

Strengthening family-community synergy: Enhancing protection and well-being for women and children

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ABSTRACT

The protection and well-being of women and children are essential pillars for fostering a safe, and resilient society. This community service initiative focuses on enhancing the safety and support systems for women and children in 'Aisyah organization Caturharjo, Sleman, by integrating family and community efforts. Through a participatory approach, the program emphasizes awareness-raising, and collaborative strategies to empower local stakeholders and promote a culture of shared responsibility. The initiative underscores the critical roles of family units, community organizations, and local leadership in preventing violence, ensuring access to essential services, and advocating for gender-sensitive and child-friendly policies. Engaging families and communities in dialogue and action, the program seeks to address systemic challenges and create a protective environment for vulnerable groups. Findings from the initiative reveal that the synergy between family and community efforts significantly contributes to sustainable protection measures and strengthens social resilience. The success of this initiative highlights the importance of inclusive, community-driven approaches in safeguarding women and children, offering valuable insights for replication in other regions. This community service effort not only addresses immediate safety concerns but also lays the foundation for long-term social change, demonstrating the transformative potential of collective action in building safer and more equitable communities.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The data from the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), in 2023, there were 401,975 reported cases of violence, with psychological violence accounting for 5,428 cases, sexual violence 4,441 cases, physical violence 3,921 cases, and economic violence 1,402 cases (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak, 2024). Although incidents of violence against women and children in Indonesia decreased by 12.2 percent—from 457,895 cases in 2022 to 401,975 cases in 2023 (Lubis, 2024)—many cases remain unreported due to victims receiving threats, lacking awareness of where and how to report, or facing inadequate infrastructure in their area (Agatha,

2022). Although the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) is not among the regions with the highest number of violence cases against women and children, it still records over 1,000 cases annually (Ties, 2021). Data from the Yogyakarta Legal Aid Institute (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Yogyakarta) indicates that Sleman Regency has the highest number of reported cases in DIY (Subarkah, 2021). According to the Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control, and Family Planning (DP3AP2KB) of Sleman Regency, the number of violence cases against women and children has been increasing since 2020, with 168 cases of violence against women and 172 cases of violence against children recorded as of October 2023. Most of these cases occur within households, with the majority of victims being women aged 25 years and older (Jogja Dataku, 2024). Data on cases of violence against women and children in Sleman Regency is presented in Figure 1.

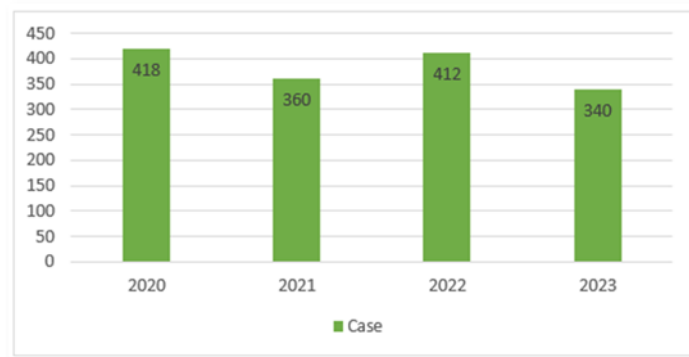


Figure 1. Data on cases of violence against women and children in Sleman Regency (2020–2023)
(Source: Jogja Dataku, 2024)

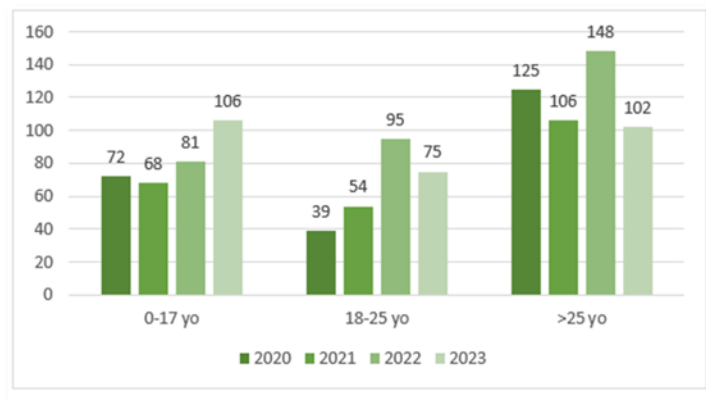


Figure 2. Data on victims of violence against women and children by age in Sleman Regency (2020–2023)
(Source: Jogja Dataku, 2024)

