

Research article

Governance Network in Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting Policy Formulation in Mentawai Islands Regency

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Abstract

This study analyzes governance network dynamics in the policy formulation of Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG) in Mentawai Islands Regency, explaining why gender inequality persists despite the formal enactment of regulatory instruments. Utilizing a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design, data were gathered through in-depth interviews with 12 key informants across three institutional categories (Driver Team, SKPD Focal Points, Regional Parliament/DPRD, and YCMM NGO) and supported by regional planning and budgeting document analysis. Data were analyzed thematically based on Klijn et al.'s (2025) three framework dimensions—actors, process, and institutions—applying cross-informant narrative comparison and document verification. Findings reveal a power paradox in the actor dimension, where Bappeda and BKAD, holding the highest budgeting authority, remain passive, whereas dedicated drivers Dinsos P3A and YCMM lack adequate budgeting authority. In the process dimension, a systemic policy chain decoupling occurs, where technical gender analysis documents (GAP/GBS) are severed from KUA-PPAS ceiling formulation due to the absence of a dedicated Driver Team coordination arena and legislative reactivity. In the institutional dimension, the network is fragmented with low relational density and suffers from institutional amnesia caused by the absence of reward/punishment rules and frequent planner rotations. This study concludes that formal regulations remain insufficient in generating gender-responsive budget allocations without internal network management by Bappeda to lead integrated coordination and implement mandatory budget locks.

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1. Introduction

Gender equality is a strategic issue in development because inequality harms all segments of society, not only women (World Bank, 2001). In Indonesia, this commitment is affirmed through Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2000 on Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) in National Development and reinforced at the regional level by Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 67 of 2011, which requires regional governments to make a gender perspective an integral part of every stage of development. Its operational strategy is Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG), an approach that incorporates a gender justice perspective into planning and budgeting so that gaps between men and women in access, participation, control, and development benefits can be narrowed (Bappenas et al., 2012; Safitri & Edison, 2020).

The need for such an approach is evident in Mentawai Islands Regency, an archipelagic region far removed from the mainland of West Sumatra. Gender inequality in Mentawai Islands Regency can be seen in the 2024 Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender Development Index (GDI) data presented below.

Table 1. Details of the Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender Development Index (GDI) by Regency in West Sumatra, 2024

No.	Regency	HDI		Regency	GDI
		Male	Female		
1.	Padang Pariaman Regency	78.79	74.40	Tanah Datar Regency	97.48
2.	Dharmasraya Regency	78.53	70.88	Agam Regency	97.09
3.	Tanah Datar Regency	77.48	76.04	Solok Regency	96.22
4.	Pasaman Barat Regency	76.58	69.23	Pesisir Selatan Regency	95.83
5.	Agam Regency	77.00	75.07	Solok Selatan Regency	95.53
6.	Sijunjung Regency	76.77	72.56	Lima Puluh Kota Regency	94.86
7.	Pesisir Selatan Regency	75.82	72.87	Sijunjung Regency	94.39
8.	Lima Puluh Kota Regency	75.95	72.27	Padang Pariaman Regency	93.92
9.	Solok Selatan Regency	75.81	72.48	Pasaman Regency	92.91
10.	Solok Regency	75.06	72.28	Pasaman Barat Regency	90.32
11.	Pasaman Regency	74.39	69.17	Mentawai Islands Regency	90.13
12.	Mentawai Islands Regency	71.76	64.79	Dharmasraya Regency	89.71

