Gender Mainstreaming in Government Programs: Between Administrative Rigorism and Demand for Public Sphere

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ABSTRACT

The program of gender mainstreaming of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries came across many problems. The Ministry admitted the difficulties in *implementing* the principle of gender mainstreaming in strategic, tactical and operational aspects. This fact has raised the question of how public sphere should be taken care of to get individual involvement. After scrutinizing some aspects in the program implementation, this article tries to depict the urgency of public sphere management in government programs from Habermas' perspective. Individual involvement in public sphere is examined through the identification of its types according to Günter Bentele and Howard Nothhaft. This issue is also observed through discussions focused on the acknowledgement of women's presence therein which is analyzed through Hannah Arendt's concepts of freedom and plurality. By doing this I found a tendency towards a simplification of what is being discussed in public sphere. A strictly arranged two-way and supposedly gender-responsive communication organized by the program manager turned out to be an absence of discussion as well as lack of mutual critiques in public sphere. The presence of women basically demonstrates the individual as well as collective awareness to be involved in this program. Lack of systemic support and existential communication to realize this program has contributed to little involvement of women in public sphere. Lesson learned from this program is that an administratively well-planned program does not necessarily guarantee that a public sphere is always ready to support the program of strategic communication including that of the government.

Key words: *gender mainstreaming, government program, administrative rigorism,public sphere*

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender Mainstreaming (GM) is one of the chosen development strategies applied by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (Indonesia: Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan/KKP). This program is meant to improve the Ministry's capacity in advocating gender equality through coordination and dialogue that are supposed to create a conducive environment for the purpose. The main idea is to achieve gender equality and justice by integrating the problems, aspirations and needs of the fishermen as well as fisherwomen into the Ministry's work programs and policies[1]. Although being reportedly successful in its program, KKP in its 2017 report admitted some problems concomitant to its Gender Mainstreaming Program (GMP). The main problems have to do with the strategy, tactics, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. These problems can be found in the insurance for the fishermen and fisherwomen, in the fisher cards, in chances to participate in trainings and

procurement of catching equipments as well as the opportunity for fisherwomen to get involved in policy making, either individually or collectively. Research finding[2]indicates that fisherwomen actually have strategic roles in various fish enterprises, but due to strong fishermen's dominance particularly in numbers, fisherwomen's contribution in capture fisheries cannot be equalized to that of fishermen. This research also described the inequality of development program in the fishery sector which is gender-biased as far as the protection and empowerment of fishermen and fisherwomen are concerned. On the other hand, advocacy efforts by woman NGOs as well as by fisherman NGOs did not seem to have yielded good results[3]. The problem of GM still certainly goes through a winding road to acceptance in mindset and in social behavior. Indeed, in the administrative documents of KKP, we can find the emphasis on the importance of gender-based participation in the community of fishers. But, during the implementation of the program the problem of