Based on the collected data (Figure 1), cases of violence against women and children in Sleman Regency have fluctuated significantly each year. This fluctuation indicates that violence against these vulnerable groups has not been effectively controlled and remains a pressing social issue that requires urgent attention. Violence against women and children in Sleman Regency is driven by various interconnected factors, including socio-economic conditions, family environment, education levels, and limited access to psychological and legal support. Among these factors, economic issues often serve as

the primary trigger. Financial difficulties such as unemployment, low income, or heavy financial burdens can exacerbate household tensions and increase the risk of violence. Moreover, economic hardship can hinder victims from seeking adequate protection or assistance, making them more vulnerable to repeated violence (Nurwanto, 2023). The high incidence of violence against women and children in Sleman Regency remains a critical issue that requires immediate attention. However, the government faces several challenges in addressing this problem. According to the Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control, and Family Planning (DP3AP2KB) of Sleman Regency, the most significant obstacle is the reluctance of the majority of the community to report such cases. Many people perceive violence against women and children, particularly sexual violence, as a source of shame, preventing them from seeking help (Purnamasari, 2024). Data on victims of violence against women and children by age in Sleman Regency is presented in Figure 2.

Based on Figure 2, in 2023, cases of violence against women and children were predominantly found in the 0–17 age group, with 106 cases, and the 25 years and older group, with 102 cases. This situation highlights the urgent need for efforts from various stakeholders to reduce the incidence of violence in these two age groups. Additionally, data on violence against women and children based on the location of occurrence is also available, as presented in Figure 3.

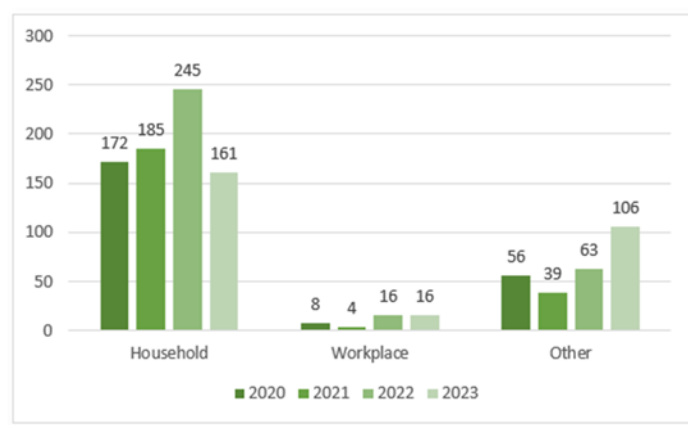


Figure 3. Data on violence against women and children by location of occurrence in Sleman Regency (2020–2023) (Source: [Jogja Dataku, 2024](#))

Based on the data above, most cases of violence occur within households. Although there was a slight decline in 2023, previous trends indicate that incidents of domestic violence have generally increased each year. This underscores the need for sustained efforts to address the root causes of violence and foster a safer family environment.

The 'Aisyiyah organization, as part of Muhammadiyah, has long been at the forefront of advocating for women's rights and child welfare in Indonesia. In Caturharjo, Sleman, the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership has been actively involved in community development initiatives, particularly those focused on education, health, and social welfare. However, despite these efforts, challenges persist in ensuring the safety and well-being of women and children. Issues such as domestic violence, child abuse, and limited access to education and healthcare remain prevalent, exacerbated by socio-economic disparities and cultural norms that often marginalize vulnerable groups. Recognizing the need for a more integrated approach, this initiative was designed to strengthen the collaboration between families

and communities in addressing these challenges. By leveraging the existing networks and resources of 'Aisyiyah, the program aims to create a model for community-driven protection and empowerment that can be replicated in other regions. The initiative is grounded in the belief that sustainable change can only be achieved through the active participation of all stakeholders, including families, community leaders, and local institutions.

