



# Journal of Social and Political Sciences

**Jovani, Audra, Subono, Nur Iman, and Suyanto, Isbodroini. (2020), Women in the Parliament and Their Role in Formulating Gender Responsive Policies in East Nusa Tenggara. In: *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, Vol.3, No.4, 1043-1062.**

ISSN 2615-3718

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1991.03.04.236

The online version of this article can be found at:  
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:  
The Asian Institute of Research

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# Women in the Parliament and Their Role in Formulating Gender Responsive Policies in East Nusa Tenggara

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## Abstract

East Nusa Tenggara's culture is deeply-rooted in patriarchy. It is more common for women to engage in the private sphere, rather than the public sphere. However, the women of East Nusa Tenggara have recently defied this expectation. In the 2014 Provincial Legislative Election, six women were elected as legislative members for the 2014-2019 period, reflecting a 100 percent increase in the number of women elected as representatives. This event became an important phenomenon, marking the history of women's representation in the parliament. It also became the basis of two questions. First, how the six women managed to enter politics amidst the strong patriarchy in East Nusa Tenggara. Second, the roles of the six women in formulating policies that are gender-responsive. This study focuses on local regulations relating to maternal and child health, the environment, and labor in order to have a holistic view on gender-responsive policies. This study is qualitative in nature and is centered on case study, while information was gathered through an in-depth interview with each of the six female representatives. Furthermore, the administrators of six political parties, namely Nasional Demokrat, Golongan Karya, Demokasi Indonesia Perjuangan, Amanat Nasional, Hati Nurani Rakyat, and Kebangkitan Bangsa were also interviewed. The principal findings of this study show that the election of these women in 2014 are connected to their "acting for" substantive representation and the support given by their families. With the increase of female representation in the legislative sphere, women are encouraged to be engaged in formulating gender-responsive policies in East Nusa Tenggara.

**Keywords:** Women, Representation, Gender-Responsive Policies, East Nusa Tenggara

## Introduction

In a democratic system, women's representation is an important indicator in the political system. Women's presence in politics can be attained through the elective process. With the presence of women in politics, the interests and needs of women can be fulfilled. Their presence allows them to participate in the decision-making process of legislations, budgets, and supervision. It also allows other women to be involved in politics, and will lead to gender equality, enable the ability to fight for women's rights, and provide variety in politics (Philips, 1995).

Nur Iman Subono stated that there are five reasons why women need political representation. First, justice and equality. From a just perspective, democracy is heavily centered on rights, and as a consequence, everyone should be able to participate in the formulation of policies that are relevant to them. These rights are owned by both men and women. Second, women's interest. Because men and women have differing interests, women understands they needs more than men. Third, emancipation and change in the political process. Patriarchy has given birth to power imbalance between men and women. These structures must be dismantled through political actions that promote justice, equality, and independence. Fourth, the difference argument. In order to change the male-centered policies and institutions, experiences and qualities (morals, ethics, and contemporary political style) unique to women needs to be integrated into politics. Fifth, the role model argument. The presence of female legislative members serves as a catalyst for other women to engage in politics (Subono, 2009).

Joni Lovenduski and Azza Karam elucidated the importance of women's presence in the parliament, stating that their presence may affect the parliament's performance and effort to uphold women's interest through four ways. First, their presence in the institution can make the parliament and its actions more amicable towards women. Second, their presence can ensure the continuity and increase of women's access to the parliament by encouraging female candidates, changing the law on election and campaign, as well as propose legislations on gender equality. Third, their presence can influence the output. This is particularly important because it relates to "feminising" the legislation by ensuring that all laws and policies formulated by the legislative body are gender sensitive. Fourth, they can affect the parliamentary's discourse, making women's perspective a commonality and changing the public's view towards women (Lovenduski & Karam, 2002).

The effort to advocate women's interests is often met with obstacles. According to Budi Santi, women in the parliament tend to be trapped between the interest of her political party and women. The party's interest tends to be masculine in nature and contradicts the interest of women. Women's issues are seen as trivial and the advocating women's issues are often seen as a discriminative action that only takes into consideration the interest of women (Santi, 2001).

In terms of quantity, women's representation in the legislative body has not increased significantly. In the 2014 elections, the number of female legislative members in the People's Representative Council decreased from 101 to 97. Although the law requires at least thirty percent of the council's members to be women, political parties have difficulties fulfilling this target. On the other hand, women's representation in local legislative bodies have seen a significant increase. In the provincial legislative body, women's representation have increased in fifteen, remained stagnant in four, and decreased in fourteen provinces. The provinces with the highest number of women's representation or have increased more than 100 percent includes Aceh, Riau, Islands of Riau, Yogyakarta, East Nusa Tenggara, Gorontalo, and North Maluku.

Women's representation in the central legislative body has decreased, but it has increased in several provinces. Although women's representation in the parliament has not fulfilled the quota mandated by the law, the underlying reason for the affirmative action is not only the quantity. It also refers to substantive representation, or the presence of policies that side with women's interest. These types of policies will allow women to access resources and bring positive impact to society (Philips, 1995). Women's substantive representation in the parliament functions as a decision-maker in the Indonesian political process. In this form of representation, women are handed the opportunity to formulate policies, programs, and budgets for women's rights. To

encourage women's participation in politics, President Abdurrahman Wahid issued a Presidential Instruction on Gender Mainstreaming (INPRES No. 9/2000). The implementation of the legislative function refers to the cycle of the law-making process, which includes the planning, drafting, discussion, affirmation, passing, and enactment of the bill.

During the 2014-2019 period, the People's Representative Council included 189 bills in the 2015-2019 National Legislation Program and 31 bills in the cumulative national legislation program. Throughout this period, bills on women's issues were delayed, and some was not discarded from the National Legislation Program. These bills include the Bill on the Protection of Domestic Workers, the Bill on Justice and Gender Equality, the Bill on Midwifery, and the Bill on the Eradication of Sexual Violence. The last bill was not supported by the legislative members because some thought that it would corner men, since they are usually the offenders of sexual violence (Koalisi Perempuan Indonesia, 2019).

The delay of the Bill on the Eradication of Sexual Violence is parallel to the opinion of Ani Soetipto who stated the exclusion of women from politics leads to the absence of policies that upholds the interest of women. Therefore, women has to participate in the legislative body to help create sensitive and gender-responsive policies (Gina & Kumalasari, 2019). The main goal of women's representation is to achieve equality. In addition, women has the rights to fulfill their needs, so their views and opinions should be taken into account during the policy-making process.

### Literature Review

The lack of women's representation gave birth to literary works on women's representation in the parliament in various countries (Pitkin, 1967; Philips, 1995; Lovenduski, 2005). It includes Indonesia. Nur Iman Subono wrote about the importance of quantity and quota as a representative requirement, and stated that it was the most rapid way to increase women's representation in the parliament (Subono, 2013). Adequate women's representation in policy-making is necessary (*sini qua non*) in a democratic system. In order to achieve this, affirmative action needs to be taken as a way to attain a just, democratic process (Mar'iyah, 2002). Sri Eko Budi Wardhani wrote that quantity and quota is important because politics is an arena that needs to be seized and fought for in order to change the decision-making pattern and process that does not side with women's interest. Affirmative action policies are a breakthrough that aims to increase women's political representation in both political parties and the parliament (Wardhani, 2009).