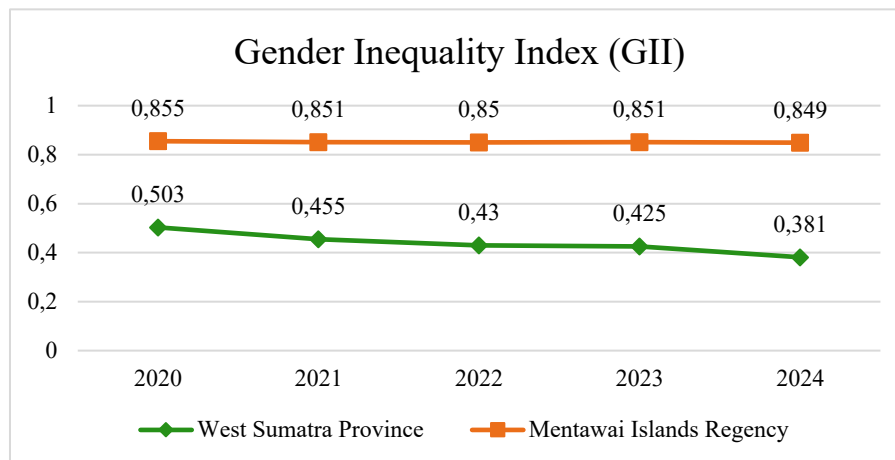
Source: Statistics Indonesia (BPS), 2025.

Based on the data in Table 1, the Human Development Index (HDI) for women in Mentawai Islands Regency was recorded at 64.79, while the male HDI was 71.76, a difference of 6.97 points. In the same year, Mentawai’s Gender Development Index (GDI) was 90.13, the second lowest in West Sumatra. This indicates that, although relatively close to parity, women’s development achievements still lag behind those of men.

To view inequality more broadly, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) is used, which measures three aspects: empowerment, reproductive health, and labor market participation. The index

ranges from 0 to 1, where a decline in value reflects progress toward gender equality and a narrowing of the gap between men and women.

Figure 1. Trend of the Gender Inequality Index (GII) of Mentawai Islands Regency, 2020–2024



Source: Statistics Indonesia (BPS), 2025

Based on Figure 1, Mentawai's GII remained within the range of 0.849–0.855 during 2020–2024, whereas West Sumatra's GII declined from 0.503 to 0.381 over the same period. This comparison shows that improvement in gender inequality in Mentawai has been far more limited than provincial progress. This condition indicates that gender inequality remains a development problem requiring an integrated policy response, and provides important context for development policies that systematically integrate a gender perspective into planning and budgeting.

To understand how PPRG is formulated, it is necessary first to examine the instruments used in the process. PPRG rests on two main instruments. The Gender Analysis Pathway (GAP) is used to identify gender gaps in the access, participation, control, and benefits of a program, and then translate them into targets and indicators. The Gender Budget Statement (GBS) is a statement attached to the Work Plan and Budget (RKA) of regional apparatus to show that the budget for an activity has been designed on the basis of gender analysis. Both instruments relate to the series of regional planning and budgeting documents, from the RPJMD, Renstra, and Renja SKPD, to the KUA-PPAS and RKA SKPD, and finally the APBD and DPA. Accordingly, the substance of gender analysis must be preserved and remain traceable as it moves from one document to the next.

In practice, PPRG involves the Driver Team and PUG Focal Points. The PPRG Driver Team consists of the agencies tasked with driving and coordinating PPRG in the region. They coordinate planning, provide technical assistance, formulate financial policy, and oversee gender-responsive budgets (KPPPA, 2013). In Mentawai Islands Regency, the Driver Team was established through Regent's Decree No. 264 of 2025 and comprises the Badan

Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah (Bappeda), the Dinas Sosial Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak (Dinsos P3A), the Badan Keuangan dan Aset Daerah (BKAD), and the Inspektorat. Meanwhile, PUG Focal Points are officers in each implementing SKPD who translate PPRG into the programs and budgets of their work units. Under Regent's Decree No. 262 of 2025, Focal Points have the functions of promoting PUG, facilitating the preparation of gender-responsive RKA, preparing GAP and GBS, and providing disaggregated data. The Regional Action Plan (RAD) for PUG, established through Regent's Decree No. 265 of 2025, serves as the work guideline for carrying out these functions.

