

APPROACHES TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

MAMPU 2014 - 2019





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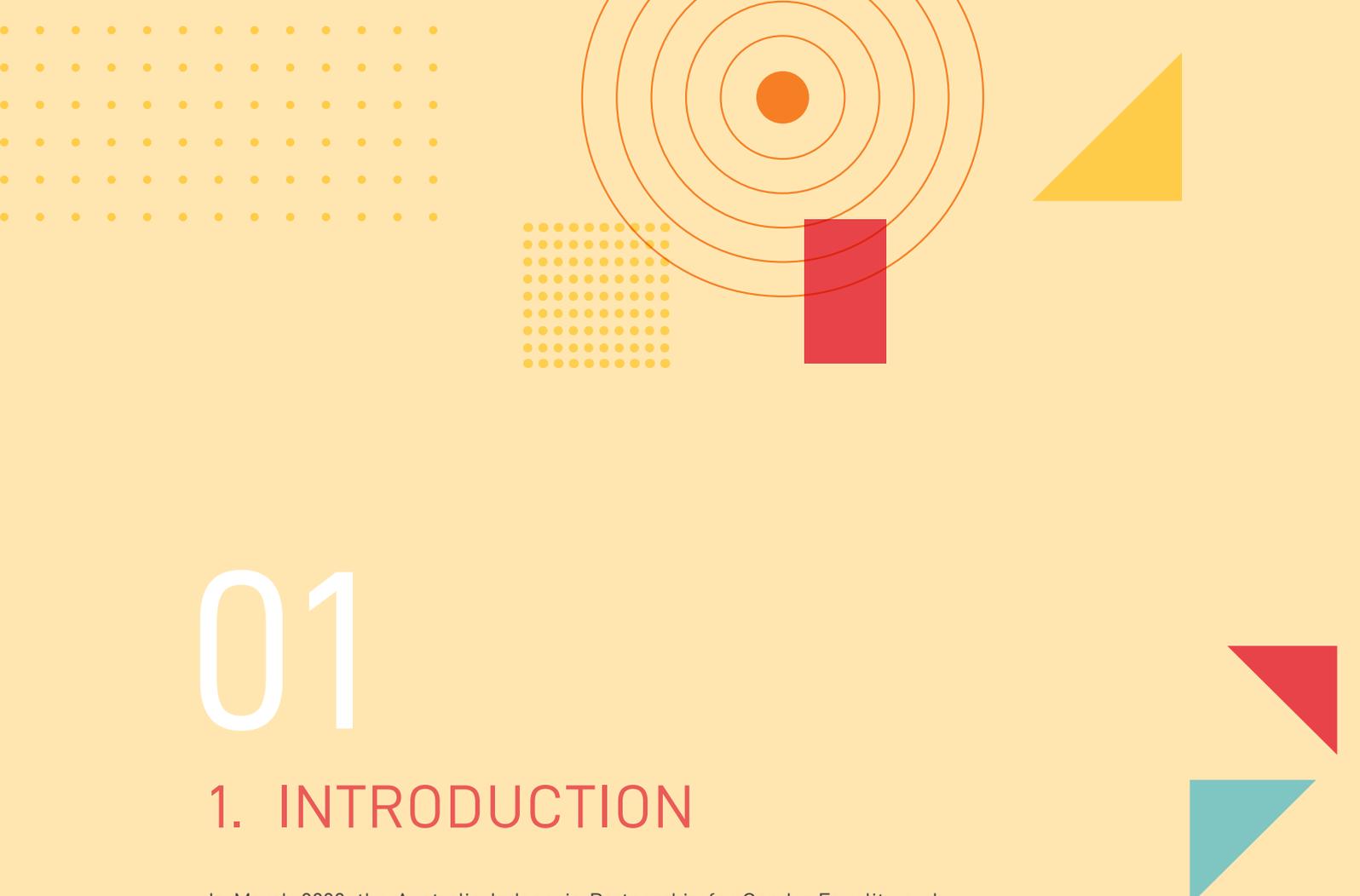


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1. INTRODUCTION

In March 2020, the Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (MAMPU), contracted SOLIDARITAS¹ to document MAMPU's economic empowerment work. The purpose was to explore the different approaches of MAMPU partners in relation to economic empowerment and identify lessons for both partners and future development programs. Using existing data, SOLIDARITAS worked with the MAMPU team over three months to identify topics and partners, review the existing documentation, identify findings, and obtain input from MAMPU partners.

This document provides an overview of MAMPU's approach to economic empowerment and uses examples from four MAMPU partners to answer the question "*what can we learn from the different approaches of MAMPU partners towards economic empowerment?*". This report is not an evaluation of the four MAMPU partners, nor does it make any judgements on the quality of their activities or results, beyond what has previously been documented by MAMPU either through partner or program reports, or through MAMPU funded studies. The focus therefore is on the approaches MAMPU partners have taken to delivering economic empowerment activities, the similarities and differences between the partners' approaches and what implications this has had for the program. This document will also consider how these experiences can be used to inform future economic empowerment activities of MAMPU partners, other civil society organisations, or other development programs with an interest in women's economic empowerment.

¹ SOLIDARITAS is an Indonesian social enterprise focusing on monitoring, evaluation, performance, and learning. We work collaboratively with organisations that design and implement development programs to produce high quality, credible and useful information and to iteratively improve the effectiveness of their work.

The rest of this document is structured as follows: Section 2 provides the background and context to economic empowerment in Indonesia and MAMPU specifically, followed by Section 3 which provides a brief overview of MAMPU and outlines the evolution of MAMPU's approach to economic empowerment over the lifetime of the program. Section 4 provides examples of how MAMPU partners have approached economic empowerment in relation to two sub-groups; migrant workers and homeworkers. Section 5 discusses the findings and implications of the different approaches used by MAMPU partners and Section 6 identifies learnings and recommendations for future consideration by MAMPU partners, civil society organisations and future development programs.



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2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This report is part of a broader effort by MAMPU to document the activities and learning of key partners over its eight years of implementation. Economic empowerment was selected as a key topic for documentation for two reasons: The first is that MAMPU partners have always conducted interventions related to economic activities, both before and during MAMPU, with many citing these activities as fundamental components of their overall model. The second reason is that economic empowerment has had a complicated history within MAMPU. This area of work has suffered from misunderstandings within MAMPU and between MAMPU and its partners, with each partner addressing the issue in different ways and with MAMPU's focus shifting overtime both in accordance with greater understanding of the issues and political priorities. It is therefore an interesting topic to understand and identify learning for MAMPU partners and any future development programs or projects focused on empowerment issues.

In order to contextualise the ways in which both MAMPU and MAMPU partners have addressed economic empowerment, it is important to first look at the reasons why women's economic empowerment is needed.

According to the global literature, a key turning point in a country's development occurs when women enter the workforce on a national scale. The economic potential of a country is determined, in part, by the size of its workforce and, on average, women make up at least half the population. In countries where women are culturally and socially discouraged from entering the workforce, this results in an automatic and corresponding limit on the economic potential of that country, by merely failing to utilise 50 percent of its workforce capacity. This is a crude description of the economic incentives behind women's workforce participation, but the point is that encouraging women to enter the workforce has a significant potential impact on the national economy (World Bank, 2012a).

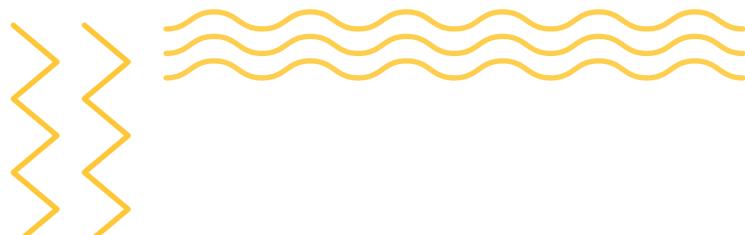
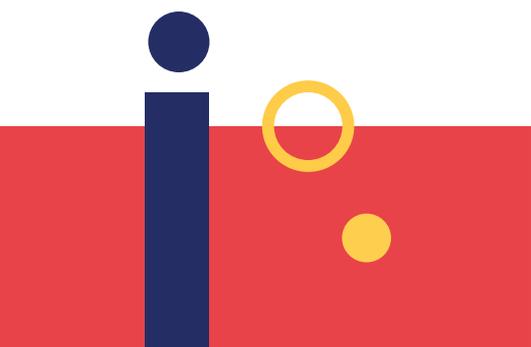
At the same time, studies have shown that women who enter the formal workforce are more empowered and that when women's income increases, more resources are allocated to food, children's education, and healthcare (Morrison et al, 2007). Women's paid work therefore has an impact at the household and local levels and contributes to broader development outcomes such as health and education.

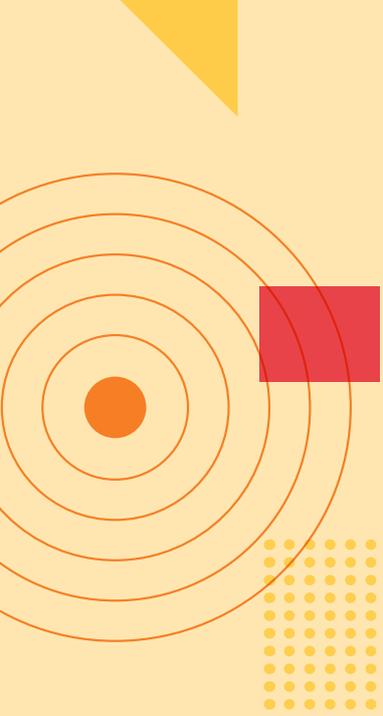
While the benefits of increased women's workforce participation are clear, the route to achieving this outcome is not. There are myriad social, cultural, and logistical constraints that prevent women from doing paid work. In patriarchal cultures, where the division of labour between the domestic and the public sphere is gendered, domestic responsibilities including childcare, cooking and housework traditionally fall to women. These tasks take up significant amounts of time, leaving little time available for paid work. This is often called "unpaid domestic labour" to underscore that, while often dismissed as insignificant, women in patriarchal cultures often work the equivalent of a full-time job in order to keep a household functioning.

