

Effectiveness of ASEAN WPS Localization through the Desa Damai Program of Wahid Foundation and UN Women in Indonesia

Nala Nourma Nastiti

Department of International Relations, Universitas Jenderal Achmad Yani
E-mail: nala.nastiti@lecture.unjani.ac.id

Yusep Ginanjar

Department of International Relations, Universitas Jenderal Achmad Yani
E-mail: yusep.ginanjar@lecture.unjani.ac.id

Disa Hanelia Putri

Department of International Relations, Universitas Jenderal Achmad Yani
E-mail: disahaneliaputri05@gmail.com

Abstract

This article examines how the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action (RPA) on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) is localized in Indonesia through the Desa Damai (Peace Village) program, a collaborative initiative between the Wahid Foundation and UN Women launched in 2017. Using feminist security theory and the norm localization framework as analytical lenses, and drawing on qualitative document analysis alongside primary interview data collected from Wahid Foundation's Manager of Research and Advocacy and the Desa Damai village coordinator in Tajur Halang (October 2025), the study assesses the effectiveness of WPS localization across five dimensions: participation, protection, prevention, recovery, and ASEAN RPA alignment. The findings indicate that the program's strongest contribution lies in prevention (score: 83.3/100), particularly through gender-responsive peace education modules delivered consistently throughout the year. Participation has meaningfully improved (72.5/100), though gains remain program-dependent rather than institutionally embedded. Protection mechanisms exist at the organizational level but are applied inconsistently at community level (66.0/100). Recovery infrastructure is the weakest pillar (52.5/100), with no crisis-response systems and absent outcome data for economic empowerment activities. The overall effectiveness score of 68.9/100 indicates that Desa Damai achieves partially effective localization. The article argues that the program's replicability is contingent on three structural improvements: the development of a standardized M&E framework tied to RPA WPS strategic outcomes, the formalization of local government integration beyond personality-dependent coordination, and investment in community-level GBV prevention infrastructure.

Keywords: ASEAN RPA, Desa Damai, civil society, Indonesia, Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji bagaimana ASEAN Regional Plan of Action (RPA) tentang Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) dilokalisasikan di Indonesia melalui program Desa Damai, sebuah inisiatif kolaboratif antara Wahid Foundation dan UN Women. Penelitian menggunakan teori keamanan feminis dan kerangka lokalisasi norma dengan metode kualitatif melalui analisis dokumen dan data wawancara sekunder untuk menilai penerjemahan norma WPS ke dalam praktik di tingkat komunitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Desa

Damai mengimplementasikan tiga pilar WPS, yaitu perlindungan (protection), pencegahan (prevention), dan lokalisasi (localization), melalui pendidikan perdamaian, penyusunan rencana aksi komunitas yang responsif gender, serta pembentukan ruang aman bagi perempuan. Namun, efektivitas lokalisasi masih belum merata karena implementasi berbeda antar desa, pemberdayaan perempuan sebagai aktor keamanan masih terbatas, dan kerangka pemantauan serta evaluasi (M&E) belum memadai. Artikel ini berargumen bahwa Desa Damai merupakan model lokalisasi berbasis aktor non-negara yang menjanjikan, tetapi keberlanjutan dan replikasinya memerlukan dukungan pemerintah, penguatan sistem M&E, serta perhatian yang lebih besar terhadap dinamika gender di tingkat lokal. Temuan ini berkontribusi pada kajian mengenai difusi norma WPS, peran masyarakat sipil dalam implementasi arsitektur perdamaian regional, dan faktor-faktor yang mendukung lokalisasi norma keamanan secara bermakna.

Kata kunci: ASEAN RPA, Desa Damai, Indonesia, masyarakat sipil, Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

INTRODUCTION

The Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, institutionalized through United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000, represents a landmark normative shift in international peace and security governance. By centering women's experiences of conflict and recognizing them as active agents the resolution established four core pillars: participation, protection, prevention, and recovery (United Nations Security Council, 2000). Yet the translation of these global norms into concrete community-level practice remains uneven and context-dependent, particularly across the diverse national settings of Southeast Asia.

The acceleration of the WPS agenda has become increasingly important at global, regional, national, and local levels. Women must not be positioned merely as objects of security. They are primary actors capable of driving meaningful change in peace efforts, conflict resolution, and sustainable development (Tickner, 1992; Enloe, 2014). Statistical evidence supports this: a peace agreement is 35 percent more likely to last at least fifteen years if women participate in its creation (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin, & Paffenholz, as cited in

Tripp & Kang, 2008). Despite this, women's representation in strategic security decision-making globally remains insufficient, and the implementation of the WPS agenda continues to face persistent challenges including gender-based violence, social norms that restrict women's participation, and inadequate institutional infrastructure for women's protection in conflict settings.

