gender equity in fisheries.



"We share tasks according to ability. Some weigh the fish, while those who can read and calculate—like me, Nurhasanah, and Bu Dayah—handle record-keeping. Everyone contributes in their own way. In short, the division of tasks is based on each person's abilities."

-Sumarni (31)

Results & Discussion

Gender and Decision-Making



Women's participation in the cooperative's strategic discussions and planning is growing, though still limited, and no woman yet holds key leadership posts such as chairperson, secretary, or treasurer. While some male members express no objection to women's involvement in governance, deeper inquiry is needed into the sociocultural context and gender power relations. Even so, the cooperative's leadership actively fosters more inclusive spaces.

"I encourage women to join the management or even as chairperson. I propose leadership rotation annually. Despite the rules, no one has yet felt ready to step up."

-Muslimin (40),

(Chairperson of Segare Harapan Jaya Cooperative)



"At first, the women were too shy to speak in meetings. But as the cooperative grew, many began voicing their concerns openly, which helps us as management better understand their challenges and explain matters more effectively."

-Badri (37),

(Treasurer of Segare Harapan Jaya Cooperative)



Results & Discussion

Resilience and Social Capital

Women's networks—both formal and informal—strengthen social capital by providing spaces for sharing information, support, and innovation. Their participation in the cooperative not only increases household income but also influences women's groups outside the cooperative and builds social legitimacy through community recognition. From the perspective of resilience and feminist political ecology, the upward trend in annual profits reflects a growing adaptive capacity—showing that women's involvement in the cooperative enhances the collective ability to face potential future crises.



"Before joining the cooperative, I mostly stayed at home with little to do. Now I've gained knowledge, earned extra income, and enjoyed shopping and socializing with friends. We lived in the same village, there used to be little communication.

Alhamdulillah, now life feels more connected and vibrant. We're even planning a new business making fish floss, recently proposed to the cooperative's chairperson."

-Sumarni (31)

"Even the neighboring cooperative, which once excluded fishers' wives from activities, is now involving them. After seeing the profit-sharing in our group, men there have begun enrolling their wives too—becoming motivation for the wider coastal community. I hope our cooperative keeps growing so fishers' wives can continue contributing to household income."

-Nurhasanah, (35)



Conclusion

This case study indicates that the progress of the Segare Harapan Jaya Cooperative rests on the interdependent and complementary roles of its female and male members. Collaboration between husband-and-wife teams—men as fishers supplying the catch and women as post-harvest managers—not only stabilizes household income but also expands the cooperative's economic capacity. Profits from reselling the catch are reinvested to develop other business units, such as providing affordable fishing gear, which in turn supports the long-term sustainability of fishing activities.

Although it has operated for only four years, the cooperative still shows gender imbalance in its governance. Women have yet to hold managerial positions that directly shape decision-making, even though their involvement in membership, post-harvest processing, and community organizing clearly strengthens both household economies and collective resilience.



Implications for Policy and Practice



These findings highlight the need to:

- Recognize and document women's roles in fisheries beyond the harvesting stage.
- Provide capacity-building programs targeting women's leadership and business skills.
- Promote gender-inclusive cooperative models and institutionalize women's participation in governance.
- Design fisheries management interventions grounded in gender equality and community-based approaches.

Such efforts can help build a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable fisheries sector.

Thank you!

 alzaki.tristi@mdpi.or.id

 anisa.indira@mdpi.or.id

 yunita.mardiani@mdpi.or.id

 Bali, Indonesia