All of the above issues are at play in the Indonesian context. Women's workforce participation has remained stagnant for the past two decades (Schaner and Theys, 2020), with participation in the workforce peaking in the 40-49 age group and a steep aggregate drop in women's participation upon marriage (AIPEG, 2017). This suggests that marriage, child-rearing and domestic activities are a priority for many women while they are still of child-bearing age, but that women may rejoin the labour force after their children are more independent, or if socio-economic situations require it (AIPEG, 2017; Schaner and Theys, 2020). The social and cultural expectations that women should prioritise domestic responsibilities also mean that there are limited facilities available for those women who do choose to work (such as childcare) and many workplaces are not set up to accommodate women who work while raising a family (such as part-time positions, flexible working hours, creches and breastfeeding rooms). These are issues faced by all women, but women in rural areas and/or from low socio-economic backgrounds have additional constraints related to the availability of services such as transport and childcare and the affordability of those services.

These constraints have resulted in many women entering the informal economy, a catch-all term for economic activities which are not taxed or monitored by the state. Official estimates from the National Statistics Agency (Badan Pusat Statistik, BPS) suggest that the informal economy accounts for 57 percent of the Indonesian workforce (BPS, 2019). For many women, the informal sector provides the flexibility that is often lacking in the formal sector and also provides work that is accessible to women with low levels of education. However, due to the lack of government oversight, work in the informal sector is often unprofitable (employers have no obligation to pay minimum wage), unsafe (safety standards are not enforced), and exploitative (contracts are rare meaning that working hours, pay and conditions are not agreed upon and subject to change without notice). Another option for informal sector work is for women to run their own micro or small enterprises. However, these enterprises tend to return minimal profit (World Bank, 2012b), lacking focus on the needs of the market (MEDA, 2017).

The above provides an overview of the benefits of women's economic participation, but also highlights the social, cultural, and logistical constraints to entering the formal sector and the additional issues faced by women working in the informal sector. The next section provides an overview of MAMPU and how women's economic empowerment has been conceptualised throughout the program.





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3. ABOUT MAMPU

The Australia – Indonesia Partnership for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (MAMPU) is a program funded by the Government of Australia that works in close collaboration with the Government of Indonesia's National Planning Agency (Bappenas). MAMPU supports networks and coalitions of women's and gender-interested organisations (the MAMPU partners), and parliamentarians to influence government policies, regulations, and services. Through this process MAMPU aims to improve the access of poor women in Indonesia to critical services and programs. Ultimately, MAMPU aims to contribute to the broader goal of improving gender equality and women's empowerment.

MAMPU provides a combination of grants and capacity development support to 13 main partner organisations working across a range of issues including social protection, sexual health and reproductive rights, elimination of violence against women, promoting women parliamentarians and, the focus of this document; decent work and economic potential.

The Evolution of MAMPU's approach to economic empowerment

This section presents the evolution of how economic empowerment has been conceptualised at the program level within MAMPU. This information is taken from MAMPU publications and represents the formal position of the program and therefore may not include the nuances of opinion from within the MAMPU team. In addition, these shifts in thinking happened at the program level and have not necessarily been reflected in partner practice.

Phase I: 2012 - 2015

MAMPU's economic empowerment focus has evolved over the life of the program. The original goal of MAMPU was stated in MAMPU Program Design Documents Parts A and B (2012) as "*improved access and livelihoods for poor women in Indonesia in selected geographic areas within the targeted themes*" and one of the key evaluation questions for the program was "How has the program contributed to improved access and livelihoods for poor women?" (KEQ3). There were two themes related to economic activities in the original design:

1. "Increasing women's access to jobs and removing workplace discrimination", with a focus on enabling women's participation in the formal economy and working with private sector actors to reduce discriminatory practices and;
2. "Improving conditions for women's overseas labour migration", focused on policy reform, financial inclusion, and oversight of recruiting firms.

The phase one design document does not refer to economic empowerment, but instead focuses on "livelihoods", which it does not define. The term livelihoods is used at a high level in the theory of change, but the main focus for livelihoods is the theme related to access to jobs and workplace discrimination, which states increased income as an example of the outcomes expected under this theme. The partner for this thematic area was the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Consolidation of MAMPU's theory of change and (economic) empowerment model: 2015 - 2017

By 2015, there were indications of a shift in the "access to jobs and removing workplace discrimination" thematic area, based on the MAMPU Forward Plan published that year. The emphasis became focused on homeworkers for the following reasons: the sector is dominated by women, homeworkers often work in value chains that "bridge the formal and informal sectors" (MAMPU Forward Plan, 2015) and they face lack of access to social security, low pay and exploitation by employees. The Forward Plan also identifies an "increased emphasis on removing barriers to employment in Phase Two" and potential opportunities to engage with the private sector, including garment and footwear manufacturers, as well as IKEA. At this point, livelihoods still had strong support: "Partners and community members strongly support the focus on supporting livelihoods in the next phase of MAMPU, as part of a holistic approach to women's empowerment" (MAMPU Verification Report of the Performance Story), but was identified as an area of the design and program logic that required "a clear strategy for achieving impact in this area, given the lack of clarity concerning this topic in the original design" (MAMPU Forward Plan, 2015).

As part of the response to this, an internal paper called *MAMPU approaches to women's economic empowerment* was developed in 2015 which outlined an economic empowerment framework (see diagram below). The model is a hybrid of several other approaches² and identifies five assets, or powers that contribute to economic empowerment. The five assets are: *human assets*, or a woman's individual capabilities, including self-efficacy and confidence; *financial and resource assets*, or control of and access to income, capital and inputs; *agency assets*, which is the ability to access social protection, economic opportunities and take an active part in family and community decision making; *social assets*, which includes having a social network, links to government and civil society and community groups; and *enabling assets*, or the supporting environment that enables the other assets or empowerment outcomes, such as legal identity, transport, childcare and supportive legal and policy frameworks. The framework conceptualises empowerment as both a process and an outcome, meaning that the five assets need to be sufficiently addressed before a woman can be said to be empowered. This model is a holistic approach, which highlights that, while income generation is a key aspect, it is not sufficient to achieve economic empowerment. It was suggested in the paper that the model could be used both at the national level to identify where multiple MAMPU partners are contributing to one thematic area (for example, migrant workers), as well as at the partner level to initiate discussions about how a partner's approach is balanced across the assets and to identify potential gaps, noting that the framework could be further adapted collectively or by individual partners to more closely reflect their work.

² The document refers to two definitions of economic empowerment, one used by ODI and the other by the Girl Effect program.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORK (MAMPU, 2015)



Phase II (2017 - 2020): A shift in focus for livelihoods

By the time the 2017 MAMPU Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020 was published, MAMPU's goal had been revised to remove mentions of livelihoods, and had become "...to improve the access of poor women in Indonesia to essential services and other government programs in order to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment and support the achievement of relevant Government of Indonesia SDG targets" and KEQ 3 was changed to focus on "improved access for poor women to essential government services and programs". By this time, MAMPU's partnership with the ILO had come to a close but the organisations previously working under the ILO; BTIRA, Yasanti, TURC and MWPRI had become national partners.

Although there were changes to how livelihoods was included in the formal outcomes of MAMPU, there was still an awareness within the program, as well as from government counterparts, that work on economic activities remained an important aspect of collective action and partners' implementation at the grassroots, demonstrated in both the women's collective action study (Migunani, 2017) and the commissioning of a report on employment and workplace discrimination in 2017.

However, issues related to economic activities remained, with the 2018 MAMPU Performance Story noting recurring feedback from partners about "the need for greater clarity and attention to livelihoods and economic empowerment", the lack of engagement with the private sector and the lack of representation of economic empowerment in the Theory of Change.

4.4 MAMPU PARTNER APPROACHES TO ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The following section explores how partners approached economic empowerment, using the MAMPU 2015 economic empowerment framework as a lens. It should be noted that the MAMPU partners themselves do not explicitly refer to the framework in the design and reporting of their activities, but instead the MAMPU framework serves as a structure to help understand partner interventions in retrospect. Due to the large number of MAMPU partners, this section will focus on the four partners that work with homeworkers and migrant workers, because there is an expectation that partners would take an economic empowerment approach and improve the economic circumstances of the women they work with.

4.1 MAMPU partners working on economic empowerment of homeworkers

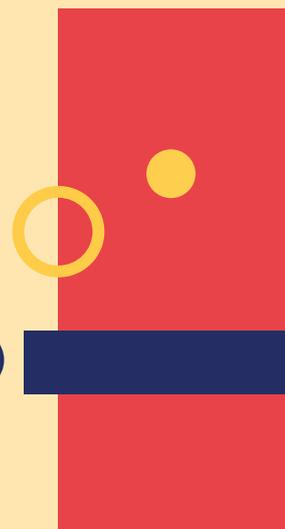
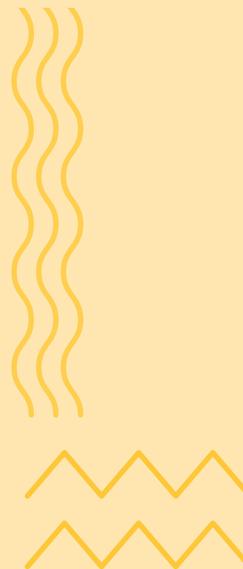
In this discussion a homeworker is a “dependent, subcontracted worker who works directly or indirectly for employers or their intermediaries, usually on a piece rate basis - also known as piece rate workers, out workers or workers in the putting out system” (ILO, 2015), with a key aspect being that the work location is not a place provided by the employer, but in the workers own home, or the home of a colleague (SMERU, 2019).

This sector is of interest to MAMPU because women make up the majority of homeworkers there is a high prevalence of women in the sector (ADB, 2011), low awareness among homeworkers of their rights, and because of the vulnerabilities associated with this type of work, including lack of legal protection, low wages and poor working conditions (MEDA, 2017). MAMPU worked with the ILO from 2012 - 2017 to address the lack of awareness of the rights of homeworkers, the absence of government policies supporting the rights of homeworkers and the lack of accountability on behalf of employers. Since 2017 local partners have continued to support homeworkers across the three elements of MAMPU's theory of change: collective action, increasing women's voice and influence, and improving access to government services.

The next section provides an overview of the context in relation to homeworkers in Indonesia, including the key issues that women homeworkers face and the MAMPU partners that aim to address these issues. The final part of the chapter describes the key activities and results.