At the regional level, ASEAN formally localized the WPS agenda through the Regional Plan of Action on WPS (RPA WPS), launched in 2022 and reinforced at the 2023 Yogyakarta Summit. The RPA defines six strategic outcomes spanning protection of rights, women's full participation, ASEAN's role in conflict prevention, SGBV prevention, relief and recovery, and implementation and monitoring. Yet a critical gap persists between these regional commitments and their operationalization at the national and local levels. This gap is most acute at the community level, where the actual lived security of women is determined.

Indonesia, as a founding ASEAN member with a National Action Plan (NAP) on WPS since 2010 and successive iterations of the RAN P3AKS (2014–2019; 2020–2025), has taken significant

legislative steps (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak RI, 2020). However, state-led implementation at the community level has been limited, creating space for civil society organizations to act as catalytic intermediaries (Yuliani & Damayanti, 2019). Since 2017, the Wahid Foundation in partnership with UN Women has filled this space through the Desa Damai (Peace Village) program, an initiative designed to translate regional WPS norms into community practice through women's empowerment, peace education, and gender-responsive community governance (Wahid Foundation & UN Women, 2021).

This article addresses the following research question: To what extent, and through which mechanisms, does the Wahid Foundation and UN Women's Desa Damai program effectively localize the ASEAN WPS agenda in Indonesia? Three subsidiary questions guide the analysis: (1) Which dimensions of the ASEAN RPA WPS strategic outcomes does Desa Damai operationalize, and how? (2) What conditions enable or constrain effective localization? (3) Under what circumstances can this model serve as a basis for replication within or beyond Indonesia?

The article contributes to scholarship on WPS norm diffusion and localization in three ways. First, it examines localization through civil society actors rather than states, extending literature that focuses predominantly on governmental National Action Plans. Second, it applies the ASEAN RPA WPS framework as an analytical grid—mapping program activities against the six strategic outcomes through primary interview evidence. Third, it moves beyond

affirmative program descriptions to offer a scored, evidence-based evaluation of the conditions under which community-based WPS models can be considered effective.

Theoretical Framework

This article draws on two complementary analytical frameworks: feminist security theory and the norm localization concept, applied through the ASEAN RPA WPS localization toolkit.

Feminist Security Theory

Feminist Security Theory provides the normative foundation of this article. The theory argues that security must be understood from the everyday lived experiences of individuals rather than solely from geopolitical or military dynamics (Enloe, 2014; Tickner, 1992). Domestic violence, gender discrimination, intolerance, gender-based extremism, and restricted access to public spaces constitute genuine security threats that traditional security frameworks render invisible (Margaretha & Tanamal, 2022; Ferree & Tripp, 2006).

Ann Tickner's (1992) reformulation of security as multidimensional and gender-sensitive, and Cynthia Enloe's (2014) insistence on making feminist sense of international politics, provide the basis for evaluating programs like Desa Damai. Christine Sylvester's concept of empathetic cooperation (understanding security through the relational, contextual experiences of different actors) is particularly relevant for analyzing the Wahid Foundation–UN Women partnership and for assessing whether the program reflects women's actual security needs at the community level (Sylvester, 1994).

Operationally, this framework directs analysis toward three evaluative questions: (a) Does the program shift women from objects of protection to autonomous subjects of security? (b) Does it challenge or reproduce gender hierarchies at the community level? (c) Does it integrate women's everyday security experiences into conflict prevention and peacebuilding mechanisms? These questions directly inform the scoring criteria applied in Section 4.

Norm Localization and the ASEAN RPA WPS Framework

The concept of localization—drawn from Acharya's (2018) work on norm diffusion in Southeast Asia—explains how global or regional norms are adapted, contested, and institutionalized in local contexts. Localization is not mere norm transmission; it involves active agency by local actors who select, reframe, and embed external norms within indigenous practices and social structures. This produces a hybrid normative architecture that is neither purely global nor purely local.

WPS localization is one of the four key recommendations of the ASEAN Regional Review on WPS. The ASEAN RPA WPS defines localization as 'promoting national leadership, ownership, and commitment to implementing the women, peace, and security agenda among key national actors' (ASEAN & UN Women, 2023; UN Women, 2015). The localization toolkit further specifies that effective localization requires legal and policy instruments, systematic cross-sectoral coordination, and robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to ensure transparency and accountability (UN Women, 2025).

The RPA WPS's six strategic outcomes provide this article's analytical grid. Against each outcome, this study assesses: whether Wahid Foundation and UN Women have transmitted RPA norms to village-level actors; how community members in Tajur Halang have adapted these norms to local social and religious dynamics; what institutional mechanisms sustain the norms beyond individual program cycles; and what evidence exists that localization has occurred in substance rather than in form only.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach with a single case study design, focusing on the Desa Damai program with primary empirical grounding in Tajur Halang Village, Bogor, West Java (Lamont, 2015; Mardalis, 1995). Tajur Halang was selected because it was among the first villages to be declared a Desa Damai, offers a contextually complex environment (religious diversity, documented inter-group conflicts), and has an active program coordination structure that enabled primary data collection.