Although this institutional framework is in place, SKPD involvement in preparing GAP and GBS has not been consistent. According to the Recapitulation of Gender-Responsive Budgets of Mentawai Islands Regency for Fiscal Years 2024–2026, the number of SKPD submitting GAP and GBS documents fell from 21 in fiscal year 2024 to 14 in 2026, and 12 SKPD have never prepared them. Within the Driver Team, Bappeda formally serves as chair, but the operational workload rests almost entirely on Dinsos P3A, and there is no dedicated forum that routinely brings together Bappeda, Dinsos P3A, BKAD, and the Inspektorat to discuss PPRG issues jointly. This condition is consistent with the obstacles already noted in the Circular Letter on the National Strategy for Accelerating PUG through PPRG, namely the unclear roles of driving agencies, weak monitoring and evaluation, and the limited capacity of driving agencies (Bappenas et al., 2012). Thus, the PPRG problem in Mentawai lies not merely in the design of rules, but also in how the mandated actors relate to one another, share roles, and ensure that gender-responsive ideas are not lost along the chain of documents.

A governance network perspective is relevant for reading these relations. Klijn and Koppenjan (2016) define it as a relatively stable pattern of social relations among interdependent actors in addressing a policy problem, which is formed, sustained, and changed through interaction. In contrast to hierarchical approaches, governance networks emphasize horizontal relations, negotiation, and resource interdependence (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007). This approach suits the character of PPRG because no single agency controls all of the required resources. Bappeda holds the planning coordination function, Dinsos P3A has technical knowledge of gender issues, BKAD holds budgeting authority, the Inspektorat holds the oversight function, and Focal Points hold sectoral data. Networks can provide benefits in the form of specialization and broader reach (Goldsmith & Eggers, 2004), but they also bring substantive, strategic, and institutional complexity (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2016).

This article follows the framework of Klijn, Koppenjan, Spekkink, and Warsen (2025), which analyzes networks through three interrelated dimensions. Actor analysis maps who is involved, how they view the problem, and how far they depend on the resources of others. Process analysis traces how interaction unfolds over time across various arenas, assesses its outcomes, and identifies network management efforts. Institutional analysis examines patterns of interaction, trust, and rules, both formal and informal, that form the context of such

interaction. Actors' positions influence how they interact, interaction takes place within particular rules, and the outcomes of interaction can in turn change the rules and the relations among actors. In this study, policy formulation is limited to the planning and budgeting process, particularly how a gender-responsive perspective is formulated in planning and budgeting documents and how its substance is carried forward between document stages.

A number of earlier studies on Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) and Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG) at the regional level have widely identified technical and bureaucratic obstacles. Studies such as Putri (2022) and Wahid et al. (2023) highlight weak inter-organizational coordination, limited human resource capacity, and minimal communication as the main factors behind suboptimal PPRG implementation. However, most of this literature treats the issue as a conventional policy implementation problem and has not systematically examined how the dynamics of inter-actor networks (governance networks) shape or undermine gender integration from the policy formulation phase onward. On the other hand, governance network studies in other contexts (Chorizu, 2022; Rembu, 2025) have demonstrated the importance of analyzing inter-actor connectedness, but have rarely been applied to explain the complexity of budget formulation, which is characterized by a rigid division of authority.

This article fills this theoretical gap by going beyond identifying weak coordination to explain the theoretical mechanisms linking network characteristics to policy outcomes (network outcomes). It addresses the main question: how do the structure of inter-actor networks, the distribution of authority, and resource interdependence shape or hinder the integration of a gender perspective into budget decisions in PPRG policy formulation in Mentawai Islands Regency? This question is addressed through the Governance Network approach of Klijn et al. (2025). The contributions of this study are (1) to map the connections between gender analysis at the SKPD level and regional budgeting documents, (2) to explain how the actor, process, and institutional dimensions are interrelated in producing or hindering such integration, and (3) to formulate recommendations that fit the network problems identified.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design to examine in depth the dynamics of the policy network in the formulation of Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG) in Mentawai Islands Regency (Yin, 2016; Sugiyono, 2020). A qualitative design was chosen because the phenomenon under study involves complex social interactions, asymmetries of authority, and patterns of inter-actor dependence that cannot be measured through quantitative statistics, but instead require in-depth exploration of experiences, views, and regional planning documents. The study is located in Mentawai Islands Regency, West Sumatra Province, which was selected based on its consistently high Gender Inequality Index (GII) (above 0.8 throughout 2020–2024) and the geographic characteristics of an archipelagic region that present unique challenges for bureaucratic

coordination.