involvement and participation does not take place according to the arrangement. The gap between plan and implementation indicates that the matter should consider a change in the communication and dialog approaches that paves the way to participation. This should be made in such a way that the celebrated objective of involving the fisher communities in a proportionately GM way from the planning stage up to the stages of monitoring and evaluation can be realized. Why are communication and dialog so important? Research showed that dialogical communication has to do with trust and distrust correlation between an organization and the public that it serves[4]. Dialogical communication is also related to the quality of presence in the communication process. Dialog has to do not only with mutual understanding and mutual influencing, but it has more to do with ceaseless efforts to enforce what one believes as truth. There is no space for egocentric self-portraying[5]. Dialog is a technique and an occasion to attain the truth that leads the way to empowering actions[6]. Connected to communication, dialog has a binding meaning, that interactive communication always presupposes differences between a communicator and a communicant. Hence the communicating participants are supposed to stay alert and responsive to different mindsets and viewpoints which are nothing but the effects of the dialog itself. This is an ongoing and endless process[7]. The emphasis on dialog and communication ethics goes alongside with the importance of communicative actions. An individual enters the communication process with the background of specific needs and potentials. These are the two faculties that determine how one takes actions to safeguard his or her communication objectives. Through dialog, an individual can understand the difference that constitutes the main components in communication ethics[8]. This article is meant to give a second thought on how a dialog in GM has made possible an involvement. People's participation is not a single and independent concept. There is a prior process in which individuals exchange opinions about what is being faced. Space is no longer understood merely as physical or artificial, whence sparks the idea of public space where an individual starts his or her initial involvement in discussions. Now the question is how one can understand a dialog in public sphere within the context of GM by the KKP. If the Indonesian people is assumed to have involved in the program, why then there are still fishing communities that are being marginalized from the program results? Why do they still get advocacies from NGOs if the program has achieved the objective of gender equality?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of public sphere has to do with the role of an individual and the people in the state. In a modern society, human being as an individual becomes the foundation of a society and therefore the existence of an individual has represented the society[9]. In that context, Habermas[10] defined public sphere as "…*space where private individuals assemble and make up the public*" (p.78). Habermas' explanation implies the notion of "*equals met as equals*" as the main concept that presumes intensity among participants in an open discussion. For Habermas, it is in the discussion in public sphere that truth will emerge – concerning what is being discussed and whether it is related to private or public domain. Contrarily enough, this research found that even in an open discussion between the people and the program management a problem may exist. Strategic communication that opens up a chance for discussion and dialog can be used to manipulate and to mislead people to attain organizational objectives by sacrificing stakeholders[11]. The attribute of public in public sphere can be traced in three types of encounters and models of individual involvement[9]. First is the radically democratic type. In this model every form of individual presence is considered important and applicable for each individual to decide whether he/she can be present in a particular public sphere. Being present in an "equally important" capacity, for Habermas, makes this type of encounter the ideal model in communication. It is ideal not because of no domination in the presence of the individuals but because of the strength of argumentation during the communication process that eventually establishes public sphere between them. Second, is the action-based encounter, marked by an individual's action against something inappropriate in the establishment of public sphere where he or she is involved. Public sphere is created by the fact that the individual is critical and courageous to fight against what he/she considers as deviating from their common concerns. The third type of encounter is characterized by the presence of actual actors, potential actorsand the audience. Actual actors are a group of people, usually in fairly small number, whose presence is located in the core of discussions that forms public sphere.Potential actors are a group of individuals who by their presence make limitations to public sphere that has been established. This group is very likely to decide at any time to right away get involved in or enter into the debate.The last group is the audience, that is, the group that becomes the important part in public sphere. It basically does not have the potential to get involved in the discussions or debates in public space, and very likely that this group has a different thought from the other two previous groups about the substance of discussions or debates. Independent involvement in public sphere turns out to be the problem itself for this group as they do not feel obliged to get involved in the discussions. Whatever the type of individual involvement it always entails a crucial problem of its own. Individual involvement is not necessarily connected to one's status. It is the information literacy that pushes their involvement in

discussions in public space. Public space then becomes connected to critical discourse, debate and reasoning [12]. According to Martin Buber [13]the virtue of dialog lies in the efforts to create something together, which is based not merely on prior common information they have. In the dialog the participants create one common thing collaboratively, both in discussions and actions. This reminds us of how limited it is when communication goes in a dominant one way traffic. This type will make one of the participants passive. In this condition communication becomes meaningless regardless of what are the common goals. The word dialog refers to the context of communication between different persons where meanings flow between and through them. Dialog is not without problems, even in a symmetrical two-way communication. Tendency to hegemony and limitedness of the dialog may end up in the problem of communication ethics [14]. The understanding of diversity, individual assessment of success probability, propensity towards a change in communicative action[15]are some of the complexity. De Turk's research also found that a dialog plays a role in improving one's understanding of different culture, partnership development as well as social change. However, it also has the potential of uncertainty about whether or not the program objectives can be achieved.Efforts to understand the existence of woman holistically in this article is traced through a proposition by Hannah Arendt on freedom and pluralism The definition of freedom by Arendt has an important meaning especially in her courage to oppose "uniformity of thoughts" about the definition of freedom as merely "the ability to choose from available alternatives"[16]. For Arendt, the understanding of freedom must include mature consideration of human existence and the whole human elements embedded therein. This must be a new challenge for the freedom of thought itself. Her research results show that freedom in public space becomes one of the concepts that determines the nature of modernity of public relations[17]. Plurality will always be a part that "goes together with" the actualization of freedom. This happens when freedom as a capacity to start something new is actuated by the presence of an actor or a participant. The actor may have a different viewpoint from the others, but this will strengthen the quality of how the actor understands his or her presence[16].