Data were gathered through three primary sources. First, primary interview data were collected through two key informant interviews conducted on October 27, 2025: (1) Libasut Taqwa, Manager of Research and Advocacy, Wahid Foundation (covering WPS conceptualization, protection mechanisms, prevention programs, and ASEAN RPA localization); and (2) Fadil, Village Head of Tajur Halang and Desa Damai Program Coordinator (covering community dynamics, program activities, participation patterns, and local conflict history). Second, organizational document analysis examined official

Wahid Foundation reports, UN Women Indonesia publications, the ASEAN RPA WPS Localization Toolkit and Guidelines, and the Panduan Rencana Aksi Desa Damai (2021). Third, academic literature on feminist security theory, WPS norm diffusion, and civil society peacebuilding in Indonesia provided the theoretical grounding.

Analytical processing followed three inductive stages: (1) data reduction—identifying information relevant to WPS pillar operationalization, localization processes, and community-level gender dynamics; (2) thematic categorization—organizing findings against the six ASEAN RPA WPS strategic outcomes; and (3) interpretive scoring—assigning effectiveness scores (0–100) to each indicator based on the degree to which interview evidence and document analysis confirm functional operationalization. Scores of 80–100 indicate effective implementation; 50–79 indicate partial effectiveness; below 50 indicates a structural gap.

This study's primary limitation is that it relies on a single village case and on data largely provided by program implementors rather than independent evaluators or beneficiary surveys. The scoring system therefore reflects evidence-based assessment rather than statistically validated measurement. Future research should incorporate beneficiary-level survey data, comparative analysis across multiple Desa Damai villages, and independent field observation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Importance of Women's Roles in the WPS Agenda

The WPS Agenda is an international framework that recognizes women's

essential role and contribution to global peace and security. It emphasizes the need for women's protection in armed conflict, their participation in peace processes, and the integration of gender analysis into peace efforts and post-conflict reconstruction (United Nations, 2018; United Nations Security Council, 2000). The acceleration of this agenda has become increasingly important as security threats diversify—from interstate armed conflict to domestic social conflicts, resource disputes, violent extremism, and online disinformation.

Research consistently demonstrates that women's inclusion improves peace outcomes. Bouka (2018) highlights women's critical role in mediating local conflicts and preventing escalation, noting that their deeper access to local communities and social dynamics makes them effective mediators. Hudson (2017) finds that greater female representation in political institutions correlates with greater attention to gender equality and conflict-related sexual violence prevention in decision-making (Holbert & Berschneider, 2017). Reyachav & Moore (2018) document that through education, training, and social support, women strengthen community resilience overall.

Despite this evidence, challenges persist globally and in Indonesia. Structural barriers—gender discrimination embedded in social systems, persistent gender-based violence, and cultural norms that restrict women's public roles—continue to limit women's meaningful participation. The imbalance in women's involvement in security decision-making is not merely a statistical deficit: it produces qualitatively poorer security policy that

fails to address the gendered dimensions of conflict and insecurity.

Challenges Facing Women in the WPS Program

In Tajur Halang, these structural challenges are manifest. The village's initial resistance to the Desa Damai program—rooted in concerns about political co-optation (*'khawatir kegiatan ditunggangi kepentingan politik'*) and initial gender stereotypes positioning women as powerless (*'dominasi perempuan karena awalnya ada stereotype perempuan tidak berdaya'*)—illustrates the socio-cultural resistance that WPS localization must navigate. This is consistent with Curtis, Ebila & Martin's (2022) analysis of the complexity of the WPS agenda, which documents the gap between the agenda's feminist aspirations and its implementation realities in contexts shaped by patriarchal norms.

Curtis, Ebila & Martin (2022) identifies four key complexities in WPS implementation: the evolution from viewing women as conflict victims to recognizing them as peace agents; the inadequacy of binary victim-or-agent narratives in capturing women ex-combatants' reintegration experiences; the risk that transnational normative processes simplify complex local realities into stereotypes; and the critique that WPS implementation may perpetuate racial or social hierarchies by privileging certain women's voices over others. All four complexities are relevant to the Tajur Halang case, where women's empowerment has been catalyzed but structural transformation remains incomplete.

Additionally, Wahid Foundation itself acknowledges practical implementation challenges: *'tantangan teknis budget, tidak semua komunitas bisa*

langsung menerima apa yang diintervensi oleh Wahid Foundation' (Taqwa, 2025). This community heterogeneity across the 22 Desa Damai villages represents a structural constraint on uniform program effectiveness that any replication strategy must account for.