In his writing, Aditya Perdana mentioned that although women in the parliament have not yet brought any substantial impact, they have made important contributions. The effort to fulfill the minimum quota of thirty percent is still being continued intensively (Perdana, 2014).

Women as legislative members have a vital role and carry the mandate of those they represent. Although they are expected to channel the aspirations of their constituents and advocate women's interests, research shows that not all female members in the parliament are active in the policy-making process.

Tabel 1. Literature on Women's Representation in the Indonesian Parliament

No	Author and their Findings
1	Mar'iyah, 2002 Sufficient involvement of women in policy-making is a necessary condition ( <i>sini qua non</i> ) of a democratic system. In order to achieve it, affirmative action must be taken as a step to bolster a just, democratic process.
2	Dewi, 2009 There are four obstacles in conveying aspirations, namely lack of self confidence in giving an opinion, lack of courage to voice out women's interest, lack of knowledge on women's issues, and lack of political education on gender-based needs.
3	Wardhani, 2009 Quantity and quota is important because politics is an arena that must be seized and fought for in order

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- to change the policy-making pattern and process that neglects women's interest. Affirmative action policies are a breakthrough to increase women's political participation in both political parties and the parliament.
- 4 Yanuarti, 2012  
Female members of the local legislative body is vital in policy-making, because they channel the aspirations of their constituents during the discussions. Because women are not placed in a strategic position, their interests are usually dismissed. In addition, they also lack support from society and even their families. Women's lack of interest towards politics, minimal training, inability to manage their activities in their political party and the parliament, and limited access to capital hinders are factors that limit them.
  - 5 Subono, 2013  
Quota as a prerequisite to representation is the quickest method to increase women's representation in the parliament.
  - 6 Perdana, 2014  
Although women have not made a significant impact in the parliament, they have made contributions. The effort to fulfill the minimum quota of thirty percent is still being continued intensively.
  - 7 Rosawati, 2014  
In the local legislative body, women's decision-making role is still relatively constricted because of internal and external factors. Women are viewed as a requirement to fulfill the constitutional mandate. In addition, the lack of knowledge towards women's issues, lack of confidence to convey their thoughts and opinion, and the lack of will to collaborate with other female members due to differences in vision and mission are factors that contribute to their limitations in decision-making.
  - 8 Siregar, 2014  
In Aceh, Women in the local legislative body are less likely to accommodate the aspirations and interests of women. Paired with the dominance of men in the local legislative body, women did not play a substantial role in the formulation of Local Regulation No. 11 of 2011 on the Eradication of Immorality and Actions Going Against the Qur'an, which included death by stoning as a penalty for women who commit adultery. This law marginalized the women of Aceh.
  - 9 Febriani, 2014  
The focus of the legislative body's representative are directed towards their political parties, rather than women's and public issues. The style of representation is delegation-based, meaning that political parties have a significant role in the female members' decisions. As a result, the needs of their constituents are not reflected in the policies they formulate.
  - 10 Marwah, 2015  
There are local regulations that side with women. These local regulations include the Local Regulation on the Medium Term Development Plan in Banyumas, the Local Regulation on the Restructuring of Rural Social Institutions in Purbalingga, the Local Regulation on Health Services in Hospitals in Banjarnegara, and the Local Regulation on Rural Development Planning in Cilacap.
  - 11 Ambarwati, 2018  
The significant increase in women's representation in the Indonesian and Norwegian Parliament is mainly due to the quota system, whether enacted through law (Indonesia) or voluntarily (Norwegia). Policies that were initially gender-neutral, such as the Public Health Insurance Policy and the Cash Benefit Act have benefited women. With more women participating in legislative bodies, the state will be more sensitive and responsive towards the needs of women (state feminism).
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### **Political Representation**

In *The Concept of Representation*, Hanna Pitkin identified four different perspectives on representation, namely formal, substantive, symbolic, and descriptive representation. The formal and descriptive perspective views representation as a 'way of acting' or 'acting for', while the substantive and symbolic perspective views representation as a 'way of being' or 'standing for'. In order to understand these concepts, one must know the context on which it is placed.

Formal representation is defined as a series of institutional rules or regulations that is conducted before and throughout representation. Formal representation has two dimensions: authorization and accountability. Authorization refers to how a representative gains a position or status, while accountability refers to the ability of the constituents to give sanctions to their representative for acting against or being unresponsive towards their interests.

Symbolic representation refers to the various ways a representative stand for their constituents or voters. Symbols could represent something that could, in reality, be nonexistent.

Descriptive representation refers to representation based on similarity or commonality between the representative and voters. The representative does not act for another person or group, but acts on behalf of another person or group. In this type of representation, the representative presents absence by reflecting similarity or commonality.

Substantive representation is often called the 'acting for' representation. This concept shows that a representative act on behalf or for the interest of those being represented, as both their agent and substitute. In this context, a representative represents the concerned object (or subject) or the relevant interest. Therefore, in this type of representation, does not compartmentalize issues based on geographical location or other factors like informal representation. These four types of representation postulated by Pitkin are forms of representation that are catalyzed by activities, such as making a descriptive representation or creating a symbol (Suseno, 2013).

The main issue in political representation is the relationship between the representative and those being represented, and how the representative can advocate the interests of his or her constituents. In other words, representation is related to presence and absence. The task of a representative is to present the interests of his constituents in the policy-making process (Wardhani, 2018).

There are three arguments on the importance of women's political representation in the parliament. First, without equal participation of men and women, true democracy and people's participation in the government and development is non-existent. In democracy, women's representation is a necessity. Second, the goal of development will never be achieved without women's participation, because they are vital in determining the goal of development. In order to ensure that women's interest is upheld, women's perspective is needed. Third, women's participation in legislative bodies will bring new priorities and perspectives that will protect the people, especially women and children. Significant results that are expected to be realized through the parliament is gender equality (Subono, 2013).

### **Gender-Responsive Policies**

During a discussion on gender and policy, Naila Kabeer mentioned that the World Health Organization categorizes gender-responsive policies into two categories: gender-blind policy and gender-sensitive policy. Gender-blind policy refers to policies that may seem neutral, but reflects male bias, or are formulated based on the needs and interests of men. Gender-sensitive policy refers to policies that are sensitive towards the effects of gender differences, specifically the reality that there exists a gender imbalance in society. This policy reflects sensitivity in viewing the different experiences and needs of men and women (Kabeer, 2003).

There are three approaches to gender-sensitive policies. First, policies that are gender neutral, which means that a policy focuses on achieving its goal through using accurate information on gender-based division of resources and responsibilities. This type of policy is generally oriented towards certain groups and does not specifically aim to tackle gender inequality. Second, policies that are gender-specific refers to policies that take into consideration gender inequality that has negatively affected women in the past. This type of policy is oriented towards giving benefits to women and provides support for programs and activities that have positive impact on women. Third, policies that are gender-transformative, which are policies drafted based on the awareness that women's access to financial and policy-making resources. This type of policy aims to mitigate the gender inequality faced by women and focuses on allocating financial resources to recover any losses caused by gender inequality. It also discusses women's representation and participation in the policy-making process.