The 'Aisyiyah organization Caturharjo area in Sleman Regency is among the regions facing a concerning level of violence against women and children. Data indicates that most of these incidents occur within households, exacerbated by the low rate of reporting due to the prevailing perception that violence, particularly sexual violence, is a source of shame. Therefore, this village was selected as a program partner to provide education and awareness to the community, encouraging them to report acts of violence and enhancing their understanding of the importance of prevention within households. The support of village authorities also plays a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of this initiative. By fostering collaboration among various stakeholders, the program aims to reduce violence against women and children in PRA Caturharjo, ultimately creating a safer and more prosperous environment for the community. A collective effort is essential to lower the incidence of domestic violence, and through this program, it is expected that residents of 'Aisyiyah organization Caturharjo, Sleman Regency, will gain the knowledge and confidence to report such incidents to the relevant authorities.

2. METHODS

This community service initiative was carried out using the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) approach, a method that actively involves the community in the development and implementation of programs (Yudha, 2019). This empowerment method prioritizes formulating solutions based on the actual needs of the community to ensure effective program execution (Ridwan et al., 2019). In this context, the community actively participates in various program designs, contributing ideas, creativity, and collective efforts to foster sustainable development. As a result, this initiative is expected to establish a self-sustaining ecosystem and cultivate a more independent and competitive society. The implementation of this community service program involves multiple stakeholders, including lecturers as initiators and the community as partners. Together, they will form a collaborative team with specific roles and responsibilities to support the target beneficiaries. This initiative will be conducted in four key stages.

Problem Identification

The Problem Identification Activity is conducted through intensive discussions with key stakeholders involved in the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman. This process involves engaging community leaders, caregivers, healthcare workers, and local organizations to assess existing challenges and gaps in support systems. Through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, the team gathers data on socio-economic conditions, service accessibility, and key vulnerabilities faced by women and children. Additionally, the initiative maps existing programs and resources to identify areas for improvement. By fostering collaboration among experts and community members, practical and comprehensive solutions are formulated to strengthen protection mechanisms. The findings are documented and used to develop an action plan that ensures targeted and effective interventions. The objective of this activity is to understand the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and children through community engagement, ensuring that solutions are relevant, sustainable, and impactful.

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Table 1. The Implementation stages

Stage 1. Problem Identification	
Activity	This identification process is carried out through intensive discussions with stakeholders involved in the protection and well-being of women and children. Partners and the team collaboratively formulate comprehensive and practical solutions to strengthen support systems within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman
Objective	Understand the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and children through community engagement
Implementation time	1 st Week of December 2024
Stage 2. Application Development	
Activity	The team initiates intensive discussions on system modeling, design, and application content. This process is conducted collaboratively with the assistance of relevant experts to ensure the development of a comprehensive and user-friendly solution that effectively strengthens support systems and community engagement.
Objective	This feedback enables the team to refine the application to better align with the objective of enhancing the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman. By incorporating user needs and expectations, the application improves its effectiveness in providing essential support services, particularly in promoting the mental well-being of women.
Implementation time	4 th Week of December 2024
Stage 3. Workshop Implementation	
Activity	The workshop implementation focuses on strengthening community-based support systems to enhance the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman. It includes capacity-building sessions, raising awareness on gender equality and child protection, and fostering family and community engagement. Additionally, it integrates technology to improve access to essential services and promotes policy discussions for sustainable support initiatives.
Objective	The workshop equips participants with the knowledge and tools to create a safer and more inclusive environment for women and children.
Implementation time	2 nd Week of Januari 2025
Stage 4. Monitoring and Evaluation	
Activity	This stage focuses on assessing the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at enhancing the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman. The team conducts regular evaluations through data collection, feedback sessions, and impact assessments to measure the success of implemented programs. Key activities include monitoring community engagement, reviewing the effectiveness of digital tools, and identifying areas for improvement. The insights gained help refine strategies, ensure sustainability, and enhance the overall impact of the initiative.
Objective	This stage ensures that implemented programs align with community needs, identifies strengths and areas for improvement, and provides data-driven insights for refining strategies
Implementation time	1 st and 2 nd Week of Februari 2025
Stage 5. Follow-Up Plan	
Activity	This stage focuses on maintaining community engagement, strengthening local support systems, integrating successful strategies into policies, and leveraging resources to ensure continuous improvement and accessibility of essential services. Through structured follow-up actions, the initiative aims to create a lasting and resilient support framework for women and children.
Objective	The Follow-Up Plan Activity involves a series of actions to ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of initiatives aimed at enhancing the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman.
Implementation time	4 th Week of Februari 2025