The WPS Program through the UN Women and Wahid Foundation Partnership

Nationally, Indonesia has demonstrated significant formal commitment to the WPS agenda. The National Action Plan on WPS (2010), the first RAN P3AKS (2014–2019) established through Permenko Kesra No. 8/2014, and the second RAN P3AKS (2020–2025) through Permenko PMK No. 5/2021 collectively provide Indonesia's legislative architecture for WPS implementation (Kementerian Luar Negeri RI, 2015; Kementerian Luar Negeri RI, 2010). The second RAN P3AKS notably expands the scope of WPS implementation to include non-traditional security threats—violent extremism, land disputes, online hate speech, and disinformation—reflecting the evolving landscape of insecurity facing Indonesian women.

At the regional level, the ASEAN RPA WPS (2022) establishes six strategic outcomes as implementation benchmarks. ASEAN's commitment is driven by three imperatives: enhancing regional relevance by integrating women into peace and security frameworks; fulfilling the commitment not to leave vulnerable women and girls as victims of gender violence in conflict; and achieving regional security against diverse threats. Indonesia's alignment with these commitments through national legislation provides the normative bridge between

regional aspirations and community-level action.

The Wahid Foundation–UN Women partnership, active since 2017, operationalizes this bridge at the grassroots. By mid-2023, 22 villages had declared themselves Desa Damai, committing their communities to protect and nurture tolerance and peace beginning within the family unit (Wahid Foundation & UN Women, 2021). The program's design reflects a hybrid localization logic: 'bottom-up top-down, *bukan hanya melokalisasi tapi juga menyesuaikan nilai RAR ASEAN dengan nilai lokal*' (Taqwa, 2025). This adaptive approach—contextualizing RPA WPS principles within Indonesia's specific religious, social, and governance dynamics—is the program's central methodological contribution.

Tajur Halang is among the most contextually complex Desa Damai implementations. Its population encompasses three major religious communities (Islam, Christianity, and Confucianism),

creating both the need for and the test of the program's inter-group peacebuilding approach. The occurrence of documented physical conflicts in 2024 (inter-youth clashes) and 2025 (inter-adolescent clashes attributed to religious differences and extremist influence) renders Tajur Halang a critical case for assessing the program's actual conflict prevention capacity rather than its aspirational design.

Effectiveness Assessment: WPS Pillars against ASEAN RPA Strategic Outcomes

The following analysis assesses the Desa Damai program's effectiveness in Tajur Halang across the five WPS dimensions, grounded in primary interview data and cross-referenced against the ASEAN RPA WPS strategic outcomes. Table 1 presents the overall effectiveness scores, and Table 2 provides the detailed indicator-by-indicator analysis.

Table 1. WPS Effectiveness Summary by Pillar — Desa Damai, Tajur Halang

WPS Pillar	Score	Category	Key Gap Identified
Prevention (SO2 & SO3)	83.3	Effective	Attitudinal change not yet structurally embedded; recurring conflicts 2024–2025
Protection (SO1 & SO4)	66.0	Partially Effective	Community-level GBV prevention weak; safety measurement absent
Participation (SO2)	72.5	Partially Effective	Structural representation in formal governance not documented
Recovery (SO5)	52.5	Partially Effective	Crisis infrastructure absent; economic outcome data unavailable
ASEAN RPA Localization (SO3 & SO6)	70.3	Partially Effective	M&E framework absent; donor-dependency risk
OVERALL AVERAGE	68.9	Partially Effective	M&E and community-level GBV prevention are critical systemic priorities

Source: Proceed by Authors, 2025.

Table 2. Detailed Effectiveness Analysis: WPS Indicators, Field Evidence, Scores, and Theoretical Assessment

WPS Pillar (RPA SO)	Indicator	Field Reality: Tajur Halang (Interview Evidence)	Score /100	Theory vs. Reality Analysis
PARTICIPATION (SO2)	Women's leadership & decision-making Proportion of women in coordination committees; women holding formal Desa Damai coordinator roles; women included in village musyawarah.	Initially sidelined due to gender stereotypes. After Wahid Foundation entry, awareness shifted: women now dominate all Desa Damai activities. Koperasi Cinta Damai is women-led. Coordinator role is actively held. (Fadil, 2025)	75	Participation increased markedly within program spaces. However, structural representation in formal village governance (BPD, musrenbang) is not yet documented — gains are real but program-dependent.
	Gender balance across all activities Female-to-male ratio in trainings; assessment of whether participation is meaningful (substantive) vs. token.	Activities are majority female — deliberate design response to initial stereotypes. Facilitators ensure full, sustained women's participation. Men participate but less prominently. (Taqwa, 2025)	70	Women now dominate, yet male engagement with WPS norms remains underdeveloped. Sustainable peace norms require both women and men to internalize gender-responsive values.
PROTECTION (SO1 & SO4)	GBV SOP existence & operationalization Formal GBV SOP known by facilitators; referral pathways to police/village apparatus established; staff	GBV SOP and early warning system exist at Wahid Foundation level. Referral goes through village apparatus or police.	83	Strong institutional intention with partial operational reach. SOP exists but is not uniformly applied across all 22 villages — flexibility is pragmatic but limits