The concept of representation and gender-responsive policies are beneficial in answering two questions:

1. How did the six female representatives enter politics, noting the deeply-rooted patriarchy in East Nusa Tenggara?
2. What is the role of the six female representatives in the parliament during the formulation of gender-responsive policies on maternal and child health, the environment, and labor?

## 2. Method

This study is qualitative in nature and is based on transformative paradigm, narrative strategy, and in-depth interviews. According to Creswell, this type of study will investigate issues related to the oppression of certain individuals. In order to attain a comprehensive understanding, interviews are conducted with the informants using a narrative approach. Furthermore, this study also uses case study to review public policy and to reflect human experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). The case study in this research explains representation and the role of the six female representatives in East Nusa Tenggara's legislative body during the formulation of gender-responsive policies amidst the strong patriarchal culture.

The six women representing East Nusa Tenggara during the 2014-2019 period in the local legislative bodies act as informants. The names of the six representatives are Kristien Samiyati, Adriana Kossi, Kristofora Bantang, Yeni Veronika, Angela Piwung, and Aleta Baun. In addition, the administrators of the six women's political parties, namely Partai Nasional Demokrat, Partai Golongan Karya, Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, Partai Amanat Nasional, Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat dan Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa are also informants.

In this study, the data used is primary in nature, meaning that it is retrieved directly from the source of the location and object of study. Furthermore, secondary data is obtained through literary study, which includes books, journals, research reports, documents, and other forms of writings related to the issue. The use of these secondary sources of information aims to support the concepts and theories used in this study.

## 3. Results

In the 2014 Local Legislative Election, women's representation increased significantly. Only three women were elected in 2009, while six were elected in 2014, marking a 100 percent increase. In 2015, another woman from Gerindra Party joined the legislative body during recall. In 2018, during another recall, two women from PDIP and Nasdem joined the legislative body. In total, nine women became the representation of women in East Nusa Tenggara during the 2014-2019 period.

This study focuses on six female representatives and views how these women entered politics, their candidacy process, their election, and their role in formulating policies that are gender-responsive in East Nusa Tenggara. Below are details on the six female representatives.

Tabel 2. The Six Female Representatives of the East Nusa Tenggara Province in 2014

No	Electoral Area	Name	Party	Candidacy Number
1	East Nusa Tenggara III (Sumba Islands, which consist of East Sumba, Central Sumba, West Sumba, and Southwest Sumba)	Kristien Samiyati	Nasdem	8
2		Adriana Kossi	Golkar	6
3	East Nusa Tenggara IV (Manggarai, West Manggarai, and East Manggarai District)	Kristofora Bantang	PDIP	1
4		Yeni Veronika	PAN	1
5	East Nusa Tenggara V (Sikka, Ende, Ngada, and Nagekeo District)	Angela Piwung	Hanura	3
6	East Nusa Tenggara VIII (South Central Timor	Aleta Baun	PKB	2

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District)

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Source: Jovani, 2018

These women entered politics because they received support from their families. Initially, several of these women had doubts in entering their respective political parties, but the support they received encouraged them to join and participate in the election. Their political parties also provided them with the opportunity and support to choose their electoral district, like how Kristien Samiyati, Kristofora Bantang, and Aleta Baun were allowed to run in their hometown. Adriana Kossi was elected in Sumba District, her husband's hometown. Angela Piwung was elected in Sikka, Ende, Ngada and Nagakeo District, her husband and parents' place of domicile. Yeni Veronika was elected in Manggarai District, where her husband served as regent.

Moreover, the entrances of these women into politics were driven by their confidence in their abilities, like Kristien Samiyati from Nasdem Party stated:

"I feel that I have the capabilities to enter into politics, and my parents and extended families are native to Southwest Sumba. So, it is not difficult for me to socialize. Not to mention Nasdem's promise to support me." (Interview with Kristien Samiyati, October 15, 2019).

Kristofora Bantang from PDIP supported Kristien Samiyati, stating:

"PDIP needed women to fulfill the 30 percent quota, so I entered after passing through the internal training provided. During the course of the training, I started to understand the importance of political education and that both men and women have rights." (Interview with Kristofora Bantang, July 24, 2019)

Yeni Veronika, who at the time, was the wife of Manggarai's vice-regent and vice-leader of the Family Welfare Movement (PKK) from PAN Party also believes that she had to involve herself in politics:

"My husband traveled frequently because of his position as vice-regent and vice-leader of PKK, so I directly witnessed the discrepancies between the information gathered by the government workers in the field and reality. It drove me to visit the village frequently with my driver. When I saw roads that were not paved, I asked my driver to measure it using the car's speedometer and note it down. After that, I would go home and relay the information to my husband." (Interview with Yeni Veronika, April 2, 2019)

Angela Piwung from Hanura realized her capabilities:

"I entered politics because I realized the potential within me. I feel that I have God-given talents, and I cannot waste it. So, during the election, I joined my political party. The situation back then was different from today, so entering a political party is easy." (Interview with Angela Piwung, April 5, 2019)

Aleta Baun, an environmental activist from PKB:

"In the beginning, I was curious as to what politics is like, why people were excited to be involved in it, why people fight to enter it, and the reason why they remain silent once they become involved. It drove me to learn about politics, the roles of those involved in it, and its benefits. My will grew when I finally understood what political decisions meant and its effect on people and the environment." (Interview with Aleta Baun, July 21, 2019)

The statements above elucidate that the six women entered politics because they realized their capabilities and the importance of women's involvement in politics for the common good.

### **The Views of Political Parties on Female Legislative Candidates**

In a democratic state, political parties have several functions. It is a medium for political communication, political socialization, political recruitment, conflict management, as well as a psychological and organizational medium between citizens and their government (Budiardjo, 2008).

Twelve political parties were involved in the 2014 Local Legislative Election in East Nusa Tenggara: Nasdem, PKB, PKS, PDIP, Golkar, Gerindra, Demokrat, PAN, PPP, Hanura, PKPI dan PBB. The parties that obtained the most seats were Golkar (11 seats) and PDIP (10 seats). Nasdem, Gerindra, and Demokrat each secured 8 seats. The table below provides more details on the seats each party acquired during the election.