Application Development

The Application Development stage begins with intensive discussions on system modeling, design, and content creation, ensuring the development of a comprehensive and user-friendly digital solution. This process is conducted collaboratively with the assistance of relevant experts to integrate best practices and technological innovations that enhance the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman. By incorporating user feedback and stakeholder insights, the application is refined to align with community needs, improving its effectiveness in delivering essential support services. Special emphasis is placed on promoting the mental well-being of women by ensuring accessibility, ease of use, and relevant features that strengthen support systems and community engagement. The aim of this stage is to develop an application that effectively enhances protection mechanisms and improves service accessibility by incorporating user needs and expectations, thereby strengthening the overall well-being of women and children.

The Workshop Implementation

The Workshop Implementation stage focuses on strengthening community-based support systems to enhance the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman. This includes capacity-building sessions to empower stakeholders with the necessary skills and knowledge, raising awareness on gender equality and child protection, and fostering active family and community engagement. The workshop also integrates technology to improve access to essential services and facilitates policy discussions to promote sustainable support initiatives. By equipping participants with practical tools and strategies, the workshop aims to create a safer and more inclusive environment for women and children, ensuring long-term community involvement and systemic improvements in protection mechanisms.



Figure 4. Workshop implementation in TK 'ABA Kendangan

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation stage is essential for assessing the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at enhancing the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman. This process ensures that the strategies implemented are achieving their intended outcomes and provides a foundation for continuous improvement. Monitoring activities involve regular assessments of community engagement levels, evaluating how well the support systems are functioning, and ensuring that services are accessible and effective. The team collects both qualitative and quantitative data through surveys, interviews, and direct observations to understand the impact of the programs on beneficiaries. In addition, feedback sessions with community members, stakeholders, and users of digital tools help identify strengths and areas that require further refinement. Evaluation

processes focus on measuring the success of digital tools used in the initiative, assessing whether they enhance service accessibility and efficiency. The effectiveness of workshops, policy discussions, and awareness campaigns is also reviewed to determine their long-term influence on community attitudes and behaviors. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are established to track progress, such as increased awareness of child protection issues, higher participation in support programs, and improved mental well-being outcomes for women. The insights gained from monitoring and evaluation enable the team to refine strategies, address emerging challenges, and make data-driven decisions to enhance program sustainability.

The Follow-Up Plan Stage

The Follow-Up Plan stage is designed to ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of initiatives aimed at enhancing the protection and well-being of women and children within the 'Aisyiyah Sub-Branch Leadership in Caturharjo, Sleman. This stage focuses on maintaining community engagement, strengthening local support systems, and integrating successful strategies into policies to create a lasting framework for protection and empowerment. Key activities include structured follow-up actions such as regular community meetings, ongoing capacity-building sessions, and continued evaluation of service accessibility and effectiveness. The initiative also works towards institutionalizing best practices by advocating for policy adoption at the local level and ensuring that digital tools and community-driven approaches remain accessible and beneficial. Additionally, partnerships with government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and local stakeholders are reinforced to leverage resources and expand the reach of essential services.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This initiative has achieved remarkable strides in enhancing the safety and well-being of women and children by weaving together the strengths of families and communities. The outcomes underscore the power of collaborative methods, digital platforms, and skill-building initiatives in cultivating a more welcoming and enduring support framework. The workshop, centered on strengthening community-based protection mechanisms for women and children, concluded with a palpable sense of shared purpose and a concrete action plan. Over three days, participants representing diverse sectors including local government officials, social workers, educators, healthcare providers, community leaders, and importantly, women and children themselves engaged in dynamic discussions, interactive exercises, and collaborative brainstorming sessions. The energy was consistently high, fueled by a collective recognition of the critical importance of this work and a shared commitment to tangible progress.