WPS Pillar (RPA SO)	Indicator	Field Reality: Tajur Halang (Interview Evidence)	Score /100	Theory vs. Reality Analysis
	trained in GBV response.	Implementation is case-by-case: 'ada alur mekanismenya tapi dilakukan penyesuaian.' (Taqwa, 2025)		systematic protection.
	Women's perceived safety within program spaces Participant-reported safety perception; presence of female facilitator; availability of confidential reporting channels.	Program activities designed as safe spaces — majority female participants, facilitators ensure security. Women feel they have access to help channels. No independent safety survey conducted. (Fadil, 2025)	75	Safe space within program boundaries established. Critical gap: effectiveness is asserted by implementors but not verified through independent participant data or standardized safety measurement.
	Community-level GBV prevention Community awareness of GBV; documented cases handled through referral system; GBV prevention integrated in village action plan.	No systematic GBV case tracking in Tajur Halang. Physical conflicts in 2024 (inter-youth clashes) and 2025 (inter-adolescent clashes) reflect ongoing structural tensions not yet addressed by the protection mechanism.	40	Structural GBV and community violence are not systematically addressed. The SOP provides individual-level pathways, but community-level prevention is weak — confirming the feminist security critique that women remain safer inside program spaces than in the broader community.
PREVENTION (SO2 & SO3)	Gender-responsive peace education modules Training modules explicitly integrating	Modules available on Wahid Foundation website and explicitly	100	Strongest program dimension — consistent with Wahid Foundation's institutional identity

WPS Pillar (RPA SO)	Indicator	Field Reality: Tajur Halang (Interview Evidence)	Score /100	Theory vs. Reality Analysis
	gender perspectives; minimum annual delivery; documentation of module content and participant reach.	integrate gender equality. Delivered ~4x/year covering financial management, UMKM, entrepreneurship, and crafts. Annual program adjusted from central office priorities. (Fadil, 2025)		as a peace education organization. Module content is gender-explicit and systematically delivered year-round.
	Attitudinal change toward gender equality Self-reported change in gender attitudes; community leaders endorsing women's participation; observable behavioral change in community deliberations.	'Kesadaran berubah setelah masuknya Wahid Foundation' — coordinator describes significant awareness shift. Community now more open to women's participation and sensitive to conflict triggers. No pre-post attitudinal survey data available.	70	Attitudinal change is real but structurally fragile. Physical conflicts in 2024 and 2025 show changed attitudes have not yet crystallized into conflict-preventive community behavior.
	Early warning & conflict prevention mechanisms Functioning community early warning/detection system; active Pokja (working group); inter-sector coordination mechanism operational.	Bottom-up/top-down hybrid model using early detection tools and community Pokja. Multi-actor coordination across sectors: 'ada tools dan perangkatnya, ada prokja, koordinasi lintas	80	Early warning system exists organizationally and is partially functional at community level. Recurring conflicts suggest detection does not yet consistently translate into prevention. Cross-sector coordination (police,

WPS Pillar (RPA SO)	Indicator	Field Reality: Tajur Halang (Interview Evidence)	Score /100	Theory vs. Reality Analysis
		sektor.' (Taqwa, 2025) Conflicts in 2024–2025 tested system limits.		village, CSO) is functional but informal.
RECOVERY (SO5)	Women's economic empowerment Livelihood/economic programs exist for women; participation rates tracked; evidence of income or skill improvement.	Koperasi Cinta Damai (women-led), household financial management training, UMKM and handicraft skills training, ~4x/year. 'Pelatihan keuangan, UMKM, RAD PE' — diverse economic activities targeting women as participants and leaders. (Fadil, 2025)	75	Economic empowerment activities are active and diverse. Critical gap: outcome data (income increase, sustained enterprise development) are absent — participation numbers alone cannot substantiate impact claims.
	Crisis response infrastructure for women Referral pathways to psychosocial, legal, or health services; women affected by conflict can access post-incident support.	No dedicated crisis-response infrastructure in Tajur Halang. Referral to police/village apparatus exists for GBV cases only. No psychosocial or legal aid channel specific to the program.	30	Weakest dimension across all pillars. Program's prevention-first focus has left recovery infrastructure underdeveloped — the largest structural gap relative to ASEAN RPA SO5.
ASEAN RPA LOCALIZATION (SO3 & SO6)	Staff knowledge of ASEAN RPA WPS norms Staff can articulate RPA WPS strategic outcomes; program	'Bottom-up top-down, bukan hanya melokalisasi tapi juga menyesuaikan	83	Strong organizational alignment. Wahid Foundation articulates a sophisticated localization logic —