Tabel 3 Seats Acquired by Political Parties in the 2014 East Nusa Tenggara Legislative Election

Number	Political Party	Electoral district								Number of Seats
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	Nasdem	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
2	PKB	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	5
3	PKS	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
4	PDIP	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	0	10
5	Golkar	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	11
6	Gerindra	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
7	Demokrat	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
8	PAN	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	5
9	PPP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Hanura	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	5
11	PBB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	PKPI	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
	Total	6	7	10	10	11	7	8	6	65

Source: General Elections Commission of East Nusa Tenggara

Table 3 shows the election was dominated by men, with fifty-nine (91%) being elected, while only six women (9%) were elected. Although the law has set a minimum of 30 percent, it is reflected in the number of women elected. Joining a political party is a prerequisite for legislative candidacy, so women enter into politics through a process that is dominated by men, in both quantity and quality. Male domination inside political parties is correlated to the social and cultural view that stems from society's cultural values. Hence, minimal women's representation is a direct reflection of Indonesia's culture. Women's representation in politics becomes difficult because of the patriarchy, which considers politics as part of a man's world. This is supported by the fact that the administrators of political parties in East Nusa Tenggara are mostly men, while only a handful number of women are in a position of leadership.

The discussion on male domination in politics is highly tied to patriarchy, similar to Sylvia Walby's (1990) writing in *Theorizing Patriarchy*. She defined patriarchy as a system and practice of social structure where men dominate, oppress, and exploit women. There are two forms of patriarchy, which are public and private. In private patriarchy, oppression towards women are placed on household production, where a male would control a female inside the house. In public patriarchy, women are oppressed in her country and workplace. In addition, politics that are public in nature are highly influenced by patriarchy, in both policies and practice. Due to this, women faces many obstacles when entering politics.

Based on the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) and the International Business Machine's study, recruitment pattern tend to follow or be determined by primordial factors, such as religion, regional similarities, close relationships, and access to the leaders of the political parties. Furthermore, a study conducted by LIPI's Political Research Center and the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) reveals that the selection and candidacy process of legislative candidates in Indonesia are influenced by their party's leader. (Dewi, 2018).

With relations to that, several political party leaders admit that the daily administration of their political party is occupied by men. Women only enter the administration of the party because it is a condition for political parties to participate in the election. Another reason why political parties are dominated by men is that they have been long-standing members of the party. Political parties provide freedom for women to actively engage inside the party, but their involvement are usually related to women empowerment, and social or religious activities.

Below are the opinions of six political party administrators from Nasdem, Golkar, PDIP, PAN, Hanura, and PKB, respectively:

Kasimirus Kolo is the vice-leader of Nasdem's Regional Board of Directors' Organization, Membership, and Regeneration Sector in East Nusa Tenggara. He explained Nasdem's effort to increase women's participation in the election:

"Nasdem Party is open in nature. This means that we are open to every citizen that has capacity, integrity, and electability. The party provides the space for each citizen to be involved in the executive and legislative elections, including women, especially because the law has set a minimum quota of 30 percent. For Nasdem, that condition is understandable and should be applied." (Interview with Kasimirus Kolo, October 22, 2019)

Ince Sayuna, the secretary-general of Golkar's East Nusa Tenggara Regional Body, stated:

"Women are a party's political asset and they attract the public. Golkar sees that, in order to gain support from the people, we need to focus on women and young people. Golkar's 2019 campaign's tagline is "women and young people". Hence, we trust women to hold key positions in our administrative structure. In order to become a legislative candidate, we provide everyone the opportunity, but they have to undergo training and prepare their mentality and capabilities as a politician. Moreover, Golkar has a women's association, so the quota for female candidates is always fulfilled." (Interview with Ince Sayuna, July 25, 2019)

Emanuel Kolfidus, the vice-secretary of PDIP's East Nusa Tenggara Regional Body, said:

"When the quota of 30 percent was enacted, our party intensively conducted training and recruitment, including organizing training programs for women as a response to the affirmative action. The training programs were also conducted at national level because there were many women who passed the selections and was even running as candidates. Two women elected in 2014 (Kristofora Bantang and Aulora Modok) started from the ground up, and I think that it was out of their own volition." (Interview with Emanuel Kolfidus, October 16, 2019)

Mathen Lenggu, the Secretary of PAN's East Nusa Tenggara Regional Board of Directors, stated:

"Political parties are obligated to recruit a minimum of thirty percent women from all the existing administrators, whether it is on the district, provincial, and central level. We have conducted this, but there are only a handful of women in East Nusa Tenggara that are interested in politics." (Interview with Marthen Lenggu, October 22, 2019)

Hamdan Saleh Batjo, the vice-leader of Hanura's regional body in East Nusa Tenggara, mentioned:

"We provide our female members with opportunities, and this is regulated inside our articles of association. So, we do not only prioritize men, but also women, and abide with the law. The law states that there is a 30 percent minimum for female legislative candidates." (Interview with Hamdan Saleh Batjo, October 24, 2019)

Yucundianus Lepa, the head of Kebangkitan Bangsa Party's East Nusa Tenggara Regional Board of Directors, mentioned:

"In principle, we encourage women in East Nusa Tenggara to be more active. It means that if there is a desire for women and children to be taken care of more profoundly, women are in a more suitable position to do so." (Interview with Yucundianus Lepa, July 30, 2019)

In the 2014 elections, only six women were elected as legislative members. In terms of quantity, this number is still far below expectations, because they only make up 9,2 percent. From a political standpoint, aside from the requirements set by the law, these six political parties have provided access and opportunity for these women to participate in the party. Their parties support these willful and strong women to be the people's representatives. Below are the results of the female representative's election from six different parties

Tabel 4. Votes Acquired by the Six Female Representatives of East Nusa Tenggara's Regional Legislative Body in the 2014 Election

Party	Candidacy Number	Elected Candidates	Areas of Election	Number of Votes	Valid Vote Rating
Nasdem	8	Kristien Samiyati	3	8.331	1
Golkar	6	Adriana Kossi	3	14.207	1
PDIP	1	Kristofora Bantang	4	10.922	1
PAN	1	Yeni Veronika	4	23.100	1
Hanura	3	Angela Piwung	5	7.047	1
PKB	2	Aleta Baun	8	3.897	1

Source: General Elections Commission of East Nusa Tenggara

Table 4 shows that two parties, PAN and PDIP, placed female candidates as their first candidate. In fact, Yeni Veronika from PAN was the candidate who acquired the most votes. PDIP placed their female candidate as the first candidate and gained 10.992 votes. PKB placed AletaBaun as the second, and although she garnered the least votes, she still managed to be elected. Hanura was the only party to select an already incumbent representative to run again. Golkar and Nasdem placed their female candidates in the receiving end of the elections, that is the sixth and eighth position, but these women still succeeded in becoming representatives.

With relations to East Nusa Tenggara's culture, there are several differing perspectives on women's involvement in politics. East Nusa Tenggara upholds the patrilineal system, so in both socio-political and cultural activities, men are prioritized more than women. However, with the increase of political education and awareness, society's trust towards female representatives grew. In addition, after becoming representatives, women have fulfilled the promises they made during their campaign and, as a result, successfully won the people's hearts.

### **The Role of the Six Female Representatives in Formulating Gender-Responsive Policies**

Female legislative members hold a key role in the formulation of gender-responsive policies and budgets. They encourage the government to arrange the budget for a wide range of activities, including for integrated health centers, food help for the malnourished, vitamins for pregnant women, women's creative economy, professional training, education, and many more. In carrying out their aspirational function, they become the door for women and children suffering to fulfill their needs.