Homeworkers in Indonesia

There is little data on homeworkers in Indonesia. The nature of home-based work and the lack of data means that homeworkers are hidden from both the government and the employer, which makes them uniquely vulnerable.



The Labour Act No. 13/2003 outlines the rights of all Indonesian workers, however this regulation is applicable only to “formal sector” workers. Homeworkers have an unclear legal status and are often considered part of the informal sector which excludes them from protection under the Labour Act. A 2015 study of homeworkers funded by MAMPU and carried out by the ILO, found that 42 percent of homeworkers did not have even a verbal agreement with their employer.³ This means that homeworkers do not receive state protection and employers are not obligated to pay minimum wage, provide proper equipment, provide healthcare or insurance.

The ILO-MAMPU study provides some insight into the characteristics of homeworkers in MAMPU locations. The findings suggest that women homeworkers have lower than average educational attainment and, although homeworking is their primary source of income, homeworkers also tend to undertake a range of economic activities, suggestive of an inconsistent or unstable source of income (ILO, 2015). Some of the very characteristics that make homeworking a vulnerable type of employment are also the reasons that make homeworking a viable and even desirable option for many women. Household responsibilities and childcare are common barriers to employment for women, so the flexibility to work from home and arrange work around other activities provides a feasible option for women who need or want to undertake economic activities in addition to domestic work. The majority of women homeworkers studied did not have a desire to enter the formal economy or full time work, and would only consider doing so if they had the same degree of flexibility as provided by homeworking (ILO, 2015), suggesting that this is a key benefit that keeps women in this type of work. The study also highlighted the range of sectors covered by homeworkers, including food processing, the garment sector and producing electronic equipment (ILO, 2015), highlighting the heterogeneous nature of this type of work.

Over the lifetime of the MAMPU program ILO, BITRA, Yasanti, MWPRI, and TURC have contributed to MAMPU's support to economic empowerment, originally focusing on access to employment and removing discrimination in the workplace. In more recent years, the focus has shifted to improving working conditions for homeworkers and supporting livelihoods beyond homeworking. The organisations that remain engaged with MAMPU and form the focus of the remainder of this chapter are TURC, BITRA and Yasanti:

3. Trade Union Rights Center (TURC) was established in 2003 and supports the development of an independent trade union movement in Indonesia. The organisation advocates for reforms to national and regional labour laws and builds workers capacity to organise.

³ Only two percent of the women in the ILO study stated that they had a written contract or agreement with their employer and 42 percent did not even have a verbal agreement.

- Yayasan Bina Keterampilan Pedesaan Indonesia (BITRA) was set up in 1986 to work with poor and marginalised communities in North Sumatra to advocate for policies that support marginalised people and raise awareness on matters of policy advocacy and economic empowerment.
- Yayasan Annisa Swasti (Yasanti) is an NGO founded in 1982 in Yogyakarta, where the organisation works to empower homeworkers through community organising, education, advocacy, and economic independence. Yasanti focuses on four main target groups; homeworkers, women labourers in traditional markets (*buruh gendong*), factory workers and women entrepreneurs.

MAMPU partner activities

This section uses the five assets of the MAMPU economic empowerment framework⁴ to describe the activities and key results of TURC, BITRA and Yasanti.

Establishing groups as the foundation for action (social assets)

All three of the MAMPU partner organisations established homemaker groups (also called homeworkers' unions) as the foundation for all other activities: TURC has organised homeworkers in Cirebon district and Sukabumi district in West Java, Sukoharjo and Solo City in Central Java, Tangerang city in Banten and Jakarta; BITRA has organised groups in Langkat district, Deli Serdang district, Binjai City and Medan city as well as at the provincial level in North Sumatra and; Yasanti has organised groups in Semarang City and Semarang District in Central Java, and established homeworkers unions in Bantul District, and Yogyakarta City, both part of DIY province. In total, approximately 1,700 homeworkers have joined these groups. The MAMPU partners have also created a national network of Indonesian homeworkers (Jaringan Pekerja Rumahan Indonesia, JPRI) extending the reach of these homemaker networks even further.

The act of establishing these groups enhances the social assets of group members by increasing social networks and connecting groups and group members to local government, the private sector and other civil society organisations.

Nunik Kristiana, homemaker from Bantul, Yogyakarta (January 2019)

Independent Mother's Group began on 10 November 2016 and with support from Yasanti we have experienced change in many areas. For example, we are able to speak with the village government, the district labour office in Bantul and Yogyakarta, the district planning agency in Bantul, the regional parliament, and others. We can access programs from the district labour office, such as training. With mentoring from Yasanti, many of our members have negotiated with their employers to increase wages and fulfilling human rights and with the guidance of Yasanti we can help our members to prosper. In terms of personal change, I am now bold enough to speak publically and I can access government programs, for example getting health and safety training from the government labour office and a health check from the government health office.

⁴ Refer to Section 3 for an explanation of the framework

Utilising homemaker groups to provide skills and rights-based training to homeworkers (human assets)

Having established homemaker groups, all three MAMPU partners build the capacity of group members (human assets) by providing training in negotiation, gender and social equality, health and safety at work, community organising, technical skills such as weaving, and business and marketing skills.

TURC has provided assistance to homemaker groups to establish new businesses (unrelated to their existing homeworking job), as an additional source of income for members. TURC's support focused on identifying key products (based on group member's access to raw materials, ease of marketing and the existing skills of the group), then providing capacity building to group members to increase the quantity and quality of production and management skills. In addition, TURC also connected homemaker groups with organisations that provide training, financial and marketing support. Some examples of the key products chosen by TURC homemaker groups include rattan weaving in Cirebon, food products in Sukabumi, Sukoharjo and Jakarta, and tailoring in Solo, Sukabumi and Tangerang.

Wire grill homeworkers group, Deli Serdang (March 2015)

Before the group was created, many homeworkers did not know each other, even though they lived in the next street. But, due to the group, all the homeworkers that make wire grills in this area know one another and have become a cohesive group. Evidence of this unity was seen when they began to develop a strategy to demand their rights in relation to pay. Together, they went on strike until their request was fulfilled by the employer. Their strike went on for almost a week and as a result the employer increased their pay by IDR 1,500 per batch...their hope is that in the future they continue to increase their capacity as homeworkers...and prove that homeworkers are not 'cheap labour'.

Yasanti, TURC and BITRA also provide training on homeworkers rights and negotiation skills to increase individual and group capacity to negotiate with employers. As a result, a TURC homemaker group that make paper bags in Tangerang increased their pay by IDR 1,000 and tailors in Sukabumi increased their piece-rate by IDR 1,500. A Yasanti group that assembles shoes negotiated with their employer to increase their piece-rate from IDR 17,500 to between IDR 47,000 and IDR 56,600 (depending on the type of shoe), plus coverage for work-related accidents. This group has also successfully negotiated for an extension of deadlines, with delivery every two days rather than one. Group members also have the opportunity to learn new skills to either improve the quality of the products they make as homeworkers, or to make new products.

BITRA has also provided skills training to women to enable them to establish or strengthen group and individual businesses outside of homeworking. BITRA supported groups and their members to receive skills training to increase the value of their products, including training to create bedspreads and pillowcases, snacks, soap, and hijabs. A total of 27 individual group members received training on massage and making *jamu* (traditional herbal drinks). BITRA group members have also received training on labour laws, negotiation skills and financial literacy.

Utilising homemaker groups to increase access to finance (finance and resource assets)

BITRA has utilised the social assets of the homemaker groups to set up a Credit Union. Currently, 29 groups and 566 members have contributed to the credit union, which has a total value of IDR 198,000,000, as of March 2020 (over AUD 18,600). This fund has become an alternative source of financing for the businesses of its members, as well as loans to support members in financial difficulty, thereby increasing group members' financial assets. In the future, 10 percent of the dividend from the credit union will be used to support the operational costs of the homeworkers unions that BITRA has set up.

As a result of their relationship with MAMPU partners, the social, agency and finance assets of homeworkers have also increased

For TURC homemaker groups, the combination of enhancing women's social and human assets has resulted in connections and access to government support programs. The Cirebon homeworkers cooperative is set to become part of a national pilot project for women's cooperatives (as the result of a visit by the Deputy of the Financing Department of the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small-Medium Enterprises) and will also receive training and financial assistance from the local government, in the hope that the cooperative can become an intermediary for women homeworkers. Similarly, the Sukabumi homeworkers' group has obtained access to the entrepreneurship training and funding offered by Baznas, the government organisation that collects and disburses Zakat (religious donations by Muslims).⁵ TURC has also supported the group businesses set up by homemaker groups in Sukabumi, Sukoharjo and Tangerang to obtain licences for their businesses.

Yasanti has brokered relationships between homemaker groups and the local government, resulting in a homemaker group in Wonolelo village (Bantul district) obtaining funding from the village government for 25 group members to attend homemaker training and a group in Semarang developing a relationship with the local Department of Cooperatives and Small-Medium Enterprises. The department asked the homemaker group to supply the government with data on their members, so that the government was aware of them and could provide support in the future. Yasanti has also brokered relationships between homemaker groups and the private sector; 50

Lismawar, homemaker from Deli Serdang, North Sumatra (Nov 2018)

Ibu Lismawar wanted to develop a catering and snack selling business, but in the beginning she was confused and didn't have the confidence to start because she didn't have the capital. But thanks to encouragement from her friends at the BITRA union, she gained the courage to borrow money from the Credit Union and the bank to obtain enough money to establish her business. Now it is over a month since Lismawar began and she has already noticed a change in her family income. Now she receives a profit of around IDR 100,000 - 200,000 per day... Ibu Lismawar says that creating the Credit Union was worth it, as now it has become a place for group members to save and borrow. They made this group with their own capital and every rule is agreed together so that each member feels they have joint ownership and support one another.

⁵ This has been delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic

women from Yasanti homemaker groups in Central Java have received training from a company called BCM Rajut to improve their weaving skills and have secured a contract for 100 woven bags for export to the USA. As the homeworkers are paid directly by the company, they also received a higher price than if they were to sell to an intermediary. TURC has also brokered relationships between homeworkers groups and IKEA and Zara to produce products made from water hyacinth.