WPS Pillar (RPA SO)	Indicator	Field Reality: Tajur Halang (Interview Evidence)	Score /100	Theory vs. Reality Analysis
	design references RPA framework; activities mapped against RPA priorities.	nilai RAR ASEAN dengan nilai lokal' — staff demonstrate mature, contextual understanding of WPS and RPA localization logic. (Taqwa, 2025)		contextualizing RPA norms, not simply transplanting them. This is the primary enabling condition for effective localization.
	Multi-actor coordination (government, UN Women, civil society) Active cooperation with UN Women and government; regular coordination meetings; documented joint activities or referrals.	UN Women collaboration ongoing since 2016–2025 with program development. Coordination with village apparatus, police, and national agencies. RAN PKAKS and RAN HAM referenced as policy anchors. (Taqwa, 2025)	83	Multi-actor coordination is a structural strength. Key fragility: local government coordination is often informal and personality-dependent — Fadil simultaneously as village head and program coordinator creates efficiency but also a single-point-of-failure risk.
	Standardized M&E framework Measurable indicators for each WPS pillar; regular data collection and analysis; findings used to adjust program; progress reported to regional/national stakeholders.	Internal monitoring exists but is not standardized. Participant survey (G-Form) was in development at time of interview. No village-level M&E framework in place. Effectiveness scores rely on implementor-reported qualitative	45	Most consequential systemic gap. Without standardized M&E tied to RPA WPS outcomes, the program cannot demonstrate effectiveness externally, cannot compare across 22 villages, and cannot generate credible replication evidence.

WPS Pillar (RPA SO)	Indicator	Field Reality: Tajur Halang (Interview Evidence)	Score /100	Theory vs. Reality Analysis
		assessments. (Taqwa, 2025)		

Source: Proceed by Authors, 2025

Prevention: The Anchor Strength (Score: 83.3 — Effective)

Prevention is unambiguously the program's strongest dimension. Wahid Foundation's peace education modules explicitly integrate gender perspectives and are delivered consistently throughout the year (approximately four sessions annually), covering financial management, UMKM entrepreneurship, and handicraft skills. The modules are publicly documented on Wahid Foundation's website and reflect the organization's core institutional identity as a peace education actor (Wahid Foundation, 2021). The early warning and conflict detection system—including community Pokja and multi-sector coordination—represents a sophisticated localization of RPA SO3.

However, the persistence of physical conflicts in Tajur Halang in 2024 and 2025 constitutes a critical test result. As Taqwa (2025) acknowledged, 'tidak semua komunitas bisa langsung menerima apa yang diintervensi.' The coordinator reported significant attitudinal change ('kesadaran berubah setelah masuknya Wahid Foundation'), yet this attitudinal shift has not yet translated into durable conflict-preventive community behavior. This gap—between changed attitudes and changed social outcomes—is precisely the transformation gap that feminist security

theory identifies as the criterion for meaningful empowerment.

Participation: Program-Dependent Progress (Score: 72.5 — Partially Effective)

Women's participation has undergone a significant trajectory in Tajur Halang: from initial marginalization rooted in gender stereotypes ('perempuan tidak berdaya') to current dominance of Desa Damai activities, women's leadership of Koperasi Cinta Damai, and active coordination roles. This shift reflects the program's success in challenging and reversing initial resistance—including the village head's initial reluctance to join the program due to concerns about political interference.

The partially effective score reflects a critical unresolved question: whether participation gains are institutionally embedded or program-dependent. The absence of documented data on women's representation in formal village governance—BPD membership, musrenbang invitations, village budgeting processes—means that participation growth cannot be verified as structural rather than contingent on program activities. If the program were to pause or funding to lapse, it is unclear whether women's participatory positions would be maintained through formal institutional channels.

Protection: Institutional Intent, Community Gap (Score: 66.0 — Partially Effective)

The protection pillar reveals the sharpest divergence between organizational capacity and community reality. At the organizational level, Wahid Foundation maintains a GBV SOP, an early warning system, and a referral mechanism to village apparatus and police. Program activities are designed as safe spaces with female facilitators ensuring women's security. These elements align with RPA SO1 and SO4.

At the community level, however, protection is fragile. Taqwa (2025) candidly noted that the referral mechanism operates 'case by case'—there is an operational framework but 'dilakukan penyesuaian' (adaptations are made). No systematic GBV case tracking exists in Tajur Halang, and the recurring inter-group physical conflicts of 2024 and 2025 demonstrate that the community-level security environment has not been secured. This directly confirms feminist security theory's critique: women are safer within the program's activity boundaries, but the structural conditions producing gender-based insecurity in the broader community have not been addressed. This is the gap between protecting women in the program and achieving women's security in the community.

Recovery: The Critical Underdeveloped Pillar (Score: 52.5 — Partially Effective)

Recovery represents the program's largest structural gap relative to the ASEAN RPA SO5. Economic empowerment activities are genuinely active and diverse: Koperasi Cinta Damai (women-led cooperative), household financial management training, UMKM skills, and

handicraft development conducted approximately four times annually. These activities address the economic dimensions of women's recovery from conflict and insecurity.