Figure 5. The process of sharing knowledge through workshop

The workshop's initial sessions focused on a comprehensive review of existing protection mechanisms. Participants openly shared their experiences, highlighting both the strengths and weaknesses of current systems. A recurring theme was the need for greater coordination among different agencies and service providers. Several participants emphasized the challenges faced by women and children in accessing available resources, often due to a lack of awareness, geographical barriers, or cultural stigma. The discussion also underscored the importance of culturally sensitive approaches that respect the diverse needs and experiences of different communities. Interactive case studies allowed participants to analyze real-world scenarios and explore potential solutions, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. A significant portion of the workshop was dedicated to exploring innovative strategies and best practices. Experts in the field shared their insights on topics such as trauma-informed care, child-friendly justice systems, and the use of technology to enhance protection efforts. Participants were particularly interested in learning about community-led initiatives that have proven successful in other regions. The sharing of these experiences sparked a lively exchange of ideas and inspired participants to think creatively about how to adapt these models to their own contexts. For example, the success of a community hotline in a neighboring region prompted discussions about establishing a similar service in the local area. The potential of mobile technology to disseminate information and provide support to women and children also generated considerable interest.

The workshop culminated in the development of a comprehensive action plan, outlining specific steps to be taken to strengthen community-based protection mechanisms. The plan identified key priorities, assigned responsibilities, and established timelines for implementation. A central focus of the plan is the establishment of a multi-sectoral coordination committee, which will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan and ensuring ongoing collaboration among different stakeholders. The committee will also play a crucial role in monitoring progress, evaluating the effectiveness of interventions, and making adjustments as needed. Participants emphasized the importance of ensuring that the voices of women and children are central to the work of the committee.



Figure 6. Discussion session

The implementation of this multifaceted initiative has yielded significant progress in strengthening the protection and well-being of women and children within the community. By prioritizing the integration of family-level support with broader community engagement, the program has fostered a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to child protection and gender equality. The documented results demonstrate the effectiveness of collaborative strategies, the strategic use of digital tools to enhance outreach and communication, and targeted capacity-building programs designed to empower local stakeholders. These combined efforts have not only increased awareness of critical issues but also equipped individuals and communities with the skills and resources necessary to address them effectively. The initiative's success underscores the importance of multi-pronged interventions that

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address both individual needs and systemic challenges, creating a ripple effect that strengthens the overall social fabric and promotes a culture of care and protection for women and children. This holistic approach has laid a solid foundation for continued progress and long-term positive change within the community.

Specifically, the initiative has demonstrably improved key areas related to the well-being of women and children. Increased awareness and knowledge surrounding rights and protection have translated into tangible actions, such as increased reporting of abuse cases and a stronger community emphasis on prioritizing education and healthcare access for women and children. The empowerment of local stakeholders, including families, community leaders, and 'Aisyiyah members, has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility for child protection and gender equality, ensuring the sustainability of the initiative's impact. The strengthening of collaboration and shared responsibility among families and communities has created a robust support network, enabling collective problem-solving and resource-sharing to address challenges effectively. Furthermore, the initiative has significantly improved access to essential services, including education, healthcare, and social services, by connecting vulnerable groups with local resources and advocating for more inclusive policies. These combined outcomes demonstrate the profound impact of the initiative in creating a safer, more supportive, and equitable environment for women and children within the community.