3. METHODS

This article is a scientific probing into the implementation of the gender mainstreaming program of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia. Literature studies are carried out through reading the reality of communication that is built up through several basic concepts of communication, which are an integral part of the realization of the program. To start with, I made some steps within the framework of literature review which can be outlined as follows:

Table 1: Steps of analysis in the framework of literature review

Item	Material	Sources
Understanding the program of GM as one of the selected strategies	Background, Objectives, Legal Basis, Institution and some documents of annual work reports on GM	Official Website of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia https://kkp.go.id/
Identifying problems in the realization of the GMP	Internal evaluation of the Ministry on the GMP.

Research findings on the families of fishermen and fisherwomen | Annual report on GMP Official website of the Ministry NGOs Articles in national scientific journals |
| **Scrutiny of concepts** | Public sphere Dialog, Characteristics of government work program GM | Articles in international scientific journals and related references |

In relation to the objectives of this article, the framework of scrutiny can be depicted as follows:
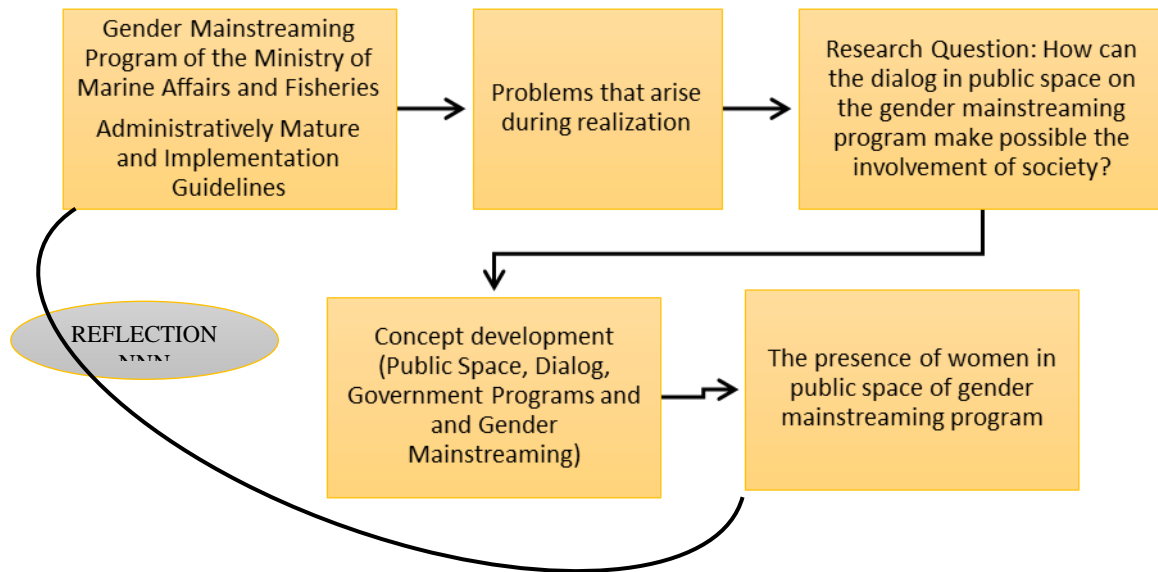
Template 1: Framework of problem exploration to answer the research question

For the scrutiny of concepts related to objectives of this article, I put forward the following scheme:

Table 2: Scrutiny of Concepts

Concept	Substance
Public Sphere	Public sphere in strategic communication Individual role Definition according to Habermas Three types of encounter and model of individual involvement in public space (Bentele dan Nothhaft) Habermas' critique of public space
Dialog	Martin Buber: the virtue of dialog
Government work program	Ability to interact with the people and the involved actors in the GMP
The presence of women in public sphere of the GMP	Freedom and plurality

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. *Gender Mainstreaming, Communication and Enactment*