The six female representatives' role were evident in the formulation of three local regulations: Local Regulation No. 1 of 2016 on the Implementation on Maternal and Child Health, Local Regulation No. 4 of 2016 on the Implementation of Environmental Protection and Management, and Local Regulation No. 7 of 2016 on the Service and Supervision of Indonesian Migrant Workers.

Local Regulation No. 1 of 2016 on the Implementation and Maternal and Child Health was initiated by the provincial legislative body and was discussed by the Fifth Commissionoverseeing Social Welfare. Their scope of responsibility includes transmigration and labor, education, art and culture, young people and sports, health and healthcare, women's empowerment and child protection, regional libraries, disaster mitigation, drugs and HIV/AIDS. During the discussions, there were three female representatives involved: Kristien Samiyati, Kristofora Bantang, and Aleta Baun. The other three women, Adriana Kossi, Yeni Veronika, and Angela Piwung was not part of the Fifth Commission. However, they also provided feedbacks and recommendations during joint meetings, as well as lobbied and communicated with the head of the Fifth Commission and their fellow fraction members in the Fifth Commission.

Local Regulation No. 4 of 2016 on the Implementation of Environmental Protection and Management was initiated by the local government through East Nusa Tenggara's Environmental and Forestry Services. The discussion of this regulation was conducted by the Second Commission specializing in Economy. Their scope of responsibility includes trade and industry, farming, marine and fisheries, forestry, food security and distribution, logistics, unions, tourism, and creative economy. During the discussions, the only female representative involved was Yeni Veronika. However, other female representatives also lobbied in their respective fractions.

Local Regulation No. 7 of 2016 on the Service and Supervision of Indonesian Migrant Workers was initiated and discussed by the Fifth Commission. Similar to the first regulation on maternal and child health, the female representatives involved were Kristien Samiyati, Kristofora Bantang dan Aleta Baun.

Below are the results from the interviews with Kristin Samiyati, Adriana Kossi, Kristofora Bantang, Yeni Veronika, Angela Piwung dan Aleta Baun, respectively.

### ***Kristien Samiyati***

As a member of the Fifth Commission, she explained the discussion of the Local Regulation on Maternal and Child Health, as well as the Local Regulation on Indonesian Migrant Workers.

"The Maternal and Child Health Regulation was formulated by the Fifth Commission when I was still incumbent, so I was involved in it. As representatives, we have a similar understanding and vision. We supported this regulation because 22 districts/cities have similar issues with regards to it. So, we concluded that this regulation is important for East Nusa Tenggara. From there, we agreed to formulate a regulation on how to administer the death of mother and child in East Nusa Tenggara. During the discussions, there were no obstacles and debates because we have all agreed to mitigate the issues using this regulation. Why is this regulation urgent? This is a constitutional mandate that needs to be passed down to the provinces and districts/cities."

"Similar to the Maternal and Child Health Regulation, the Fifth Commission initiated and formulated the Indonesian Workers' Regulation. Issues regarding Indonesian migrant workers in East Nusa Tenggara is very troublesome, so this regulation is necessary. Currently, there is a moratorium on the dispatch of Indonesian migrant workers. This is the perfect time for us to contribute, instead of letting the government handle the issue alone. I think that everyone needs to think of it as a communal problem, so it's the responsibility of both the executive and legislative body. This moratorium, for me, is only a temporary break for us to overview where the drawback lies, and see whether or not these workers are fully equipped, in order to mitigate future problems."

Kristien Samiyati admits that the discussions were not always smooth, but their mutual commitment to build East Nusa Tenggara led them to agree on solving the issues through the regulation.

"The biggest obstacle we faced during the discussion is when we still had different understandings, but we realized our priorities, so we minimized the friction between us by understanding that this is an issue that needs to be solved. There was no lobbying. Everyone agreed and we were supported by the government, who also thinks that this issue needs to be regulated by law."

The Local Regulation on Environmental Protection and Management was formulated by the Second Commission, so Kristien Samiyati was not directly involved in it. However, she communicated with her fellow party members in the Second Commission. She also communicated her thoughts on it during Nasdem fraction's meeting. She came from Sumba, a land rich in natural resources and culture. So, she fully supported the regulation.

"This regulation was initiated by the provincial government and garnered support from us, especially because I went directly into the community to oversee a sugar cane field. As a representative, I support it because I have conducted research and there is an area in East Sumba that holds the potential to become the center for sugar cane production, and it could affect other sectors as well. In East Sumba, the fields are interminable, so we have to be open when someone wants to utilize the lands and hire the locals. There may also be investors. So, it is important for investors, the local government, and the locals there to have a clear commitment and realize that this is a form of

symbiotic mutualism. For me, we should all support something that is positive and beneficial to the public."

### ***Adriana Kossi***

Although Adriana Kossi was not part of the Fifth Commission, she has a similar concern.

"During the discussion of the Indonesian Migrant Workers' Regulation, I was part of the Fourth Commission and a member of the Regional Policy Planning Body. We did not face any challenges while discussing the regulation. We agreed that the regulation is important to maternal and child health in East Nusa Tenggara. In my electoral district, there are many cases of underage marriages. These children are not aware of the consequences it holds towards reproductive health. Young girls do not have knowledge on the nutrients that can benefit her and her baby. As a result, these babies are malnourished. Furthermore, there is very few medical workers in Sumba villages. Therefore, we agreed to formulate and enact the regulation swiftly. I thank God there were no suspicions among the legislative members, and that we all worked hard because it is a priority in East Nusa Tenggara."

Coming from Sumba District, Adriana Kossi have witnessed the exploitation East Nusa Tenggara's natural resources caused by the government's issuance of permits to investors. This could have long-lasting, detrimental effects to future generations:

"I witnessed cases of government officials abusing their power through issuing permits to investors. This action has led to environmental damage, especially in the mining areas of South Central Timor, Ngada, Nagekeo, Manggarai, Larantuka, and Sumba. The marine environment in Labuan Bajo, Alor, and Sumba are also damaged. As a legislative member and part of Golkar, I fully supported this regulation. If the damage to East Nusa Tenggara's environment is irreversible, what will our future generations eat? There are also many cultural sites and lands that needs to be protected. So, during our fraction's discussions, we asked for the protection and management of marine and land resources, as well as the protection of forests from logging. The local regulation specifically regulates these issues because the government was afraid of the repercussions of mining activities towards the environment. East Nusa Tenggara is rich in natural resources, so people are attracted to invest in it. So, I am grateful that the government supports this regulation as well."

During Golkar fraction's meeting, Adriana Kossi conveyed that this regulation should be realized quickly, noting the substantial environmental damage in several areas in East Nusa Tenggara. One of the examples is the exploitation conducted by a mining corporation in Mollo, South Central Timor. There are also exploitation occurring in the Flores Islands, Ngada, Nagekeo, Manggarai, Larantuka, and Sumba.