All three MAMPU partners have supported homeworkers to access social protection, with approximately 2,500 homeworkers with access to government health insurance (*BPJS Kesehatan*) and around 232 homeworkers in Yogyakarta with access to government employment insurance (*BPJS Ketenagakerjaan*) through a quarterly payment system.

Policy reform to protect homeworkers (enabling assets)

In addition to supporting the individual members of homemaker groups, all three MAMPU partners have attempted to address the lack of regulatory and policy protection for homeworkers by influencing 26 policy and regulatory decisions at village and district levels. TURC, alongside the Network of Indonesian Homeworkers has successfully established a coalition to campaign for legislation protecting homeworkers rights at the national level and has obtained support from officials within the Ministry of Labour (Directorate of Labour Supervision). In North Sumatra, BITRA and the homeworkers' unions have been advocating for a provincial employment regulation since 2017. This advocacy work has resulted in the draft regulation obtaining support from the regional assembly and the Governor of North Sumatra, and it is in the process of being debated by the Ministry of Home Affairs. In Yogyakarta Yasanti and JAMPI (*Jaringan Advokasi Melindungi Pekerja Rumahan*) have obtained support from the provincial Department of Labour and the regional assembly to be in the process of data collection and development of supporting academic documents (*Naskah Akademik*) for a regional policy on homeworkers to be debated in 2021.

In summary...

In the context of homeworkers, the three MAMPU partners discussed in this chapter have focused on utilising homemaker groups as social assets to build the individual skills of homeworkers, broker relationships with the government and private sector, access social protection and financial support. This approach addresses four of the five assets (human, social, agency and financial) at the individual level for homemaker group members. However, these social assets do not just benefit individuals: MAMPU partners have also used social assets as a method for addressing the structural issues faced by all homeworkers, by campaigning for government policy reform to ensure homeworkers have legal protection. As part of this effort, MAMPU partners have been able to draw on the homemaker groups, who at the individual level are aware of their rights and have advocacy skills, to contribute their voices and experience to the campaign for improved enabling assets for homeworkers in Indonesia.

4.2 MAMPU partners working on economic empowerment of migrant workers

This section provides an overview of the work conducted by MAMPU partners related to Indonesian migrant workers, as part of an effort to identify the different approaches of MAMPU partners towards economic empowerment and the subsequent learnings from the most recent phase of implementation.

In general, the term migrant worker may refer to an individual who moves to another region or another country to find employment. However, MAMPU follows the ILO definition of migrant worker, which is "a person who migrates from one country to another with a view to being employed otherwise than on his (her) own account and includes any person regularly admitted as a migrant for employment" (ILO, 1949).⁶

Migrant workers are of interest to MAMPU because there is a high prevalence of women in the sector (Schaner, 2012) - up to 68 percent according to national statistics (Migrant CARE, 2020), many of whom are vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation throughout their migration and work experience. This is due to a range of issues including unregulated private sector agents, lack of government services to support safe migration and lack of access to justice for migrant workers who do experience abuse (Schaner, 2012). MAMPU has worked with Indonesian NGO Migrant CARE since 2013 to address the lack of state protection of migrant workers' rights, enhance organisational capacity and networks, and advocate for migrant worker related services. Migrant CARE works with local partners to ensure migrant workers protection and services are available right down to the village level. These organisations support migrant workers across the three elements of MAMPU's theory of change: collective action, increasing women's voice and influence, and improving access to government services.

The next section provides an overview of the context in relation to migrant workers in Indonesia, including the key issues that migrant workers face and the MAMPU partners that aim to address these issues. The final part of the chapter describes the key activities and results of a select number of MAMPU partners.

Indonesian migrant workers

According to the National Agency for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (*Badan Nasional Penempatan dan Perlindungan Tenaga Kerja Indonesia*, BNP2TKI), there were over 270,000 migrant workers placed abroad in 2019. However, these figures represent formal placements only, with a 2016 World Bank report suggesting that when informal placements are taken into account, as well as those Indonesian's already working abroad, the total number of migrant workers abroad during that year would have been more like 9 million (World Bank, 2017). The main reasons for wanting to migrate is the promise of better economic opportunities; and to avoid unemployment or under-employment and receive higher pay than workers would receive if they stayed in their home region (SMERU, 2016). This is also borne out in the data, which suggests that remittances from migrant workers can have significant positive impacts on the welfare of their families (Schaner, 2012; SMERU, 2016; Dewi and Yazid, 2017).

⁶ ILO Convention No. 97 on Migration for Employment (Revised). This convention has not been ratified by the Government of Indonesia.

The majority of Indonesia's migrant workers are women, who tend to work in the informal sector, often as domestic workers (Schaner, 2012; SMERU, 2016). A SMERU study in 2014 of 15 MAMPU villages found that the majority of women migrants were between the ages of 20-29 and unmarried. Their main destinations were Malaysia, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore (SMERU, 2016). These women often migrate repeatedly until they have collected enough money to achieve a particular goal, for example building a house, sending parents on pilgrimage, or paying a family debt (SMERU, 2016).

While there are significant gains to be made from migrating for work, there are also significant risks that can occur throughout the migration process. Migrating is expensive and time consuming, due to the amount of documentation required for the immigration procedure. One ILO (2010) study suggested that recruitment process could cost up to 14 months wages, meaning that most women have to borrow money to afford the fees. The alternative is to migrate through a cheaper but undocumented route, which leaves women vulnerable to trafficking (SMERU, 2016). A World Bank study in 2017 estimated that 39 percent of women migrant workers are undocumented (Schaner and Theys, 2020). Once abroad, women report experiencing issues with incomplete documentation, overwork or even abuse from employers, and communications issues with their employer (SMERU, 2016; Schaner and Theys, 2020). Upon return to Indonesia, migrants face potential issues reintegrating back into village life and adjusting to no longer having a stable source of income (SMERU, 2016).

In recent years the government has introduced legislation to increase state protection of migrant workers and has improved the services available to them, both of which can be at least partly attributed to the work of Migrant CARE and their networks (see below). However, challenges still remain, ensuring that (1) local governments have the information and capacity to fulfil their new responsibilities under the law and (2) prospective, current and returned migrant workers have access to the government services that can provide training, information and assistance (Schaner and Theys, 2020).

MAMPU has partnered with Migrant CARE to address the common issues faced by women migrant workers. Migrant CARE is an Indonesian NGO that focuses on improving women migrant workers' access to services and social justice. Migrant CARE works in collaboration with six local NGOs to deliver services and advocacy at the regional level.

MAMPU partner activities

This section uses the five assets of the MAMPU economic empowerment framework⁷ to describe the activities and key results of Migrant CARE and their local partners.

Creating groups as a foundation for all other activities

Migrant CARE and their partners begin by establishing migrant worker groups in areas where it is common for people to migrate abroad for work. To date, there have been groups established in 37 villages across eight districts in five provinces. These groups are mainly made up of ex-migrant workers and serve as a way to build ex-migrant workers networks and social assets, which are likely to have been disrupted as a result of working abroad.

These groups form the basis for all other activities the Migrant CARE and their partners implement to improve the lives of migrant workers.

⁷ Refer to Section 3 for an explanation of the framework

Initiating savings and loans groups and linking ex-migrant worker groups to government programs

One of the main activities for these migrant worker groups is helping ex-migrant workers to identify income generating activities, so they can continue to earn money once they return to Indonesia. Some groups set up separate savings and loans activities, such as a group supported by Migrant CARE partner SARI in Wonosobo District (Central Java) which has grown the original investment of IDR 19.5 million (provided by SARI in 2003), to IDR 60 million by 2015. Some groups provide financial literacy and skills training, while others link migrant worker groups to government support including skills training such as for food processing and batik making, loans programs, and to government marketing initiatives. Although there are some impressive savings initiatives and evidence that women have increased their skills, there is little indication that this has resulted in increased income generation (Circle Indonesia, 2015; Migunani, 2017; MEDA, 2018).

Migrant worker groups establishing services for potential and existing migrant workers

Migrant worker groups also provide the foundation for establishing village-based support services for existing and future migrant workers. This initiative sees migrant worker groups lobbying the village government to declare the village as a "Village that Cares About Migrant Workers" (*Desa Peduli Buruh Migran*), or DESBUMI. This government support formalises the relationship between Migrant CARE, their local partners and the village government, drawing attention to the issues faced by migrant workers in the village and increasing the likelihood that the group will obtain funding from the village budget. There are currently 37 villages in eight districts that have declared themselves as DESBUMI.

Migrant worker groups and the cadres that are selected to help run them are provided with capacity building training from Migrant CARE and their partners on a range of topics, including village planning and budgeting and case handling and support for migrant workers that have had their rights abused while working abroad. This supports the functioning of DESBUMI services, which provides information, socialisation about safe migration, support to complete paperwork, access to social protection, complaint handling and case management, as well as the access to income generating activities offered to ex-migrant workers. This provides comprehensive support services for migrant workers from the moment they start to consider migrating for work, whilst they are abroad and once they have returned, all of which can be accessed at the village level. The model also collects data on current and returned migrant workers which helps to identify needs and is also shared with the government.

As a result of this capacity strengthening, the groups have begun to improve the services they provide. DESBUMI group members and cadres in Wonosobo and Jember have formalised case assistance by developing case complaint forms and establishing a system for coordinating with the village government and other key actors. This has resulted in some DESBUMI villages, such as Juntinuyut in Indramayu, providing operational support for the handling of migrant worker

Sriah, ex-migrant worker from Banyuwangi, East Java (September 2018)

"My friend invited me to join the migrant workers group, supported by Migrant CARE. And I was very happy, because now I have lots of friends, often get invited to join training and have gained a lot of new knowledge and experience which is really useful. The changes I experienced since joining the DESBUMI group include that I can help other ex-migrant workers and current migrant workers if they have problems. And from the training I learned to make woven plates which has become my daily work and really helps my family income".

legal cases. The coordination of case support at the village level also extends to Migrant CARE partners at the regional level and Migrant CARE at the national level. This enhances the degree of support provided to migrant workers, enabling mediation with national government bodies and repatriation. Another result of this capacity building process and encouraging linkages between migrant workers and the local government is that women migrant workers are increasingly participating in village government processes. At least 29 Migrant Worker groups have been involved in the village planning process (*Musrebang Desa*) and DESBUMI cadres in four districts have become candidates for the Village Council (*Badan Permusyawaratan Desa*, or BPD). This model of providing village level support services for migrant workers, along with a campaign by

Apiyah, ex-migrant worker from Wonosobo, Central Java (June 2016)

Courage and a need to improve her family economy made Apiyah decide to work abroad. Taiwan was her destination because the pay was good and it was safe. It also made Apiyah learn a lot about life as a migrant worker in Taiwan including its problems. Returning to Indonesia in 2008, Apiyah set up a restaurant with her family. In 2014 she was invited to join a group called MUIWO that was formed by the village government and facilitated by SARI. In this group Apiyah was selected to join the social protection and advocacy group and she often joined paralegal training. Apiyah... joined social protection activities in the village and was part of groups that often met with the local government, national activists and even the Minister of Labour, making Apiyah even more vocal about protection of migrant workers. Now Apiyah regularly manages the service counter for migrant workers at the village office in Lipursari.