Various forms of socialization and the strengthening program of GM have a purpose to change the internal mindset of the Ministry and the fishing communities on the idea of gender equality. How can we understand this matter in the context of strategic communication? *First,* this program has been from the beginning designed as state accountability to international commitment in GM. The commitment was then realized as a strategy in gender-based development. This means, on the one hand, that the GMP is carried out in a broad context to support national development. On the other hand, this program has an internal purpose that the fishing communities can enjoy the fruits of development without being hindered by gender bias. *Second*, this program applies the practice of communication that includes various interrelated elements such as provincial government, district government, NGOs and other business partners. The practice of communication in the collaborative process of different elements is designed in a strictly administrative manner according to the procedure and standards set up by KKP the purpose of which is that the whole work process since the planning up to monitoring and evaluation is located within the context of gender-responsive framework. *Third*, related to enactment in public sphere by KKP, this matter is still part and parcel of the GMP that has been set up administratively. For example, the socialization of the essence of gender-responsive work program in the first place is carried out at the first echelon level[1].Administratively this is alright but there are still many problems that are implied in the socialization policy. For example, how about the preparation process of the material to be socialized? Does it always follow an administratively gender-based protocol? Did the preparing personnel always involve all elements related to the program, in order for them to get a comprehensive outlook on the empirical problems concerning gender equality? In general, the socialization activities are carried out with the purpose of obtaining feedbacks about the materials that have been socialized. How about the socialization

of GMP among the first echelon civil servants of the Ministry? Does the same thing apply? What kind of feedbacks they get if the presenters and recipients of the material come from the background fully controlled by bureaucratic protocol and therefore think the same administratively? All these questions will affect the Ministry to enact against different problems in the field. Matters such as motivation, desire, interest, partiality, dissatisfaction and the like are some of the attributes contained in the information that will always be present in the dynamics of the realization of the GMP. What is the consequence for the KKP as a government entity that takes care of this program? If the purpose of this program is to get people's involvement, then there are some guidelines that can be used as measurement[18].People's involvement is determined by community building, sense of community, and positive word of mouth among the people. How about the adaptation model that can be constructed by the local government (as an entity of GM management)? Positive information that circulates and is developed among talks in society will affect people's involvement through the individual's sense of community.Whatever designed by the local government within the context of strategic communication will not be effective if it is not followed by the sense of community. This means managing the program of GM does not merely mean paying attention to the results of administratively well designed program, but it needs also to involve, in a big portion, the understanding of how people talk about, accept and possess the expectation of what will be realized concerning the program in the future. If this can be lived by the entity of program management, then the stakeholders' dissatisfaction due to gender bias can be anticipated early on.

4.2. *Involvement and Dialog in Public Sphere*

Explanation about identification of the type of individual encounter, let's look at the first type of radical democratic encounter. The involvement of the Ministry's inner circle in the GMP, equipped with the theoretical framework of gender-responsive program, belongs to this type of encounter. There are similar frameworks that bind their presence in public sphere, which can also be traced in the gate keeping process that they create to make sure that they will attain the aims and objectives of the GMP. From the perspective of the involvement of various related elements, we can find a very different and limited condition among the different elements. For example, in the groups of fisherwomen who try to get recognition of their work. Encountering and talking about various difficulties they confront will form a democratic public sphere among them for each person is present there with her strong argument. This makes their involvement strong

in public sphere. But, when they form and/or get involved in public sphere where the entity of the Ministry's program management is also involved in it, then it will be difficult to assess the absence of domination from one party to the other. The strength of argument that binds the individual involvement *sinks* under the *shadow* of a more dominant individual or group in public sphere. This fact goes along with the drawback of the first type of encounter where the competence to criticize is set aside when the individual takes the position of "wait and see" what to do taking into account their equally important presence in public sphere[9]. Similarly, for the well-served fisher communities in GMP with a good management of capture fish, the discussion does not always last in critical manner. After all things were assessed as giving positive impact on the betterment of people's living conditions, and therefore were supported without critical evaluation of various training programs, then the discussions in public sphere became biased with personal interests and were no longer reflective.The second type of encounter is marked by an individual's action. This type of encounter is used to describe ceaseless efforts by fishing NGOs to conduct advocacies for fisherwomen. There are always critical people in public sphere who are combat-ready to struggle for something they consider "right". This, of course, brings expectation that public sphere can be a means to struggle for what one considers good. And this can only be realized if an individual has guts to "step forward" with critical reasoning of discussions. The third type of encounter is characterized by the presence of actual actors.Individuals who represent the entity of the GM management, who are critical against this program, or individuals or institutions or NGOs that conduct advocacies for the fishers, or other related organizations are examples of actual actors. From the side of quantity, this group is relatively small, but what they do has a great impact on empowerment. The presence of this group can be the beginning of mechanism to improve public sphere through discourses that come into being in public sphere**.** The next group is potential actors. Assessing this group within the context of GMP will direct us to the presence of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (KKP) as the management entity. Strict definition of gender-responsive program and its realization within the context of fishing and marine communities is determined and interpreted by an administrative protocol. This definition will be made the guidelines in the management of discussions in public sphere that involve various related elements. Potential actors are also represented by groups that are critical against the implementation of GMP. Advocacies set forth by related NGOs indicate that they also have the definition of what is being claimed as gender-responsive program. Different kinds of advocacies that they carried out indicate that they are