The adequacy and representativeness of the data were achieved through the involvement of 12 key informants selected by purposive sampling across three main institutional categories (Bryman, 2016). The first category comprises seven informants from the Main Driving Actors Group, or PPRG Driver Team, consisting of two expert planners from Bappeda who carry out the coordination function, two technical officials from Dinas Sosial P3A who provide operational assistance, one budgeting official from BKAD responsible for the RKA Circular Letter, and two auditors from the Inspektorat responsible for LHE quality assurance. The second category comprises three informants from the Sectoral Implementing Actors Group, or SKPD Focal Points, namely planning officials from the Dinas Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, the Dinas Pekerjaan Umum dan Penataan Ruang (PUPR), and the Dinas Kesehatan, who provide disaggregated data and prepare GAP/GBS documents. The third category comprises two informants from the External Advocacy and Oversight Group, namely the GEDSI Project Manager of Yayasan Citra Mandiri Mentawai (YCMM), who channels civil society aspirations, and a Member of the Budget Committee (Badan Anggaran) of the DPRD of Mentawai Islands Regency, who holds the legislature's budgeting rights. Determining the informant composition across these three tiers allowed the researcher to capture the connections and relations among actors across the entire policy network, rather than merely recording the perceptions of a single institution.

Data were collected through a combination of semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation study. Interviews were used to explore perceptions, strategies, and the dynamics of inter-actor interaction in depth, while documentation study was conducted to collect secondary data in the form of the Perda RPJMD of Mentawai 2025–2029, the Perbup RKPD of Mentawai 2023–2025, Regent's Decree No. 264/2025 on the Driver Team, Regent's Decree No. 262/2025 on Focal Points, the KUA-PPAS and DPA SKPD documents, and sample GAP and GBS documents of regional apparatus.

Data analysis was carried out interactively following the stages of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), combined with thematic coding techniques (Braun & Clarke, 2006) anchored in the three dimensions of Governance Network by Klijn et al. (2025). In the initial stage, interview transcripts and secondary documents were reduced and coded into three main analytical categories: the actor dimension (problem perception, position, resource dependence), the process dimension (interaction arenas, policy rounds, the decoupling phenomenon, network management efforts), and the institutional dimension (relational density, sanction/incentive rules, institutional amnesia).

To detect network dynamics objectively and avoid institutional bias, the analysis continued with cross-informant narrative comparison and physical verification of documents. For example, Dinsos P3A's verbal claim that it bears the operational burden alone was confirmed by comparing it with Bappeda's statement that its role is limited to being an application input gateway and with BKAD's account that it only verifies the completeness of the RKA figure

format without examining the gender analysis content, leading to the conclusion regarding the concentration of the coordination burden and the passivity of the network. Furthermore, the policy chain decoupling phenomenon was tested concretely by comparing the proposed GBS documents against the actual allocations in the approved KUA-PPAS and the APBD DPA.

Data credibility and validity were rigorously maintained through source triangulation, by cross-checking information from the Driver Team, SKPD Focal Points, the DPRD, and YCMM, as well as method triangulation, by matching in-depth interview results against legal facts and the figures stated in APBD documents (Hasanah, 2017). Discrepancies found in the field were traced back to key informants until consistent data saturation was reached.