Migrant CARE at the national level, has resulted in the partial adoption of the DESBUMI approach by the national government through the Ministry of Labour in 2016. The government version of the program, called *Desa Migran Produktif* (Desmigratif), has been implemented in 13 DESBUMI villages in the districts of Wonosobo, Banyuwangi, Jember, Lembata, Kebumen, Cilacap and Central Lombok. DESBUMI groups directly support the running of the Desmigratif program in these locations, including by sharing data collected by DESBUMI groups, as well supporting provision of information services.

Policy reform to protect migrant workers (enabling assets)

The advocacy work of Migrant CARE and their partners contributed to a reform of the National Law 39/2004 on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers and their families. This process took seven years and resulted in a new law (National Law No. 18/2017) on the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, which outlines a stronger role for the government at national and local levels, including oversight for (often

exploitative) private sector agents that engage migrants and also reduces the costs of migrating through official channels. After the passing of this law Migrant CARE and their partners shifted focus on the development of supporting regulations at the national level, resulting in Ministry of Labour Regulation No. 18/2018 which provides access to social protection for all documented overseas migrant workers, as well as ensuring alignment with subnational regulations.

Migrant CARE and their partners have lobbied district governments in the districts of Jember, Kebumen and Indramayu, securing a schedule for the revision of regional regulations in the 2019 Indramayu legislative agenda. Partners in Wonosobo have drafted and successfully advocated for the passing of a local regulation (Perda No.8/2016) on the placement and protection of migrant workers, complementing the national law. In addition, Migrant CARE has supported groups to advocate for the allocation of village funds to support Desbumi activities.

In addition to supporting the enabling assets of migrant workers through regulatory reform, Migrant CARE has also addressed the logistical and safety concerns related to international migration. Migrant CARE and its partners have worked on establishing a migration corridor between the district of Lembata in East Nusa Tenggara and Nunukan district in North Kalimantan. Through advocacy efforts by Migrant CARE and its partners, the East Nusa Tenggara provincial government and the Lembata district government have developed a concept and begun to explore collaboration with the North Kalimantan District government. A common route for migrants from Eastern Indonesia, this concept would establish half-way houses to help ensure migrant worker safety for those that use this corridor for migration. Originally proposed to support migrant workers from Lembata district only, the plan has already expanded to include migrants from anywhere in East Nusa Tenggara, with plans for each district in East Nusa Tenggara province to contribute to the costs.

In summary...

To address the issues facing migrant workers, Migrant CARE and its local partners have utilised migrant worker groups as social assets to build the capacity of individual group members for two purposes. The first is to enhance their individual income generating skills and financial assets, either directly through skills training and savings and loans groups, or by brokering relationships to access government support programs. The second purpose of group formation and capacity building is to support the establishment and functioning of a village level support service for potential and existing migrant workers. This approach addresses four of the five assets (human, social, agency and financial) at the individual level for current and ex-migrant workers in DESBUMI villages. Migrant CARE and its partners have also used social assets as a method for addressing the structural issues faced by all migrant workers, by campaigning for policy reform to ensure legal protection and safety when travelling and working abroad.

05

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section begins to address the question of *what can we learn from the different approaches of MAMPU partners towards economic empowerment?*, firstly by comparing the ways in which the four MAMPU partners⁸ in this report have approached economic empowerment and then by identifying some of the potential implications.

5.1 Comparison of MAMPU partner approaches

In order to understand the ways in which different MAMPU partners have approached economic empowerment, this section will compare partner approaches in three ways:

(1) **Assets** (*what empowerment assets did the partners focus on?*)

The activities of MAMPU partners all support women to increase their assets, with some partners choosing to focus on some or all of the assets, depending on their approach. It should be noted that the MAMPU partners themselves do not necessarily conceptualise their work in this way, but it serves as a tool to understand their interventions and intended results.

(2) **Institutions** (*how did partners address structural issues related to the government and private sector?*)

The five economic empowerment assets can also be externally influenced by two key structures: the government and the private sector. Both have the ability to strengthen or weaken women's access to each of the five assets and so MAMPU partners may choose to address these structural issues as part of their approach to women's economic empowerment.

(3) **Strategies** (*what was the approach to improving existing income versus new economic opportunities?*)

In addition to the economic empowerment assets and the structural issues that influence them, there is also the consideration of whether to focus on improving the existing economic activities of women, or introducing new economic activities either as additional income streams, or as an alternative. Partners may take different strategic approaches depending on the needs of the women they are working with and the potential for existing or alternative economic activities.

The second and third elements have been borrowed from the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework⁹ (Levine, 2014), which also uses an assets model (similar to the MAMPU one), but adds "institutions" and "strategies" to provide further ways of to help development actors design and analyse activities and projects seeking to promote economic sustainability at the individual or household level.

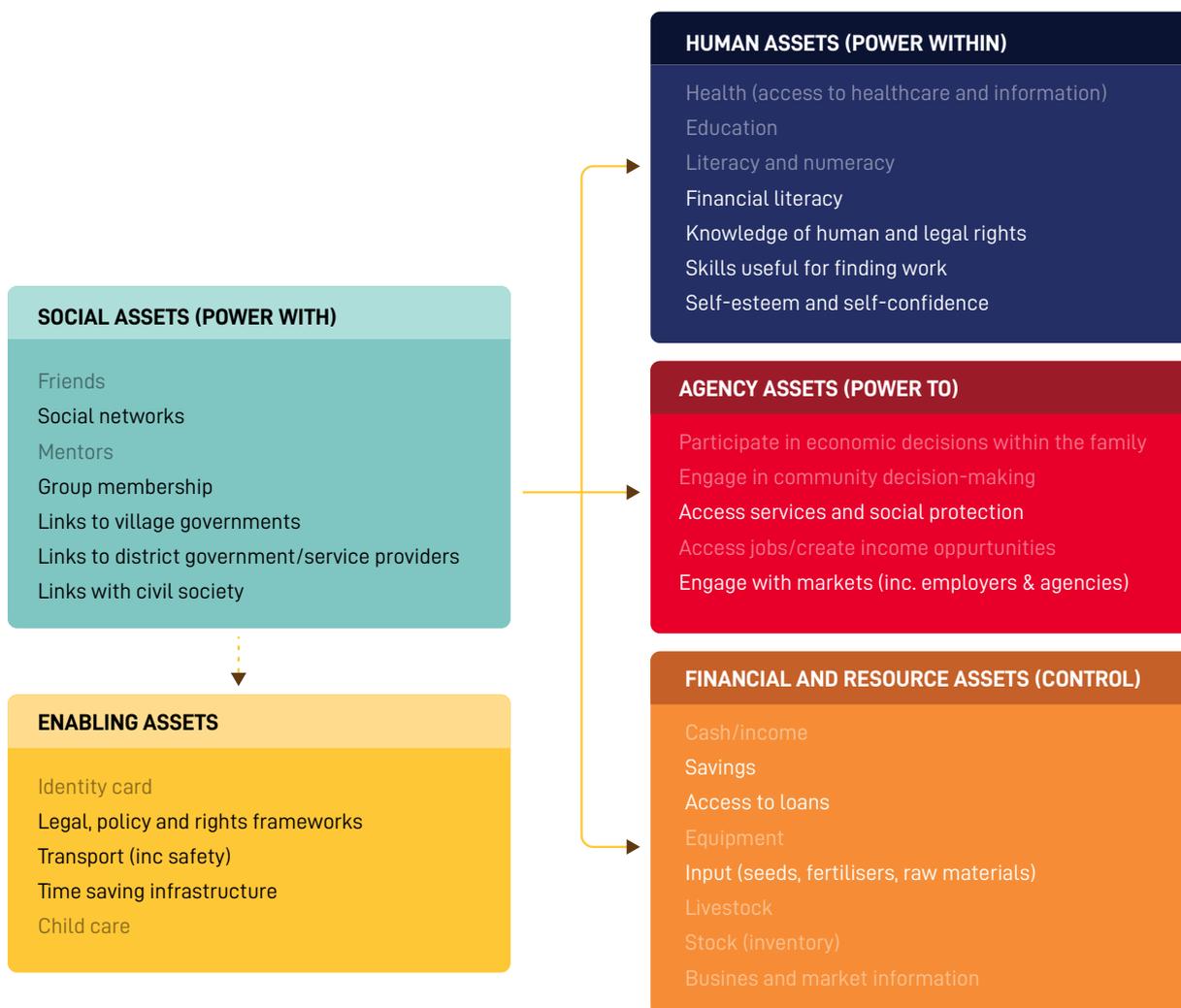
⁸ Migrant CARE and their local partners will be considered as one entity for the rest of the document, for the sake of simplicity.

⁹ The framework was originally developed by DfID in 1999

Economic empowerment assets

All four MAMPU partners have implemented interventions covering all five assets, demonstrating an understanding of the broad range of issues faced by migrant and homeworkers and the need for a holistic approach. All four MAMPU partners focused on social assets as the entry point, not only increasing the social assets of the group members by connecting group members to each other, other organisations, and the local government, but also as the primary approach used to increase other empowerment assets - see the Theory of Action diagram below (interventions in bold text are MAMPU partner interventions). This reflects the MAMPU emphasis on collective action and the first step in the MAMPU theory of change.

MAMPU PARTNER ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INTERVENTIONS (THEORY OF ACTION)



Note: The Theory of Action diagram represents areas of partner intervention only, and does not represent results.

