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# Elevating Women's Roles as Catalysts for Transformation in Manado, Indonesia



The city of Manado has been selected as the implementation site for a pilot project in Indonesia. Manado is surrounded by the Sulawesi Sea, Philippines, and the Pacific Ocean to the north; the Maluku Sea to the east; Tomini Bay to the south; and Gorontalo Province to the west. Based on GIZ 3RproMar baseline data, the population of Manado is approximately 454,606 people. The Bunaken National Park is located 3 kilometers from the coast of Manado. This marine park is one of Indonesia's first national parks and one of the tourist destinations around the Likupang Super Priority Destination (DSP). Moreover, the Manado community is renowned for its progressiveness, particularly in empowering women to assume leadership roles within churches and communities for an extended period. The roles of decision-makers and breadwinners are not exclusively dominated by males. Overall, Manadonese communities are characterized by their egalitarian values, with gender segregation progressively diminishing over the years.

## Why Gender Mainstreaming Matters and The Pilot Actions

This initiative highlights how **integrating gender perspectives** into waste management not only enhances **social equity** but also improves **environmental outcomes**. It focuses on recognizing women's contributions, reducing burdens, and empowering their roles across the waste management value chain.

In Manado, gender dynamics play a crucial role in how waste is managed and experienced. Women often bear the primary responsibility for household waste, yet they remain under-recognized in formal waste management systems. Vulnerable groups, especially women waste pickers at locations like Sumompo Landfill in Manado, face unsafe and inequitable working conditions. These realities highlight the urgent need for gender-responsive approaches that acknowledge and address the burdens, risks, and contributions of women. To tackle these challenges, the 3RproMar pilot project has implemented targeted actions in several targeted locations in Manado, ensuring that women are not just beneficiaries, but active leaders and change agents in marine debris reduction:

### Sumompo Landfill

A women-led cooperative group has been formed, providing economic and legal empowerment for informal waste pickers. Basic infrastructure such as shelters, sanitation facilities, and meeting spaces have been built to improve working conditions. Women waste pickers also receive targeted education and coaching.

### TPS3R Cempaka & Malendeng

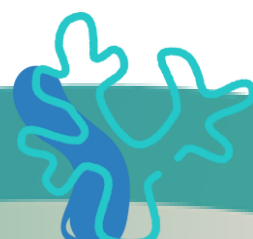
Facility upgrades now ensure safer and more inclusive environments for both male and female waste sorters—acknowledging the roles and safety needs of all genders.

### Tongkaina and Malalayang

Community outreach activities target housewives and school communities, promoting the idea that managing waste is a shared responsibility, not a woman's burden alone.

### Molas and Bailang

Women community leaders have taken center stage in advocating for eco-friendly practices. Educational materials such as flipcharts emphasize joint responsibility in managing waste and protecting the environment.





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## ■ Key Stakeholders

A range of actors are contributing to gender-transformative outcomes:

- **Waste Pickers and Sorters:** 50 women at Sumompo Landfill (24 members in the Cooperative Group); 2 women and 12 men sorting at the TPS3Rs.
- **Local Educators & Champions:** 8 female community educators and activists from the EduTeam, including teachers and NGO workers.
- **Community Leaders:** 5 neighborhood heads (3 women, 2 men) are actively involved in supporting behavior change.
- **Women's Groups in Family Welfare (PKK) and Religious Institutions** are mobilizing over 140 women to become agents of change.

Local authorities and subdistrict (kecamatan) officials, alongside NGOs and the private sector, form **the backbone of multi-stakeholder collaboration**.



## ■ Impact Snapshot



The formation of a women-led cooperative gives waste pickers legal identity, income opportunities, and a safer, more dignified working environment.

Formalising  
Informal Workers



Increased plastic recovery and segregation help reduce landfill volume and marine litter, directly contributing to cleaner neighborhoods and coastlines.

Environmental  
Protection



Over 140 women — from PKK (women's groups), churches, and schools — have been engaged in interactive education programs promoting waste separation and eco-responsibility.

Increased  
Awareness



Female champions in Molas, Bailang, and Tongkaina are now peer educators, inspiring their communities with everyday sustainable actions on household waste management.

Women Leading  
The Way

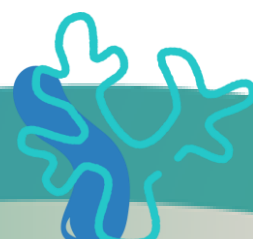
## ■ Monitoring and Way Forward

Monitoring tools help measure success, adjust approaches, and scale impact:

- **Tracking cooperative performance:** Includes data on waste recovery, member participation, and cooperative finances — disaggregated by gender.
- **Behavior Change Monitoring:** Household surveys assess whether both men and women share waste responsibilities, and whether source separation is practiced.
- **Spotlighting Innovations:** Women's groups are leading creative approaches to upcycling, turning waste into crafts or products with added economic value.