During the discussion of the Indonesian Migrant Workers' Regulation:

"We were saddened because many of our daughters became victims of illegal migrant worker trafficking. Because most of them are elementary school graduates, a trip overseas and high income is sufficient to trick them. Boys were also tricked into it. The members of the Regional Policy Planning Body and the Fifth Commission initiated and agreed on enacting this regulation. In 2015-2016, the discussions were quite difficult. The fact showed a high number of illegal migrant workers, many of whom did not return to Indonesia. So, we were not sure if they were dead or alive. During the discussions, we came to an agreement in the end. The only difficulty we faced is finding illegal migrant worker traffickers who were widespread in many villages, and targeted our daughters and poor families. I am grateful that the regulation is now implemented. Although there is still a moratorium on the dispatch of migrant workers, training are being given by the relevant government services. The police are also looking for these illegal agents."

### ***Kristofora Bantang***

The Local Regulation on Maternal and Child Health was catalyzed by the central body's policy on Maternal and Child Health Revolution, which obligated all provinces to implement this policy through their local regulation. As explained by Kristofora Bantang.

"I was in the Fifth Commission and a member of the Honorary Council. Similar to other legislative members, we agreed to prioritize the regulation on maternal and child health. The discussions were quite soft because it was a mandate given by the central legislative body, so we were obligated to implement it, especially knowing the worrisome situation regarding maternal and child health, such as the high mortality rate of mother and child in East Nusa Tenggara. We feel that this problem is shared among us, and thus making it the shared responsibility, be it husbands, fathers, mothers, health services, religious and cultural leaders, non-governmental organizations, and even businessmen. We all have to help these women and children. During the discussions, we also talked about the facilities and infrastructure needed, and we agreed to tackle this issue together. It made me remember when I was campaigning in the villages of West Manggarai, Flores, in early 2014. The streets were damaged because of rain and heavy transportations like trucks and cars carrying food help. I met pregnant women who were having trouble mobilizing because of the damaged streets, and it made traveling with motorbike almost impossible. There were also very few medical workers in these villages. It was very saddening to see pregnant women staying at home and not being able to monitor their babies' health. So, it drove me to lobby this issue to my colleagues in the Regional Policy Planning Body so they could complete and enact the regulation quickly. I understand that this is a problem faced by women and children in my electoral district, East Nusa Tenggara IV, so I kept on pushing for its solution. Thankfully, the regulation has now been implemented."

Kristofora Bantang is originally from Manggarai District, and although she was not directly involved, she conveyed her opinion about the importance of this regulation in her fraction's meeting. Before being a legislative member, in 2004 and 2009, Kristofora and a non-governmental organization demonstrated against a mining company in West Manggarai.

"This local regulation was initiated by the provincial government and discussed by the Second Commission. I was not involved in it, but my colleagues and I fully supported the regulation because it can protect East Nusa Tenggara from the effects of mining and protect its marine environment. Along with a non-governmental environmental organization, we focused on advocating women to reject mining activities through community meetings and women's movement. After joining the local legislative body, I made road infrastructure the main priority because it could enhance the economy. Liang Dara, a sub-district of West Manggarai had damaged roads that is now currently under renovation."

During the in-commission discussions, Kristofora Bantang conveyed her views on the issues, and also lobbied other legislative members. There were no heated debates during the discussion of the immigrant workers' regulation because it received support, and the legislative members agreed that it should be prioritized.

"East Nusa Tenggara's local regulation requires many references, so communication between the local legislative body and government is needed. The idea to formulate this regulation has existed since an extended period of time because there were many cases of illegal Indonesian immigrant workers dying, false documentation, questionable administration, and other issues. There were also bodies returned home in very appalling conditions, with no identity whatsoever. This issue concerns all of East Nusa Tenggara, so we formulated the regulation based on the data and references we received. There was the issue of complex administration as well, so we had to converge it into one system. The moratorium has rendered the regulation ineffective. It is unfortunate because we have spent quite a hefty amount on formulating the regulation, so the activity could have proceeded as usual. We all gave our opinions during the discussion of the regulation because each of did a comparative study to Nunukan and Kendari because they had already enacted a local regulation on migrant workers. It was quite a long process as well because we had to communicate with the police department and non-governmental organization to hear their opinions. I remember that everyone in the Fifth Commission supported this regulation. Honestly, it was very tiring because it involved almost every district in East Nusa Tenggara."

***Yeni Veronika***

Yeni Veronika was part of the Second Commission specializing in Economy. The commission's scope of responsibility includes trade and industry, agriculture and plantation, farming, marine and fisheries, forestry, food security and distribution, logistics, union, tourism, and creative economy. They have a similar concern with regards to maternal and child health.

"I was a representative designated in the Second Commission. Like other female representatives in the Regional Policy Planning Body (Kristien Samiyati, Adriana Kossi, and Angela Piwung), there were no obstacles during the discussions of this regulation because we all agreed that it is an issue that needs to be resolved. Based on the data we obtained from East Nusa Tenggara IV (Manggarai District), there were no issues with regards to maternal and child health. The people are aware about the importance of maternal and child health. This is the data I received from work visits while I went into the villages as the head of the Family Welfare Movement. Based on the information I gathered, the main issues in Manggarai with regards to maternal and child health are breast, cervical, and tongue cancer. These three illnesses increase each year. Although these illnesses can only be treated with the technology offered in hospitals, the locals are only able to go to public health centers due to financial limitations. In addition, the welfare of medical workers in village health centers, as well as the quality of health and education needs to be taken care of by the government. So, with the enactment of this regulation, the welfare of medical workers is being catered."

Yeni Veronika is one of the few women in the Second Commission that conveyed her thoughts during the discussion of the environmental regulation, because she realized the importance it holds towards East Nusa Tenggara's rich natural resources and its vulnerability to exploitation:

"The Local Regulation on Environmental Protection and Management was initiated by the provincial government and the Second Commission. We prioritized it in our fraction's meetings because we understand its importance and we fully supported it. I presented issues related to water in my electoral district, and stressed the role and function of the legislative body, especially our role as representatives of East Nusa Tenggara. Why can the people of Sumatera and Java obtain clean water from its rivers? Why can't the water in East Nusa Tenggara's river be utilized? Representatives of East Nusa Tenggara should be able to bring forward the agenda on budget allocation for District Three, Manggarai, so that people are able to access clean water and benefit from it. Not all the villages have water springs. Even if they do, the debit is small. So, I think that we can use the rivers to support the people's lives. People in Manggarai Raya choose their representatives not based on the party they are associated to, but based on the individual's capabilities to fight for their interests and increase budget allocation. Why? If representatives of Java and Sumatera are able to do so, why are we unable to do it?"

With regards to the Indonesian Migrant Workers' Regulation, Yeni Veronika was not part of the Fifth Commission, but she also had a similar concern.

"In relations to formulating a gender-responsive policy in 2016, I did not fight alone. All of us in the local legislative body, especially those in the Regional Policy Planning Body and their related governmental services also made efforts to realize it. The Fifth Commission were in charge of the Indonesian Migrant Workers' Regulation. In 2015, there were three illegal Indonesian migrant workers in my area who died, and I handled it first-hand. The government turned a blind eye and there were debates among the legislative members as well because it concerned our electoral district. So, I did what I had to do: I mastered the law and gathered data on the issue."