All partners then used these groups to build the human and agency assets group members. Improving human assets focuses on knowledge and skills, although the topics varied between partners. The four key areas are: an understanding of rights (all partners), negotiation skills (Yasanti and BITRA), creative skills such as food processing, sewing and batik (all partners), financial literacy (Migrant CARE, Yasanti and BITRA) and business skills. In addition, Migrant CARE provided specific training to groups of women ex-migrant workers to deliver the paralegal, data collection and administrative services associated with DESBUMI. The partners improved agency assets of group members by supporting access to social protection, government services for creative skills and business training, and finance (all partners). In addition, Migrant CARE also provided services to migrants through DESBUMI, and Yasanti brokered relationships between homeworker groups and the private sector.

Although this approach is consistent with MAMPU principles, it does have some risks, as the development of all other assets (with the exception of enabling assets) are then dependent on the homemaker and migrant worker groups as an entry point. If an individual was no longer able to access the group (either because the group lost funding, or as a result of a disagreement), then many of the gains in the other empowerment assets may also be lost. Migrant CARE is able to mitigate this somewhat, as the services provided by DESBUMI, an agency asset, are available to all migrant workers in the village and are not dependent on group membership.

Yasanti and TURC are two partners that have engaged directly with the private sector. Yasanti in its work with weavers from their women's groups and BMC Rajut, has played a broker role and has coordinated capacity building of women weavers and mediated between the weavers and the company. Similarly, TURC has brokered relationships between women homeworkers and Zara and IKEA to produce products from water hyacinth. The other partners have provided indirect support to enable women to engage with the private sector, by providing training either to (a) increase the creative skills of homeworkers and migrant workers so that they could make products to sell, or (b) improve the negotiation skills of homeworkers so they could negotiate with their employers, as well as providing links to shops and organisations to sell products, but these partners have not engaged directly in the value chain.

MAMPU partners have focused primarily on savings and access to loans as a way of addressing financial and resource assets, either through the savings groups, cooperatives or linking to government loans. There are few partner interventions (aside from Yasanti's work with BMC Rajut and TURC's with Zara and IKEA) focused on direct income generation, provision of equipment or business and market information. This is linked to the above point about the minimal direct engagement with the private sector and the decision to focus on *supporting* women to set up individual or group enterprises or improve negotiation skills. These decisions mean that interventions are limited to building capacity (human assets) and increasing links to government services and the private sector (social and agency assets). The outcome is (potentially) increased income, but as the MAMPU partners have no direct participation in the running of these businesses, they cannot be said to be implementing income generating interventions.

All partners have focused on regulatory issues, with only Migrant CARE attempting to address other enabling assets. All of the partners campaigned for legal protection of homeworkers and migrant workers at national and regional levels. This work was often conducted by the MAMPU partners as part of their organisation's advocacy agenda, but the campaigns utilised the social assets of the homemaker and migrant worker group to add voices to the advocacy effort at the national level and campaign for change at the local level. In addition to legal protection, Migrant CARE also increased enabling assets for migrant workers by supporting the government to develop a migrant worker corridor to facilitate safe migration.

The primary focus on legislation accurately reflects the issues faced by migrant and homeworkers, where the lack of legal protection is one of the root causes of their vulnerability. Childcare is often mentioned in the literature as significant for women's empowerment, but this has not been addressed by any of the four partners in this report. This appears to be consistent with the needs of migrant and homeworkers. Migrant workers usually rely on extended family to look after their children while abroad, so childcare is probably not an appropriate intervention. Similarly, for homeworkers, the flexible nature of the homework and the ability to arrange it around other domestic needs, including childcare, is the exact reason why many women work in that sector in the first place. This may well be driven by a need to earn income rather than a desire to be a homemaker, but a childcare intervention is likely to be more suited to a strategy that aims to enable women to access the formal economy, as many informal sector jobs can be combined with child-rearing.

MAMPU partners approach to institutional support

The five assets of the economic empowerment model are influenced by two key economic institutions; the public sector (government) and the private sector¹⁰ and the following paragraphs will compare how the partners engaged with these two institutions.

All four partners have succeeded in increasing women's access to government services, government social protection schemes and have advocated for improved government policies.

For homeworkers and ex-migrant worker groups the government training and services include skills training and access to loans. For potential and existing migrant workers, Migrant CARE has not only linked women to government support services, but has improved them, by integrating DESBUMI into the government-run service, Desmigratif, and by supporting women ex-migrant workers to reintegrate into the community and particularly participate in village development. The three partners working with homeworkers have increased women's access to government health insurance (*BPJS Kesehatan*) and government employment insurance (*BPJS Ketenagakerjaan*). To ensure fulfilment of homeworkers rights, MAMPU partners have advocated for improvements to government policy. Although the key piece of national legislation acknowledging homeworkers in the labour law has yet to be passed, BITRA and Yasanti have had success in passing local regulations protecting homeworkers, demonstrating that local regulatory reform is possible even without overarching national regulations. Migrant CARE has contributed to the passing of two key pieces of national legislation to secure migrant worker protection, increasing responsibility for government oversight of migration services and ensuring social protection while migrant workers are abroad.

A negative aspect of focus on government provision of services is that they are not always high quality, or appropriate to the needs of women seeking alternative income streams.

Government training programs tend to focus on skills, such as how to make products, such as cakes, or snacks or batik, with a limited focus on business skills, such as costing, product development and marketing. Pure skills training is most likely to be suitable for women who have an existing business and wish to up-skill (for example a tailor learning new sewing techniques, or taking a clothing design course), because learning a new skill from scratch is difficult and using this skill to make a product that commands a viable price takes time and commitment. Those that do also include business skills often assume that there is already an existing market for the product or skill being taught, yet participants attending the course have rarely conducted any market research and, as has been reported by women from MAMPU partner groups, face subsequent challenges selling their products (MEDA, 2018; Migunani, 2017).

There are few examples of partners supporting women's increased access to private sector training, services, policies, or social protection schemes.

With the exception of Yasanti, which has linked weavers with private sector training, there are no examples of MAMPU partners engaging with private sector or social enterprises that offer similar services to those offered by MAMPU partners or the government.

MAMPU partner strategies related to income generation

Income generating activities are often a key aspect of economic empowerment interventions and when planning activities to improve income there are a number of different potential

¹⁰ A third is civil society organisations, i.e. the MAMPU partners themselves.

strategies to consider, including; (1) whether to intensify and maximise the existing income generating activity, or diversify to include a broader range of income generating activities, (2) whether to promote income generating activities in the formal¹¹ or informal economy and (3) whether to focus on employment or entrepreneurship as a strategy. **MAMPU partners working with homeworkers promote combining employment as a homemaker and group or individual businesses.** All the MAMPU partners working with homeworkers have taken a diversification and intensification approach, by supporting homeworkers to understand their rights and increase their negotiation skills which could be used to improve their current work situation, while also providing access to skills training and support to establish a group or individual business. This has resulted in some women successfully negotiating better pay, as well as offering the possibility of obtaining income from a new source. **In comparison, Migrant CARE promotes safe migration for current migrants or group or individual businesses for ex-migrants.** With existing migrant workers, Migrant CARE takes an intensification approach, making migrant worker's current economic activity easier and safer, by ensuring state protection, proper documentation and registration and legal support, making it easier to access migrant work, migrate safely and potentially enables women to receive better pay and conditions. For ex-migrant workers, Migrant CARE has promoted diversification, supporting women to establish new group or individual businesses and access skills training. There are benefits to both intensification and diversification, with the former focused on improving the existing income generating activity and the latter on adding a new potential source of income. Women may continue with these multiple sources of income, or the new income generating activity could provide an exit strategy from homeworking if desired.

All partners have chosen to promote setting up individual or group businesses (entrepreneurship).

While MAMPU partners provide support for women to continue homeworking and migrant work, when it comes to new economic activities, all MAMPU partners have promoted entrepreneurship as a main strategy to increase income. Partners have, in general, followed a traditional approach, first identifying businesses based on the desire or skills of the homemaker or ex-migrant worker groups and the availability and access to raw materials, followed by skills training in food production, handicrafts or clothing and bags and, sometimes, general business skills. This kind of approach is often criticised in the economic empowerment literature, because these kinds of approaches rarely take into account the needs of the market or the range of business skills required to run a successful business. As a result they often fail to produce viable businesses, or increased income (Vadenburg, 2006; Shah and Saurabh, 2015), which mirrors the experience of some of the women's groups noted in several MAMPU studies (MEDA, 2018; Migunani, 2017).

No MAMPU partners have chosen to focus on employment in the formal economy. Instead, all partners have focused efforts on formalising these informal sectors, by campaigning for the formal recognition and protection of homeworkers and migrant workers by the government as the first step towards achieving safer and fairer working conditions. In terms of economic activities outside of homeworking and migration, all MAMPU partners have supported small-scale businesses which also fall into the informal sector. While the literature suggests that the greatest benefits in terms of income generation and poverty reduction come from participating in the formal sector (Schaner, 2012), in rural areas and with low levels of education the availability of formal sector jobs can be a key challenge. In addition, the priority for homeworkers and migrant workers is reducing vulnerability in these sectors, not necessarily supporting women to enter the formal sector.

¹¹ In this context the "formal economy", means economic activities that are under the regulation of the state (including the payment of taxes) and comprises of an organised system of employment that includes a standardised relationship between the employer and employee, including hours worked, remuneration, benefits and role, defined in a written contract (Oviedo et al. 2009).

In summary, MAMPU partners have taken an economic empowerment approach that focuses on social assets but encompasses all five assets in the economic empowerment model, engaging primarily with the government and with the aim of reducing the vulnerability of women working as homeworkers and migrant workers. These approaches were not developed in reference to or as a result of the frameworks used so far in this document, therefore the following section goes on to identify the key factors that have influenced how partners have approached economic empowerment.

5.2 Discussion

As seen in the previous sections, the four MAMPU partners have, in general, taken a similar approach to economic empowerment across the three elements (assets, institutions and strategies). This has been influenced by three things: the MAMPU design and theory of change, the organisational characteristics of MAMPU partners, and the characteristics of the target groups they work with.