However, two critical gaps limit the recovery score. First, outcome data are absent—participation in economic activities does not automatically translate into income improvement or enterprise sustainability, and without measurement, impact claims remain unsubstantiated. Second, crisis-response infrastructure for women affected by conflict or violence is absent: there are no psychosocial support channels, legal aid services, or health referral systems specific to the program. This means that women who experience violence during or after a conflict incident—such as those in 2024 and 2025—have no program-supported pathway to recovery. The program's prevention-first focus has come at the cost of recovery readiness.

ASEAN RPA Localization: Strong Design, Weak Evidence Architecture (Score: 70.3 — Partially Effective)

Wahid Foundation's localization logic is conceptually sophisticated. Taqwa's articulation—'bottom-up top-down, bukan hanya melokalisasi tapi juga menyesuaikan nilai RAR ASEAN dengan nilai lokal'—reflects genuine engagement with the ASEAN RPA's localization framework rather than superficial compliance. Cross-sector coordination with village apparatus, police, national agencies, and UN Women is operational. Policy anchors in RAN PKAKS and RAN HAM demonstrate alignment with Indonesia's national WPS commitments.

The partially effective score reflects one consequential structural weakness: the absence of a standardized M&E

framework. At the time of interview, an organizational monitoring system existed internally, but a village-level participant survey was only in development. This means that effectiveness assessments—including this article's scoring—rely on implementor-reported qualitative data rather than independently verified participant outcomes. Without standardized indicators tied to RPA WPS strategic outcomes, Wahid Foundation cannot systematically compare effectiveness across 22 Desa Damai villages, cannot generate evidence to support replication advocacy, and cannot demonstrate accountability to the ASEAN RPA's SO6 monitoring requirements.

Enabling Conditions and Structural Constraints

Three enabling conditions underpin the program's partial effectiveness. First, Wahid Foundation's Islamic civil society legitimacy—rooted in Nahdlatul Ulama networks—creates social trust that allows the program to operate in communities where state actors and secular organizations have limited reach. This legitimacy was decisive in overcoming Tajur Halang's initial resistance to the program. Second, the UN Women partnership provides normative alignment with the ASEAN RPA and access to technical and financial resources that amplify local implementation capacity. Third, the Desa Damai Action Plan mechanism creates a formal community artifact—a village-level governance document—that embeds WPS commitments beyond individual program cycles.

Three structural constraints limit the program's effectiveness and must be addressed for sustainable localization.

First, donor dependence: the program's continuity is contingent on external funding cycles, which creates institutional fragility incompatible with the long-term norm institutionalization that the localization framework requires. Second, personality-dependent coordination: Fadil's simultaneous roles as village head and Desa Damai coordinator create efficiency in Tajur Halang, but represent a single-point-of-failure risk—if this individual were to leave either role, both government integration and program continuity would be disrupted. Third, the M&E gap: without standardized outcome indicators, the program's replication claims cannot be substantiated, its cross-village learning is constrained, and its accountability to regional stakeholders is undemonstrated.

CONCLUSION

This article has assessed the effectiveness of the ASEAN WPS agenda's localization through the Desa Damai program of Wahid Foundation and UN Women in Indonesia, with primary empirical grounding in Tajur Halang Village. The overall effectiveness score of 68.9/100 indicates partial effectiveness—a finding that is more analytically precise than either a blanket endorsement or a dismissal of the program.

The program is effective in: institutionalizing women's participation in community peace governance (from 'powerless stereotypes' to women-led cooperative and coordination roles); delivering gender-responsive peace education consistently and with documented community impact; and enacting a sophisticated hybrid localization model that adapts ASEAN RPA WPS

norms to Tajur Halang's specific religious, social, and governance dynamics. These contributions align with RPA WPS SO2, SO3, and aspects of SO1, and demonstrate that civil society actors can serve as effective norm intermediaries between regional frameworks and community practice.

The program is partially effective or weak in: translating attitudinal change into structural conflict prevention (evidenced by physical conflicts in 2024 and 2025); extending protection beyond program activity spaces to the broader community security environment; providing recovery infrastructure for women affected by violence; and generating the evidence base needed to substantiate effectiveness claims and support replication advocacy.

Three structural improvements are necessary for the Desa Damai model to achieve sustained, replicable localization of the ASEAN WPS agenda. First, a standardized M&E framework tied to RPA WPS strategic outcomes must be developed and implemented across all 22 villages—enabling cross-site learning, accountability to regional stakeholders, and evidence-based replication claims. Second, local government integration must be formalized beyond personality-dependent coordination: Wahid Foundation's approach requires institutional anchoring in village governance documents, district-level policy endorsement, and government co-ownership of program continuity. Third, recovery infrastructure must be developed alongside prevention activities: the current prevention-first focus leaves women without support systems in the aftermath of conflict or violence, representing a critical gap relative to ASEAN RPA SO5.