***Angela Piwung***

Although Angela Piwung was not part of the Fifth Commission, she had a similar concern as well.

"I closely followed the discussions on the Maternal and Child Health Regulation, so I know the policy-making process of this regulation. Everyone was excited to discuss it because maternal and child health was a problematic issue in East Nusa Tenggara. As a member of the Fourth Commission, I think that development should also support women and children, and we have seen many issues in East Nusa Tenggara relating to development. For example, lack of hygiene could be a contributing

factor to the high mortality rate among mothers and children in East Nusa Tenggara. So, hygiene became our main focus. In my electoral district, East Nusa Tenggara V, we have resolved the issue on maternal and child health. One of the causes was the fact that many mothers were not aware of the nutrition they need. For them, delivering is the main focus, while they do not pay attention to the pregnancy itself. It's even common for many mothers to eat less when they are pregnant. In the past (2009-2014), there were only a few public health centers, so the government decided to build smaller scale public health centers in every village. Many of these smaller scale public health centers closed down, because for the mothers to give birth, they still have to visit the public health center that is far away from their village. However, many midwives are now practicing in these villages. So, the mortality rate of mothers and children has been decreasing. Death can also be caused by abnormalities during pregnancy and other factors, nevertheless I am glad that this regulation has been implemented in East Nusa Tenggara. Now, we just have to see the results and evaluate in the future."

With relations to the environmental regulation, Angela Piwung who is from the election area of Sikka, Ende, Ngada, and Nagekeo conveyed her thoughts and views in the fraction meetings.

"The environment of the area I represent is beautiful. It is not like in Kalimantan, where illegal mining activities run rampant, because the churches' intervention is heavy, and they reject activities that damage the environment. There are no contractors here and the government is strict because the people reject those kinds of activities. Furthermore, local leaders and indigenous people have strong influence, and they are against it as well. There is also an area that has potential for steel mining. In the past, there were mining activities conducted, but it stopped due to the people's rejection and protests.

According to Angela Piwung, although she was not in the Second Commission during the discussion of this regulation, there is always discourse among legislative members, which is important because they are not part of the same commission. As long as the public's welfare is concerned, the legislative members will always give their support, and there were no challenges faced during the formulation of these regulations. They all realized that East Nusa Tenggara is troubled by many issues in differing sectors.

"Before we propose an idea, we always discuss it beforehand with those in our commission and ask for their opinion. The power of the council members lie in their bargaining power. For example, if we were to propose an idea or a regulation, it should be beneficial and not detrimental for the public."

Angela Piwung's stance on the Indonesian Immigrant Workers Regulation is also similar to that of the other six female representatives. She thinks that the regulation needs to be formulated because there is a constant increase in illegal migrant worker trafficking in East Nusa Tenggara.

"In my electoral district, there are very few of these cases, but there is a substantial number of cases in Timor and Sumba. I have been incumbent for two periods, so this is an issue I am familiar with. We always remind women to take precaution when working overseas as a migrant worker. If they have the skills and capabilities, they are allowed to work overseas, provided that they have the necessary documents. In Flores, these cases rarely occur. The migrant workers from Flores are equipped with legal documents. At the beginning, we had to directly visit the areas involved and ask for the people's and the local leaders' opinion on the matter. We wanted to know if the regulation would have positive impact or not. The Commission also discussed the budget beforehand. The stages were discussed with the stake holders. All of the representatives went to their respective areas. I went to Ende District with regards to the Regulation on Tourism, Ngada District with regards to the Maternal and Child Health Regulation, and Ende District with regards to the Indonesian Migrant Workers Regulation. The people of Ende did not agree with the initial draft, so they provided us with their opinions and feedbacks. With regards to the stake holders, we usually approach the local government, the locals, and the relevant government services. The implementation of the Maternal and Child Health Regulation was outstanding, and the response towards the Indonesian Migrant Workers' Regulation was positive. With regards to the latter bill, the people were not heavily involved because village governments are often involved in illegal migrant worker trafficking. They often issue false documentation. Ever since the

regulation was enacted and enforced, there have been a decrease in the number of cases. Of course, there are still some agents that go through the back door, but not as much as before."

The discussion on the Indonesian Migrant Workers' Regulation did not receive any internal challenges. All of the legislative members collaborated to find a solution. However, Angela Piwung and her fellow colleagues faced difficulties during the implementation of the regulation due to the lack of socialization and control.

"All of the members agreed. Before we propose an idea, we always discuss it beforehand with those in our commission and ask for their opinion. The power of the council members lie in their bargaining power. For example, if we were to propose an idea or a regulation, it should be beneficial and not detrimental for the public. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of this regulation is questionable. There is a lack of socialization from the local government to the people. We act as the controller, but the regulation itself is only effective when there are new cases. The failure to implement the regulation as a whole is also due to the lack of budget. Without the necessary funding, the regulation will only exist in paper form".

### ***Aleta Baun***

Aleta Baun is a member of the Fifth Commission and she has a similar view with the other five female representatives in relations to the Maternal and Child Health Regulation.

"I was part of the Deliberation Body and the Fifth Commission, the Commission that initiated the Maternal and Child Health Regulation. In relations to the health of mother and child, we have to trace it thirty years into the past, and count the death rate instead of birth rate. For thirty years, our death rate was tied to culture. Firstly, I am not referring to village shamans. I am referring to how comfortable the locals are with giving birth and the methods they use to strengthen their health. This refers to whether or not they are willing to plant vegetables, because it could affect their health. I was born traditionally, not inside a hospital. My mother kneeled before the earth, the giver of life, and she raised her hand to God. She said that when my child is born, she will praise the Lord. Then, the child will shout and receive the responsibilities bestowed by mother earth. The responsibilities take the form of local culture. My question is whether or not a pregnant woman has to lie on her back while she gives birth. Why is that so? Why is the mortality rate of mothers higher than that of children? A newborn child cannot change his or her family. He or she has a lineage that can be traced to his or her ancestors. The strings that attach us cannot be replaced or broken. Rules are important, culture is important, and consumption is important. The high number of mortality rate among mothers and children is correlated to the environment. If there is no water, how can they plant cassava?"

Before becoming a legislative member, she was an environmental activist. In the 1990s, along with the people from her area, she opposed the mining activities in Mollo, South Central Timor.

"I was called to defend the interest of Mollo's indigenous people because land, water, and rock are our identity. It is a blessing from God that requires our protection. If these rocks are mined, how will we obtain water? Where will we farm? How will our children eat? Where will we live? Our lives have been sustained by these rocks. We have been fed and sustained by these rocks, not by the mining company".

After being elected as a local legislative member representing East Nusa Tenggara in the 2014 Election, AletaBaun focused on issues relating to the environment and indigenous people. This was the reason she joined PKB and was elected as a representative. During the formulation of the Environmental Regulation, she conveyed her opinion in her fraction's meeting and to the head of the Second Commission. Below is the thoughts she conveyed.