MAMPU design and theory of change

The MAMPU theory of change envisages a three-step process, starting with collective action, leading to increased voice and finally increased access to government services. This theory is rights-based and government-focused and therefore lends itself to an economic empowerment framing that is focused on increasing workers' rights and access to support systems such as social protection or systems created by collectivising (credit unions, cooperatives etc). The original theory of change included reference to livelihoods, but the meaning of the term and the change process that was intended to occur over the lifetime of the program was never fully articulated and the phrase was dropped for the design of phase two. All four MAMPU partners covered in this document have heavily focused on the public sector, which reflects the theory of change which encourages a focus on access to government services and changes to the policy environment across different levels of government, but potentially acts as a disincentive to focus on the private sector as a key influencer of economic empowerment.

The main focus of the four MAMPU partners on building social assets also mirrors the theory of change which has collective action as its foundational step. Collective models such as these prioritise the group and promote equality amongst group members. In contrast, the private sector is defined by being profit-driven and competitive, naturally favouring those with existing assets. This highlights the potential for complementarity between MAMPU partners and the private sector, with partners building the assets of individual women so they can access opportunities provided by the private sector. However, these inherent differences also mean that collaboration between the private sector and collective action groups would require both sides to have the willingness to identify an approach (potentially through compromise) that fits the needs and the values of both parties. If private sector engagement is a high priority, experimenting with alternatives to a social-assets based approach may be more appropriate.

The lack of clarity in the original MAMPU design regarding how the program defines and addresses economic empowerment has also been a source of confusion for partners. The original focus on private sector engagement and formal sector interventions were not an explicit part of the

phase two design, making it unclear whether these should continue to be addressed. In addition, MAMPU's expectations regarding the role of income generation in economic empowerment has also not been explicitly articulated. Furthermore, the economic empowerment model proposed in 2015 is the same model used by MAMPU to explain the approach to women's empowerment in general, making it unclear how, or indeed if, MAMPU differentiates between economic empowerment and women's empowerment more generally. A clear articulation of economic empowerment and its purpose in relation to women's empowerment by either MAMPU or the partners would help to identify both whether interventions selected by partners are appropriate and on-track to achieve the desired outcomes, as well as what kinds of support partners might need to achieve those outcomes.

Key characteristics of MAMPU partners

The four MAMPU partners covered in this document are advocacy and rights-based non-profit organisations, so their usual ways of working include collective action (social-assets) and government engagement approaches. Their focus on empowering vulnerable groups means the partners also recognise the importance of a holistic approach, making them highly suitable for a women's empowerment program like MAMPU. These characteristics also suggest that partners are unlikely to have experience of running successful businesses, nor do they necessarily have strong networks within the private (including social enterprise) sector. This puts partners wishing to focus on income generation at a disadvantage, as private sector engagement and a business background are likely to be extremely useful in designing successful interventions that directly or indirectly support income generation. This has been somewhat overcome by some MAMPU partners who have, in later years of the program, made connections with private sector networks, such as Yasanti's connections and partnership with the Indonesian Association of Women Entrepreneurs (IWAPI) and TURC's collaboration with Indonesian social enterprise, Kopernik. These partnerships not only provide potential new business opportunities for women's groups, but also engage and involve these private sector actors in the advocacy efforts of MAMPU partners.

Income generation appears to be an aspect that the MAMPU partners have struggled with and this has been an area often highlighted for improvement. This could be due to a lack of MAMPU partner's experience in this area, because the purpose of the partner's intervention was not to increase income, or because the partner was unable to identify a business they were comfortable collaborating with. As many MAMPU partners are grassroots activist organisations with strong values of inclusion and supporting the most vulnerable, some MAMPU partners may not be willing to collaborate with the private sector, due the compromises it often involves.

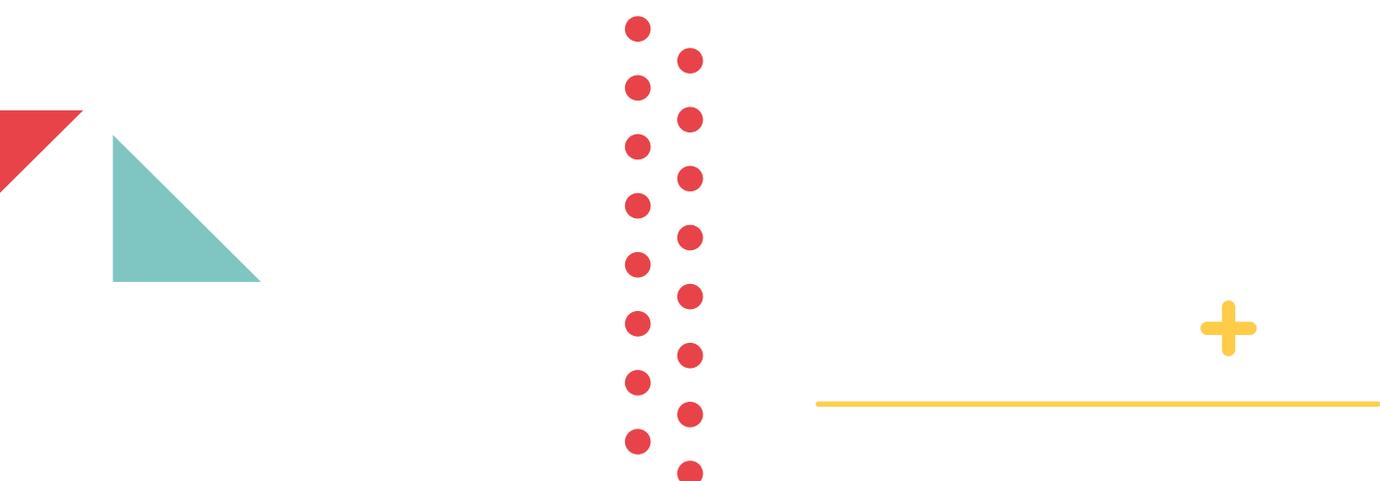
Key characteristics of the target group

One thing that separates the four partners that have been studied in this document from the other MAMPU partners, is that the women they work with are economic actors, meaning that the women targeted by their interventions are defined by what they do to earn an income e.g. homemaker or migrant worker. Other MAMPU partners, for example PEKKA and Aisyiyah, define the women they work with by a social status, such as poor, or vulnerable. While elements of economic empowerment (including income generation) may be an important aspect of these other partner's interventions, their purpose is not directly linked to economic activity.

The four MAMPU partners who have economic actors as the primary group they work with have a purpose that is directly linked to an economic activity, but is not linked to increasing women's income (although it may well be an outcome). Migrant CARE's primary focus is ensuring safe migration, by reducing the vulnerability of women throughout the migration process, while the thematic roadmap for homeworkers focuses on policy reform for the protection of homeworkers, as well as increased access to government services.

Defining the purpose of economic empowerment helps to identify what assets and strategies to use, as well as what institutions to involve in advocacy efforts or to provide support. For example, MAMPU partners who define the purpose of their economic empowerment interventions as control of income may prioritise savings and loans and addressing social attitudes towards gender, whereas those that intend to provide an exit strategy or reduce dependency on exploitative work may focus on vocational education, or income generation, while others still may want to focus on food security and so set up savings groups or cooperatives. These strategies demonstrate the holistic nature of economic empowerment and that income generation may not be a key strategy. However, because of this holistic nature it becomes important to define what the purpose of economic empowerment is and the strategy for achieving it, to (1) enable partners to understand whether their interventions are having the desired effect, (2) manage the expectations of stakeholders and (3) support reporting.

The characteristics of the target group also helps to determine the strategies adopted by the MAMPU partners. One of the main challenges of working with migrant workers and homeworkers in the informal sector is that employers are hard to identify, the jobs within these sectors are varied and employers are numerous, all of which makes an approach that involves engaging with employers potentially inefficient in terms of time and resources.



06

6. LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES

This section highlights the key learnings that have been identified from MAMPU in relation to women's economic empowerment and puts forward some suggestions for MAMPU partners, civil society organisations and future development programs interested in women's economic empowerment. These learnings and recommendations have been identified based on discussions with the four MAMPU partners involved in this documentation process and cover three key areas: designing economic empowerment interventions, accounting for context and characteristics of target groups and involving the private sector.

6.1 Designing and managing economic empowerment interventions

The first area of learning is related to the ways in which development actors can structure and support the design process and management of economic empowerment programs and projects.

One of the things MAMPU partners valued was the flexibility provided to them by the MAMPU program, which enabled them to experiment, learn and adapt throughout the implementation process. This is useful in all complex program design and management (empowerment included), but flexible and adaptive approaches were seen as especially useful for income generating interventions, where failure of business activities are common and do not necessarily reflect poor design, but rather the dynamic nature of the market. While this flexibility was considered important, it was not accompanied by sufficient clarity or guidance regarding what was expected from economic empowerment interventions, or how they contributed to the MAMPU Theory of Change. This was particularly true of the role of income generation. Although income generation is often assumed to be of primary importance in economic empowerment, each of the partners were working towards outcomes that encompass a much broader purpose, which could be achieved without increasing income at all. In reality, each of the four MAMPU partners conducted activities that were intended to increase income, but their experience confirms the global literature which states that while likely to be an aspect of economic empowerment, income generation alone is not sufficient, and should be accompanied by a range of other interventions that address issues of power.

In response to these learnings, development actors should consider (1) establishing a clear, holistic definition of what constitutes economic empowerment (including the role of income generation) in the context of the program or project and, where possible, (2) providing a conceptual framework to support and structure the design of interventions. This would help to manage the expectations of stakeholders (especially regarding income generation) and outline the scope of economic empowerment activities, while providing a thinking tool (the conceptual framework) to help give structure to a complex process

and concept like empowerment. Such a framework would also help to create a shared language amongst stakeholders, enabling clear and deliberate discussions about the logic of the design.

The modified version of the 2015 MAMPU framework used in this document is an example of such a conceptual model. It has several key characteristics that make it suitable and that could be used as criteria for identifying or developing other conceptual models; (1) it is holistic, promoting a broad approach to economic empowerment which is consistent with the global literature and the MAMPU experience, (2) it provides a flexible menu of options that can be adapted to specific contexts, providing both structure and flexibility and (3) it can be employed at various points throughout the program cycle, including at design, monitoring, reflection and reporting stages to provide structure and direction. An example of a design process using the framework can be found below:

EXAMPLE DESIGN PROCESS

Qualifying question - Is an economic actor or issue a key aspect of the end of program outcome?