For scholarship, these findings extend the localization literature by demonstrating that non-state actors can operationalize WPS norms in contexts of limited state capacity—but that the quality of localization depends on structural conditions that program design alone cannot guarantee. For practitioners, the Desa Damai model offers a transferable design logic (Islamic civil society legitimacy, hybrid localization, community action planning) that must be accompanied by M&E investment, formal government integration, and recovery infrastructure to constitute a credible model for wider ASEAN replication.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors express appreciation to UN Women Indonesia and the Wahid Foundation for their publicly available publications and reports that formed the empirical basis of this analysis. Special thanks are extended to Libasut Taqwa, Manager of Research and Advocacy at Wahid Foundation, and to Fadil, Village Head and Desa Damai Coordinator of Tajur Halang, for their time, candor, and willingness to share both program achievements and implementation challenges. The authors also thank La Rampu Da staff and all Wahid Foundation field facilitators who provided contextual information, and colleagues who offered critical feedback during the drafting process.

REFERENCES

- Acharya, A. (2018). *The end of the American world order*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- ASEAN & UN Women. (2023). "Localisation toolkit and guidelines for the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security." *ASEAN Secretariat*. <https://asean.org>
- Bouka, Y. (2018). Gender and civil war mediation. In *Oxford research encyclopedia of politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Curtis, D. E. A., Ebila, F., & Martin de Almagro, M. (2022). Memoirs of women-in-conflict: Ugandan ex-combatants and the production of knowledge on security and peacebuilding. *Security Dialogue*, 53(5), 402–419.
- Enloe, C. (2014). *Bananas, beaches and bases: Making feminist sense of international politics* (2nd ed.). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Fadil. (2025, October 27). Interview — Village Head and Desa Damai Coordinator, Tajur Halang. (D. H. Putri, Interviewer).
- Ferree, M. M., & Tripp, A. M. (2006). *Global feminism: Transnational women's activism, organizing, and human rights*. New York: New York University Press.
- Holbert, N., & Berschneider, E. (2017). *The Hillary Doctrine: Sex & American foreign policy*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hudson, V. M. (2017). *The WomanStats Project: Findings*. Brigham Young University.
- Kementerian Luar Negeri RI. (2010). *National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security*. Jakarta: Kementerian Luar Negeri.
- Kementerian Luar Negeri RI. (2015). *National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (2014–2019)*. Jakarta: Kementerian Luar Negeri.
- Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak RI. (2020). *National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (2019–2024)*. Jakarta: KemenPPPA.
- Lamont, C. (2015). *Research methods in international relations*. London: SAGE.
- Margaretha, R., & Tanamal, N. A. (2022). Peran perempuan dalam ketahanan nasional. *Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan Widya Praja*, 48(2), 203–212.
- Mardalis. (1995). *Metode penelitian: Suatu pendekatan proposal*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- O'Reilly, M., Ó Súilleabháin, A., & Paffenholz, T. (2015). *Reimagining peacemaking: Women's roles in peace processes*. New York: International Peace Institute.
- Reychav, I., & Moore, M. (2018). Gender and civil society in the Middle East. London: Routledge.
- Sylvester, C. (1994). *Feminist theory and international relations in a postmodern era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taqwa, L. (2025, October 27). Interview — Manager of Research and Advocacy, Wahid Foundation. (D. H. Putri, Interviewer).
- Tickner, J. A. (1992). *Gender in international relations: Feminist*

- perspectives on achieving global security. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Tripp, A. M., & Kang, A. (2008). *The global impact of quotas: On the fast track to increased female legislative representation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- UN Women. (2015). *Indonesia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2014–2019): Review and analysis*. Jakarta: UN Women.
- UN Women. (2025). "WPS localization in ASEAN: Priority actions and national implementation." <https://www.unwomen.org>
- United Nations. (2018). *Women, peace, and security: Enhancing implementation of the WPS agenda in ASEAN*. New York: United Nations.
- United Nations Security Council. (2000). "Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security." *United Nations*. <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/WPS%20SR-ES1325%20.pdf>
- Wahid Foundation. (2021). *Laporan program Desa Damai 2021*. Jakarta: Wahid Foundation.
- Wahid Foundation & UN Women Indonesia. (2021). "Panduan Rencana Aksi Desa Damai." https://peacevillage.id/modul/Panduan%20Rencana%20Aksi%20Desa%20Damai_WF.pdf
- Wutsqah, U., & Mukaddamah, I. (2023). Peran perempuan dalam membentuk ketahanan keluarga. *Jurnal Inovasi Penelitian*, 3(9), 7643–7652.
- Yuliani, N., & Damayanti, R. (2019). Women, peace, and security: The Indonesian experience. *Journal of Southeast Asian Human Rights*, 3(1), 70–84.