Table 2. Pre and post-test evaluation

Aspect Assessed	Average Pre-test Score	Average Post-test Score	Improvement
Awareness of Women's and Children's Rights	5.0	8.4	+3.4
Knowledge of Gender-Based Violence	7.2	8.5	+1.3
Understanding of Child Protection Laws	2.3	8.3	+6.0
Awareness of Reporting Mechanisms	3.0	8.0	+5.0
Attitudes Toward Gender Equality	6.0	8.8	+2.8
Confidence in Addressing Issues	3.5	9.2	+5.7
Participation in Community Initiatives	7.9	9.3	+1.4
Awareness of Child-Friendly Policies	4.0	8.2	+4.2
Understanding of Conflict Resolution Strategies	4.2	8.0	+3.8
Awareness of Women's Leadership Roles	3.8	8.4	+4.6
Understanding of Child Development Needs	6.3	8.5	+2.2
Commitment to Advocacy	5.0	9.0	+4.0
Total Average for All Aspects	6.8	8.55	+3.7

There is significant positive impact across various aspects related to women's and children's rights, gender equality, and community engagement. Participants showed notable improvements in their awareness and knowledge, with substantial increases in understanding child protection laws, reporting mechanisms, and women's leadership roles. Gains were also evident in knowledge of gender-based violence, awareness of child-friendly policies, and understanding of conflict resolution strategies. Furthermore, the initiative appears to have positively influenced attitudes towards gender equality and commitment to advocacy. Perhaps most importantly, participants reported a marked increase in their confidence in addressing related issues. While participation in community initiatives saw a more modest rise, likely due to existing high engagement, the overall trend indicates a positive shift in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. The total average improvement of 3.7 points across all assessed aspects underscores the program's effectiveness in promoting positive change within the community.

Discussion

The activity proved remarkably successful in cultivating a shared sense of purpose and fostering genuine collaboration among a diverse range of stakeholders. Participants included social workers providing direct support services, educators working within the community's schools, healthcare providers addressing the physical and mental well-being of residents, and, crucially, community leaders who possess invaluable local knowledge and influence. This multi-sectoral engagement is not merely beneficial; it is absolutely critical for effectively addressing complex social issues like the protection and well-being of women and children (Virtanen et al., 2021). As the workshop discussions repeatedly emphasized, the need for greater coordination among the various agencies and service providers operating within the community is paramount. Often, individuals and families in need face significant barriers when navigating the system, struggling to access the appropriate resources and support due to fragmented services, a lack of clear communication channels, or simply a lack of awareness about what assistance is available (IPU, 2020; UN Women, 2022). The workshop served as a crucial platform for bridging these gaps and building the necessary relationships for more effective collaboration. The emphasis on multi-sectoral collaboration aligns with findings from UNICEF (2019), which underscores the importance of integrated approaches to child protection and gender equality. Their research underscores the interconnectedness of various social, economic, and cultural factors that influence the well-being of children and the realization of gender equality.

The initiative significantly improved participants' awareness, knowledge, and confidence in addressing issues related to women's and children's rights. The pre- and post-test evaluation (Table 1) revealed substantial improvements across all assessed aspects, with the most notable gains in understanding child protection laws (+6.0), awareness of reporting mechanisms (+5.0), and confidence in addressing issues (+5.7). These results highlight the effectiveness of targeted capacity-building programs in empowering local stakeholders. The findings are consistent with the work of Bandura (1997) on self-efficacy, which suggests that building confidence and skills through training and education can lead to greater empowerment and proactive behavior. These results highlight the effectiveness of the targeted capacity-building programs implemented as part of the initiative. By providing participants with relevant information, practical skills, and opportunities for discussion and reflection, the program has clearly empowered local stakeholders to become agents of positive change within their communities. The findings are consistent with the extensive body of research on self-efficacy, most notably the work of Bandura (2023). Bandura's theory posits that self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task, is a key determinant of human behavior. Building confidence and skills through training, education, and supportive experiences, as this initiative has done, can lead to greater empowerment, increased proactive behavior, and a stronger sense of agency. When individuals believe they can make a difference, they are more likely to take action, challenge harmful norms, and advocate for the rights of women and children (Carpenter, 2016). This initiative's success in fostering self-efficacy among participants is therefore a crucial step towards creating more resilient and protective communities. Further research could explore the long-term impact of these changes, examining how increased knowledge, confidence, and awareness translate into sustained action and improved outcomes for women and children over time.