"Until today, Indonesia still has not understood the environment's importance. It reflects in how we manage our budgets. We focus on achieving certain economic targets, and we neglect the environment in the process. This is detrimental, especially for the people of East Nusa Tenggara. If we refer to the environment, we are referring to certain people. If we refer to health and education, we are referring to trend. People think of health and education, but fail to see that the environment is its foundational basis. The 2016 Local Environmental Regulation was discussed by the Second Commission. I was not

present when it was being discussed, but I sent a message to the head of my fraction and the head of the Second Commission. People see that the Fifth Commission focuses on women, starting from their health, work, education, to empowerment. I choose to focus on the environment first before health and education because I thought that, if the lands were dry, how will we plant and obtain water?"

As have been stated previously, Aleta Baun's main goal in entering politics is to continue advocating issues relating to the environment. She anticipated future mining projects that were going to be conducted in the western side of East Nusa Tenggara (Flores, Sumba, Rote, and Sabu), and her goal was realized when the Environmental Regulation was enacted. To her, although this regulation has been enacted, its implementation has not been effective. The most difficult challenge she faced is the different understanding among legislative members about the importance of environmental issues.

With regards to the issue on Indonesian migrant workers, she conveyed her thoughts during the commission meeting and contributed in finding solutions to solve the issues in East Nusa Tenggara.

"In my electoral district, South Central Timor, there has been many cases of illegal migrant worker trafficking. The main issue lies not within the regulation, but with its implementation. There are still many victims who choose to work overseas, without the necessary documents, in order to fulfill their needs".

With regards to it, Aleta Baun proposed a solution:

"I proposed the idea to open job opportunities for the public. We can use creativity as a resource to bolster development in the villages. East Nusa Tenggara's lands are not poor, and we have creative people here. These people made weaved fabrics that are unique and different from other areas. We also excel in farming. Where people can freely marry in Java, cows and pigs can marry freely in East Nusa Tenggara. The reason is that there are many people in Java, but more farm animals in East Nusa Tenggara. We need bait, not rules. Why did they go to Malaysia? Why are they looking for work? To get money. Why do you give them rules? It is funny because they need money and work, not regulations. To me, there is nothing wrong with migrant workers, provided that there are clear regulations and process. If they find a place to work and sustain themselves, they will obey the law because they are prosperous and secure. Imagine giving impoverished people regulations. Indonesian migrant workers are mainly centered in three districts (South Central Timor, Belu, and West Sumba). Although South Central Timor has the most non-governmental organizations, it also has the highest rate of illegal trafficking. You can enact as many regulations as you want, but if there are no jobs available, then it will be rendered useless. If we see closely, it is not caused by loss of land or lack of skills. They are not going to accept the fact that they are poor. If Belu and South Central Timor are poor, will their governments provide them food everyday? Of course, not. The people also do not have the time to work in plantations. So, if they do not, I stand before them. Yes, they eat three times a day, but only corn. They never ask for money, nor borrow from others. They are only lacking in skills. For example, skills on turning corn into twenty different types of food. They need to be taught how to make use of what they have. For example, turning cassava into cake so it has added value and can be marketed. They need skills, knowledge, and technology".

The solution proposed by Aleta Baun comprises of skill and technology. Aside from the regulation, there needs to be synergy between the Labor and Transmigration Services and other relevant government services. In addition, it is important to give technical guidance to the people. For example, in South Central Timor, there should be training programs to improve their skills and educate them on food management, as well as how to market the food they produce.

Three female legislative members in the Fifth Commission, Kristien Samiyati, Kristofora Bantang, and Aleta Baun have similar thoughts and views on the Indonesian Migrant Workers Regulation. They all come from areas that are prone to illegal migrant worker trafficking. Furthermore, based on their work visits and interviews with the locals, this problem is evident in 22 districts/cities in East Nusa Tenggara. Therefore, they conducted a comparative study to Nunukan and Kendari in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding and different perspectives to solve the issue. As Aleta Baun have said, aside from formulating regulations, other solutions

need to be made. This can be achieved through opening job opportunities and equipping people with skills and providing them with transfer of technology so they can create and innovate. This guidance needs to be conducted continuously by the relevant government services, and even non-governmental organizations that are focused on empowerment.

During the discussion on the Maternal and Child Health Regulation, these women did not face any obstacles and the parliament was in agreement that the regulation is needed in East Nusa Tenggara and must be prioritized. The content of the regulation does not only encompass maternal and child health, but also increasing the health of school kids, the public's role, funding, guidance and control, as well as awards and incentives. The government of East Nusa Tenggara has promised to ensure the availability of medical and non-medical workers, as well as facilitate the empowerment of those in the medical field through local public figures, communities, non-governmental organization, and businesses.

When the environmental regulation was discussed, these female representatives also did not face any challenges. The communication and discourse proceeded smoothly. The initiation of this regulation by the province responded to the worries of the legislative members because the people they represent strongly rejects mining activities in their respective areas.

Similarly, the discussion of the migrant workers regulation that were initiated by the local legislative body received feedbacks because there were an increasing number of illegal migrant worker trafficking each year. Female legislative members were doubtful with the regulations' implementation, because they think that the regulation cannot fully resolve the issue, but it needs to be partnered with concrete actions through education, health, job opportunities, training programs, and the usage of technology and local wisdom.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study concludes the following: Firstly, in a socio-cultural context, although East Nusa Tenggara's patriarchy is still deeply-rooted and discourages women from participating in politics and the government, this does not fully hinder women from doing so. Female representatives are supported by their families, and this serves their social capital. Women are trusted to become the people's representatives because they are capable of representing the issues faced by the people. As both women and mothers, their approach makes people comfortable with their presence. The reason is that East Nusa Tenggara's highly honors mothers. This is utilized by the female representatives as a strategy to build a relationship with their people. After being legislative members, these women conducted periodical visits and listened to the inputs of their constituents.

Secondly, in relations to the selection process inside politics parties. The selection is commonly conducted by the leaders and elites of a party, which are mostly men. Even though the political parties in East Nusa Tenggara are dominated by men, the constitution mandates that at least 30 percent of the members should consist of women. Two of the female representatives (Angela Piwung and Kristofora Bantang) entered their respective political parties due to their own volition, while the other four (Kristien Samiyati, Adriana Kossi, Yeni Veronika, and Aleta Baun) entered because they were asked by the leaders of their political parties. These leaders opined that women brings variety. Out of the six female representatives, five were directly elected in the 2014 elections. This shows the people's trust towards them. Their campaign, which focused on health, the environment, and economic empowerment received a positive response from the people.

Thirdly, the roles of the six women in formulating policies that are gender-responsive did not receive any negative feedbacks from other members of the parliament. The key to this is their ability to communicate. They did not voice their opinions aggressively, but they conveyed it in an eloquent manner and supported it with factual information from the field. In addition, they also conversed outside the forum, and approached their commission's leader and other members of their fraction.

## Acknowledgements

This research is based on a dissertation sponsored by The Republic of Indonesia's Secretary of Finance's Endowment Fund for Education.

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