### Next Steps:

- **Scale up:** Replicate successful models in other subdistricts
- **Refine tools:** Make monitoring more inclusive and evidence-based
- **Promote leadership:** Encourage women to lead as trainers, managers, and cooperative leaders





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# Gender Empowerment through Waste Management in Soc Trang Province, Viet Nam

## ■ Women's Engagement in Cleanup Awareness Activities

Across Viet Nam, women have emerged as key actors in community-led solutions to reduce marine debris and improve local waste management. Through 3RproMar pilot implementation in Vin Chau and Tran De Town, Soc Trang Province, women have taken on **visible, impactful roles** in cleanup campaigns, awareness-raising, and skill-building programs—turning everyday action into lasting environmental leadership. Through this integrated approach—combining action, education, and empowerment—women are not only helping to reduce marine debris but also reshaping how communities manage waste. Their involvement is building stronger **environmental citizenship** and inspiring more **inclusive local leadership**.

### Cleanup Campaigns and Bamboo Waste Collection

In 25 shoreline and neighborhood cleanups, held monthly or bi-monthly, **2,150 residents** participated—**30% of them women** (~645). Women also supported **30 bamboo waste trap collection events**, working alongside men to retrieve debris and prevent it from reaching open waters. These efforts provided a public platform for women to lead by example, promote cleaner surroundings, and advocate for waste prevention at the source.

### Recycling, Sorting and Upcycling Initiatives

A team of **10 women** consistently sorted plastic waste from bamboo traps and creatively **upcycled it into reusable mesh bags**. These women-led innovations not only reduce plastic pollution but also offer livelihood opportunities, demonstrating how environmental action can also build economic resilience.

### Education and Green School Engagement

Through school-based outreach, **3,000 students and teachers**—**50% of whom were female**—were engaged in lessons on proper waste disposal and waste segregation. Women teachers were instrumental in delivering these messages and encouraging students to adopt sustainable practices both at school and at home.

### Waste Segregation Training and Community Empowerment

• More than **2,800 community members** joined waste segregation trainings, with women making up **55% (~1,540)** of participants. These sessions went beyond technical knowledge—they also helped women gain **confidence in public speaking, facilitation skills, and environmental education techniques**. Many have since become peer educators in their communities.

## Empowering Numbers in Female Participation

- Estimated total female participants across all 3RproMar activities in Viet Nam:
  - ~645 in cleanup campaigns
  - ~1,540 in segregation trainings
  - ~1,500 in school-based awareness and education

Total: 3,685 women and girls engaged

### Women's Groups Involved:

- Youth Union members
- Local teachers and education leaders
- Community-based environmental clubs
- Women-led social groups and local champions



## Agent of Change: Female Role Model

"By integrating green practices into our schools, we are not only protecting the environment but also nurturing a generation that values sustainability. Through weekly awareness activities, waste segregation training, and school-wide recyclable waste collection campaigns, we empower our students to become responsible stewards of the planet."  
— Ms. Cam Tu, Head of the Department of Education and Training in Vin Chau as she champions in youth participation and school-based waste reduction.



# Empowering Women as Central Actors in Sustainable Consumption and Reuse Initiatives

## ■ Why Gender Mainstreaming Matters – and Who's Leading It

In the “Circulating Island” Pilot Project, implemented by Divers Clean Action (DCA) with support from GIZ 3RproMar, women have emerged as key drivers of sustainable waste management across Kelapa, Harapan, Pramuka, and Panggang Islands in Kepulauan Seribu, Indonesia. Their pivotal roles in household consumption, waste sorting, and community engagement have made them indispensable to the success of the reuse system and efforts to reduce marine debris. The majority of waste bank staff are women, and many also serve as Toko Cura' partners—the pilot's reuse brand—acting as educators, shop owners, and champions of behavioral change and local business innovation.



Organizations such as Women's Groups in Family Welfare (PKK), local environmental educators, and community leaders actively contribute to **gender-responsive implementation**. The pilot has strategically integrated women's involvement through trainings, peer-to-peer learning, and localized mentoring. These efforts recognize not only the foundational role women already take, but also the importance of structurally supporting their leadership in environmental programs. While their participation in formal government waste roles remains limited, the pilot shows how **investing in women's capacity**—particularly in financial literacy, advocacy, and engagement in multi-stakeholder processes—can build a more inclusive, resilient, and community-driven waste system.

### Gender-Responsive Actions and Results

#### Women as Toko Cura' Partners

- Women engaged as shop owners promoting reuse products
- Received training in marketing, communication, and outreach

#### ✓ Waste Bank Leadership

- Female-led waste banks fostered trust and improved household-level waste sorting

#### ✓ Localized, Inclusive Training

- Delivered via women-to-women, field-based approaches close to participants' homes

#### ✓ Household Education

- Gender-sensitive education reached 1,300 households, promoting reuse and segregation at source

#### ✓ Feedback Mechanisms

- Focus group discussions and Most Significant Change (MSC) stories ensured women's voices shaped project improvements

### The Targets and The Measures

#### Primary Beneficiaries:

- Women of productive age—especially housewives—who gained income, visibility, and leadership roles

#### 👉 Support System:

- DCA, PKK, waste banks, shop owners, and educators supported training, distribution, and monitoring

#### 🚫 Identified Gaps:

- Women are underrepresented in formal waste collection roles
- Opportunity to strengthen skills in financial literacy, advocacy, and policy engagement.

Progress is measured through gender-disaggregated data, regular field reports, and Most Significant Change (MSC) stories shared by women participants. Community feedback from focus groups also helps shape program improvements and ensures that women's experiences continue to inform the project's design.

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