Design Question 1

- Which of the five assets need to be addressed in order to achieve the outcome?
- Which element of each asset is most appropriate and relevant to achieve the outcome?



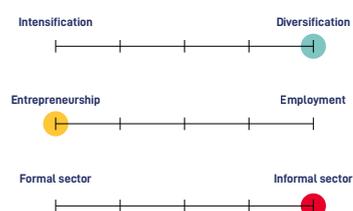
Design Question 2

For each activity: Will the activity be targeted or involve collaboration with the government or the private sector? Or a combination of both? Or will the development (civil society) actor conduct the activity independently?



Design Question 3

- If income generation is part of the strategy:
- Will the focus be on diversification of income generation activities, or intensifying existing activities?
 - Will the focus be on entrepreneurship or employment?
 - Will the intervention promote activities in the informal or formal economy?



An example of what this process could look like is as follows:

- At the beginning of the design process, development actors can use design question 1 and the five assets as an assessment tool, or to brainstorm ideas about which assets need to be addressed and which elements are most appropriate to address them for their specific context. *In the case of the MAMPU partners each decided that the main way they were going to address economic empowerment was to establish homemaker and migrant worker groups and then use the groups as the basis for developing human, agency and financial assets. One of the elements of financial and resource assets selected by partners working with both homeworkers and migrant workers was "loans".*
- As part of designing the loans activity, development actors could use design question 2 to consider the options of advocating to or collaborating with either the government or private sector, or whether the development actors themselves will deliver the product or service. *In the case of the MAMPU partners and their loans activities, BITRA decided that they would provide the loans service themselves, by supporting the establishment of a credit union made up of BITRA homemaker group members, while Migrant CARE used a combination of civil society (Migrant CARE providing a savings and loans service as part of migrant worker groups) and government (by connecting groups to government loans).*

- Development actors planning income generating interventions, can use design question 3 to decide which strategies are most appropriate for the women in their target group. If appropriate, there could be one strategy for the whole group, or several different strategies. *In the case of Migrant CARE, their income generating activity for ex-migrant workers was diversification into entrepreneurship in the informal sector.*

Summary

- **Lesson #1:** Economic empowerment programs and activities require a flexible approach that allows for learning and adaptation throughout implementation
- **Lesson #2:** Income generation is only one aspect of economic empowerment and the degree of emphasis on income generation will vary across programs and projects, depending on the context and intended outcomes.
- **Recommendation #1:** Development actors establish a clear, holistic definition of what constitutes economic empowerment (and the role of income generation) in the context of the program or project
- **Recommendation #2:** Development programs provide a conceptual framework to support and structure the design of interventions at both the program and project level.

6.2 Characteristics and context of target groups

The second area of learning is related to the importance of understanding the characteristics and the context of the women being targeted by economic empowerment interventions.

Reflecting on the process of selecting and designing economic empowerment interventions, the partners identified several factors that need to be taken into consideration: Firstly, MAMPU partners found that not all women in their groups were suited to entrepreneurship, which requires a specific skills and characteristics, and this is likely to influence the success of their business. Secondly, throughout the MAMPU program, women have highlighted that flexibility is a key determining factor when choosing to start or remain engaged in an economic activity, often in spite of poor pay and conditions. Thirdly, the partners that involved men in economic empowerment activities noted that it increased support for their activity and also provided opportunities to address male attitudes towards gender. This, according to the global literature, may also reduce potential for conflict within the household, which has been known to occur in situations where women are given increased control over resources, especially in contexts where this goes against social norms.

These three factors, drawn from the experience of MAMPU partners, highlight the importance of understanding women's needs related to economic activities and the context they live in. All women's empowerment programs and projects should involve women in as many ways as possible throughout the process, but these learnings suggest that development actors at the project level (as a minimum), should consider involving women at the design stage of interventions, by gathering information about their needs and collaborating with women to identify the pros and cons of the various options. A transparent approach to designing interventions which highlights the challenges and opportunities, not only avoids treating homeworkers, migrant workers and others as homogenous groups, it also gives women agency to decide which approach is most suitable for them and promotes realistic expectations about future challenges. It may be that partners cannot provide all of the options prioritised by the women they are working with, but knowing which of these options is most preferred by the target group may help to identify (1) other third parties that can support these women, (2) which options are most viable and/or (3) which women are most likely to benefit from each intervention option.

Summary

- **Lesson #3:** Entrepreneurship is not suitable for everyone and the skills, attitudes and preferences of women should be taken into account before selecting entrepreneurship as an intervention
- **Lesson #4:** Flexibility of working hours is a key criteria for many Indonesian rural women in relation to economic activities, often trumping other criteria such as pay and conditions.
- **Lesson #5:** Involving men in women's economic empowerment activities increases support for women's participation and provides opportunities to address male attitudes towards gender.
- **Recommendation #3:** Involve women in the design and selection of economic empowerment activities, being transparent about the pros and cons of various options, as well as potential future challenges
- **Recommendation #4:** Identify ways to involve men at various points during the implementation process to help build support for women's empowerment activities as well as addressing attitudes towards gender.

6.3 Collaboration with the private sector

This section identifies the learnings from the MAMPU partners in relation to collaboration with the private sector.

The MAMPU partners covered in this document are all rights-based organisations with strong experience in advocacy, as well as extensive grassroots and government networks. At the beginning of the MAMPU program they lacked business skills and private sector networks, putting them at a disadvantage when designing economic empowerment interventions, especially those related to entrepreneurship. In later years, the MAMPU program connected partner organisations with social enterprises such as Kopernik, or partners themselves sought out private sector collaborators. These collaborators provided private sector networks, access to markets and business knowledge, which complemented the strengths of the MAMPU partners.

This need for private sector knowledge and support is reflected in the income generating interventions selected by MAMPU partners. The main intervention was entrepreneurship and the primary approach to selecting the product or service to sell was to identify the skills and resources available to the women. While these are important considerations, a lack of understanding of whether there was a clear gap or need within the market for these skills or products and the level of demand, meant that the MAMPU partners and women's groups often found marketing and fulfilling orders a significant challenge. The MAMPU partners noted that these issues must be considered at the outset, as part of the process of deciding on the product or service to be sold, rather than something to be addressed once the product or service is of sufficient quality. These are skills that social enterprises and businesses were able to contribute to partner interventions, which was especially useful for the organisations with minimal business experience.

In light of the above, it is therefore recommended that projects identify the various ways in which they could benefit from private sector support and collaborate with the private sector for this purpose. Potential roles for the private sector include:

1. Delivering aspects of an economic empowerment intervention, for example collaborating with a social enterprise such as Amarth¹² to provide savings and loan services to women's groups. This alleviates some of the burden from MAMPU partners (allowing them to focus on other aspects of economic empowerment), as these kinds of organisations specialise in micro-loans, have proven models and often provide support for women as an integrated part of their service.
2. A potential target for advocacy and collaboration to improve pay and working conditions. This would mean working with the private sector to improve their pay and conditions which would benefit all workers in their supply chain.

12 A peer-to-peer micro lending platform providing business and financial training to women in rural areas, and a 2017 DFAT innovationXchange winner

3. Providing support and training to engage women in their own value chain. This is similar to the approach taken by Yasanti and BMC Rajut, whereby BMC Rajut agreed to provide training to women's homemaker groups, which benefitted BMC Rajut by increasing the number of producers.

The traditional strengths of civil society organisations in the arenas of workers' rights, collective action and grassroots organising has the potential to be highly compatible with private sector organisations (particularly social enterprises) that may be interested in supporting rural, or women from low socio-economic groups but that do not have the capacity or networks to reach them and develop their skills.

However, while collaboration with the private sector can be mutually beneficial, it may not be suitable for all civil society organisations, due to a conflict in values. From the program perspective it is therefore important to identify which civil society organisations are willing to collaborate with the private sector and which are not. This does not mean civil society organisations that unwilling to collaborate with the private sector are unsuitable for economic empowerment interventions, rather that values should be identified and discussed upfront to avoid partners feeling pressured to collaborate with the private sector and to ensure that their economic empowerment outcomes can be achieved without private sector support.

Collaboration with the private sector creates an opportunity for development actors at the program level to play a brokering role between willing civil society organisations and appropriate private sector partners. This would be valuable for both civil society and private sector as a way of increasing the reach of both the private sector and civil society organisations, who may not have come across one another under normal circumstances, and also as a way of screening organisations for compatibility. The involvement of the program could also serve to ensure that shared values are agreed upon at the outset and that there is a more equal balance of power in negotiations between the private sector and civil society organisations. This could also be replicated at the project level, with civil society groups brokering relationships between private sector actors and women's groups, to ensure compatibility and provide a balance of power where necessary.

Summary

- **Lesson #6:** Understanding the needs and gaps in the market should be a main consideration when identifying an enterprise opportunity
- **Lesson #7:** Collaborations between the private sector and civil society organisations can be mutually beneficial and can complement both party's respective strengths and weakness
- **Lesson #8:** Private sector collaboration is not suitable for all civil society organisations, particularly those with strong advocacy agendas in opposition to the private sector
- **Recommendation #5:** Programs and (where appropriate) projects collaborate with the private sector (including social enterprises) to strengthen interventions and add capacity
- **Recommendation #6:** Programs play a brokering role between private sector and civil society organisations, to screen private sector organisations to ensure that values align and to correct any potential power imbalances between the two parties. Civil society organisations can play a similar brokering role between private sector organisations and women's groups.

07

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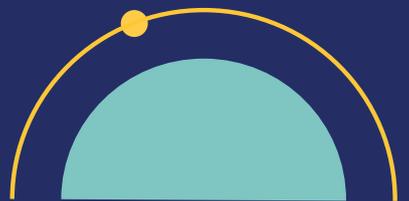
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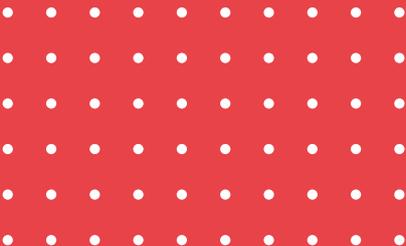
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APPROACHES TO WOMEN'S
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