in public sphere and as a result actions will always be there to accompany their presence. The last group is the audience. The people that becomes the target of this program, the fishers of capture fish communities, coastal fishers and other various categories, are the audience. Their involvement in the discussions in general is not caused by their personal awareness that there is something to fight for in the discussions in public sphere. When their personal objectives are attained through the GMP, for example, the fulfillment of their economic needs, then the condition is sufficient for them to denote that their involvement in the GMP has brought about benefits and therefore it does not need further criticizing. The public sphere finally will be open to all possibilities of motivation for involvement. For Habermas, the fulfillment of one's economic needs will be the beginning for his or her desire to be present in the capacity of *zoon politicon*, a method for self-development and simultaneously a tool to distinguish him/her from other individuals of the same stratum[9]. Latest development of woman existence shows that woman is "present" in all walks of life. Even in male-dominant professions, women are there. Whatever it is the door will always be open to different possibilities of woman involvement. Accusation that has often been voiced is the question whether women are able to answer the challenge to freedom in which they demonstrate their competence to start something new in a limited space for women (who are supposed to play many roles). The limited space for women is also caused by male dominance, cultural mindset and a system that is not likely to side with the female world. This dilemma, from Arendt's perspective, is related to rights which Arendt defines as political activation of the principle of freedom which is construed as the potential to survive in a political structure or a particular community with all their social systems. The political activation of freedom principle will expand into a newly scaled domain that presupposes active involvement and adjustment to different parties[19]. Arendt's recommendation shows that the critiques of all these should be addressed to socio-political system around women's life and existence. All questions concerning "what women can do" should be addressed to the socio-political system in which women's presence and existence are a must[20] and [21]. Arendt's recommendation seems to be validated. Women have been able to opt for something new. They step forward openly to struggle for life as fisherwomen. How about the state? Does the existing system needless to mention social system support the women's choice? The answer to the question is worth further verifying.

5. CONCLUSION

Habermas [22] demonstrates that the state can come into contact with people's needs through the vehicle of public opinion that evolves in public sphere. The evolution of public opinion can occur through various communication modes that go hand in hand with discussions and debates in public space. Reflection on public sphere in the GMP of KKP indicates that, first, the existing communication has not touched the substance of dialog as a technique to construct public opinion that support the achievement of this program. Second, the individual's subjective formal freedom lies in the ownership and expression of assessment, contention, and personal recommendation about state affairs.What happens in public sphere concerning the GM of KKP indicates that the program management can easily find expressions and personal recommendations from different related elements. Comments, opinions, assessments, actions and varied forms of information from related elements, on the other hand, demonstrate the face of awareness and freedom. Lack of space for dialog, not merely two-way communication, finally causes the program management to become trapped in the hermeneutic circle of strategy, tactics and operations of the program. What this article recommends is that we need do further research on the dialogs and public sphere in the GMP of KKP. Various researchers that have been conducted on the dynamics of the operational fieldwork relationship and the condition of fisher communities must become the basis now for the mapping out substantial problems. Critical reflection on the dialog and public sphere in the government's program of strategic communication becomes one of the methods to advocate state hands-on policies for a better living condition of the people. From the academic perspective, evaluation of the practice of strategic communication can enable the academicians and practitioners as well to learn many new things to avoid stagnation in the application of strategic communication

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