The protection and well-being of women and children are fundamental to the health, development, and prosperity of any society. They represent not only a moral imperative but also a crucial investment in the future. Protecting women and children from violence, exploitation, and discrimination is essential for upholding their basic human rights and ensuring they can reach their full potential (Prastini, 2024). Counseling activities on child protection are also very important to increase children's knowledge

and legal awareness (Rahmanto et al., 2018). When women and children thrive, communities thrive. Conversely, when their rights are violated or their well-being is compromised, the consequences ripple outwards, impacting families, economies, and future generations. Several interconnected factors underscore the importance of prioritizing the protection and well-being of these vulnerable groups (Sutami et al., 2020). First, women and children are disproportionately affected by poverty, conflict, and disaster. These crises exacerbate existing inequalities and create new vulnerabilities, making them more susceptible to exploitation, abuse, and neglect (UNICEF, 2021). Secondly, violence against women and girls remains a pervasive global issue, with devastating consequences for physical and mental health, education, and economic opportunities (WHO, 2021). This violence often extends into childhood, with millions of children experiencing physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, leaving lasting scars (WHO, 2020). Thirdly, access to quality education, healthcare, and other essential services is often limited for women and children, particularly in marginalized communities. These disparities perpetuate cycles of poverty and inequality, hindering their ability to thrive (UNESCO, 2022).

Furthermore, ensuring the well-being of women and children is essential for achieving broader sustainable development goals (Sudirman & Susilawaty, 2022). Investing in their health and education not only improves individual lives but also contributes to economic growth, social progress, and reduced inequality (UN Women, 2018). Empowered women are more likely to participate in the workforce, contribute to their communities, and raise healthy and educated children (OECD, 2019). Healthy and educated children, in turn, are more likely to become productive members of society, breaking the cycle of poverty and contributing to future prosperity (World Bank, 2020). Protecting children from exploitation and child labor is also crucial for preventing long-term physical and psychological harm and ensuring they have the opportunity to develop their full potential (ILO, 2017). The protection of child workers is an important effort to safeguard children's fundamental rights and promote positive changes in their lives (Azwar, 2023). In addition to these socio-economic factors, the importance of protecting women and children is rooted in fundamental human rights principles (Anggraeni, 2023). International conventions, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), establish legal obligations for states to protect and promote the rights of women and children (UN Human Rights Office, 2023). CEDAW is recognized as a regulation aimed at protecting women from violence and gender-based injustice. Additionally, CEDAW serves as a legal framework to eliminate discrimination against women, starting by addressing biased understandings of human rights and obligations (Failin et al., 2022). These conventions recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every human being, regardless of age or gender, and emphasize the importance of creating a world where all individuals can live free from violence, discrimination, and poverty (Nurusshobah, 2019). This protection aims to safeguard children from economic and sexual exploitation, human trafficking, drug abuse, physical and mental violence, and neglect. Children with disabilities also have the right to special protection to ensure their proper growth and development (Shomedran et al., 2022). Therefore, prioritizing the protection and well-being of women and children is not just a matter of charity or social responsibility; it is a fundamental obligation that all societies must uphold.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key outcomes of the initiative include a significant increase in awareness and knowledge of women's and children's rights, improved understanding of child protection laws, and enhanced confidence in addressing issues related to gender-based violence and advocacy. The pre- and post-test evaluations revealed marked improvements in participants' engagement with child-friendly policies,

conflict resolution strategies, and women's leadership roles, highlighting the transformative impact of knowledge-sharing and skill-building activities. The initiative's success is evident in the documented results, which demonstrate the effectiveness of collaborative strategies, the strategic use of digital tools, and targeted capacity-building programs. These combined efforts have not only increased awareness of critical issues but also equipped individuals and communities with the skills and resources necessary to address them effectively. The initiative's success underscores the importance of multi-pronged interventions that address both individual needs and systemic challenges, creating a ripple effect that strengthens the overall social fabric and promotes a culture of care and protection. This initiative exemplifies the value of holistic, community-driven interventions in fostering safer and more supportive environments for vulnerable populations.

Moving forward, further long-term assessments will be essential in evaluating the sustained impact of these efforts and identifying additional strategies to reinforce community-based protection mechanisms. Ultimately, the success of this initiative highlights the necessity of continued investment in collaborative and innovative approaches to ensuring the rights, dignity, and well-being of women and children.

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