

Strengthening Voice and Economic Independence of Indigenous Women as Environmental Human Rights Defenders at the Coastal Regions, Indonesia

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Regulation No. 7 of 2023 issued by the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia



National Investor: PT Makmur Elok Graha (MEG) with IDR 381 trillion until 2080 for a land area of 7,572 hectares.

Foreign Investor: Xinyi Group, China (IDR 175 trillion) for the construction of glass and solar panel factories in Rempang.



Mass Displacement: The project will displace 7,000–10,000 residents from 16 villages.

Livelihood Impact: Most residents are fishermen and farmers.

Conflict with Authorities: Clashes broke out on September 7, 2023, between residents and joint Military & Police forces.

BUSINESSES VERSUS HUMAN RIGHTS

The Indonesian National Strategic Project to establish Rempang Eco City as an integrated hub for industry, trade, and tourism

Women voiced their opposition to relocation in Sembulang Village, Rempang Island of Batam City, on March 7, 2024.



Amnesty International Indonesia recorded 8 attacks on Indigenous communities in Rempang Case from 2019 to 2024, affecting 90 victims through criminalization, intimidation, and violence

COASTAL WOMEN'S VOICES: LAND GRABBING FOR NATIONAL STRATEGIC PROJECT



Residents' Resistance met with force from PT. MEG (corporation and foreign investment) Officers. PT.MEG attacked the Opposition Post on

December 18, 2024

THE PROBLEMS OF MARGINALIZED INDIGENOUS WOMEN IN REMPANG ISLAND, BATAM CITY



Women facing multiple barriers to resources, services, and opportunities—like health, education, and participation—remain unheard in discussions about the Rempang Eco City National Strategic Project in their areas



Unique Methods, Challenges, And Solutions

Methods

Deepen Consultations: Conduct in-depth engagements with Indigenous women to gather insights and build trust.

Storytelling: Make a short video to show current situation in Rempang Island with testimonial from Indigenous women.

Artistic Works (Traditional Cultural Expressions): Exhibit artistic works of Rempang community to describe the previous and current situation.

Traditional Knowledge: Collect information on Indigenous community's traditional knowledge that is deeply integrated in their land.

Challenges

Low Education Levels: Many Indigenous women have limited access to education; some cannot read or write

Trust Issues:

Past experiences have created mistrust with external parties.

Cultural Sensitivity:

Consider and respect their social and cultural contexts.

Solutions

Skill Development in Fisheries: Provide training in fish processing techniques to diversify income sources, such as making fish snacks and other value-added products.

Promote Grassroots Advocacy: Strengthen Indigenous women's role as educators and leaders in their communities, empowering them to participate in decision-making processes.

Address Patriarchal Constraints: Conduct community awareness campaigns to challenge patriarchal norms, reducing dependency on male family members and fostering women's independence.

Results, Insights, Impacts

Preliminary Activities

Organized a 12-session online international seminar series on human rights and gender, featuring APIF alumni and international experts to enhance the project **(funded by WWG & UIB)**

Visited and had dialogues with indigenous and coastal women to understand their needs and challenges **(funded by IMA & UIB)**.

Training for fisherfolks (freshwater fish cultivation) and snacks-making training for women **(funded by IMA and Supported by UIB)**.

International conference on the impacts of ESG for business & community in Kuala Lumpur **(self funded)**.



Results

Patriarchal Dependence: online seminars and dialogues revealed that Indigenous women rely heavily on fathers or husbands due to patriarchal norms.

Lack of Skills and Awareness: Many women lack skills and knowledge about their personal and regional potential, limiting their opportunities.

Economic Opportunity in Fisheries: Fish products are sold directly, missing opportunities for value addition.



Insights & Impacts

Empowerment Through Skills: The project will train indigenous and coastal women in processing fish into products like crackers, enhancing livelihoods.

Strengthening Families: The project will directly strengthen the economic independence of women in their families and communities.

Responsive Approach: This project will prioritize Indigenous women's input, addressing their aspirations and strengthening their economic independence.

FUTURE VISION 2025-2028

Advocate for Policy Change: Work alongside government policymakers to promote policies that align with the needs of Indigenous women (**output: policy paper and press release**)

Engage with Businesses: Collaborate with corporate groups to ensure their practices respect and incorporate Indigenous women's voices and rights (**output model protocols and informed consent**)

Bridge Conflicting Interests: Act as mediators between policymakers and businesses to amplify the voices and desires of Indigenous women (**output: SOP & mediation anime**)

Model for Advocacy: Develop a scalable framework to address challenges faced by marginalized groups in the context of development projects (**Output: modules & advocacy video**)

Focus on Women's Empowerment: Prioritize empowering women as key agents of change in their communities (**Output: storytelling video and workshops**).

Global Impact: Research & share the project's success stories and insights on international platforms (**Output: international webinar, article (SCOPUS Q1 journal), E-Book Chapter**): funded by BRIN from April – December 2025



LET'S EMPOWER THEM
LET THEIR VOICES BE HEARD

JOIN US...WE CAN MAKE CHANGES