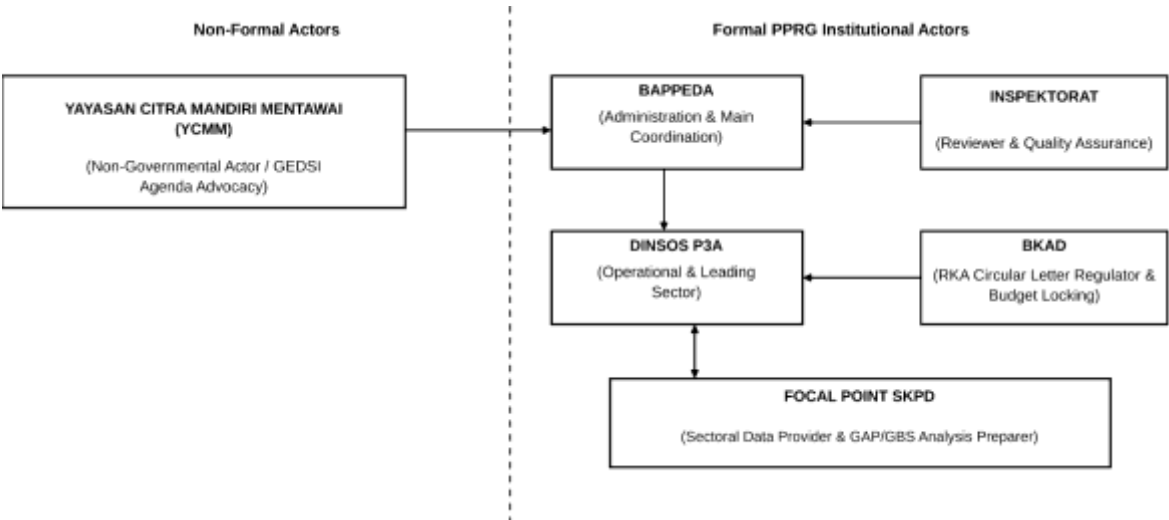
3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Actor Analysis in the PPRG Policy Network of Mentawai Islands Regency

The institutionalization of Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) and Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG) in Indonesia is a national regulatory mandate derived from Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2000 and reinforced by Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 67 of 2011. In Mentawai Islands Regency, this national mandate is formally operationalized as an annual agenda embedded in the regional planning and budgeting cycle. To drive this institutional mechanism, the Regional Government established two main legal umbrellas, namely Regent's Decree of Mentawai Islands Regency No. 264 of 2025 on the PPRG Driver Team and Regent's Decree No. 262 of 2025 on the PUG Focal Point Working Group.

The formal institutional actors of PPRG comprise two main bureaucratic tiers. The first tier is the PPRG Driver Team, consisting of four driving agencies, namely Bappeda, Dinas Sosial P3A, the Badan Keuangan dan Aset Daerah (BKAD), and the Inspektorat. Bappeda holds the formal position of Chair and serves as the administrative hub and controller of the reporting system. Dinas Sosial P3A acts as Secretary and operational leading sector (operational hub), bearing the burden of technical assistance for Gender Analysis Pathway (GAP) and Gender Budget Statement (GBS) analysis. Meanwhile, BKAD acts as the reinforcer of budget regulation through the RKA Circular Letter, and the Inspektorat performs an ex-post oversight function based on document compliance. The second tier is the PUG Focal Point Working Group, consisting of planning officials or secretaries in all implementing SKPD as providers of sectoral disaggregated data. Outside this formal bureaucratic structure, Yayasan Citra Mandiri Mentawai (YCMM) is present as a non-governmental actor that consistently advocates the Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) perspective and influences the formation of the region's medium-term planning agenda.

Figure 3.1 Structure and Relations of the PPRG Actor Network in Mentawai Islands Regency



Source: Processed by the researcher, 2026

To operationalize the commitment and power position of these actors precisely, this analysis applies Klijn and Koppenjan’s actor typology, which crosses the critical actor dimension (critical vs. non-critical) with the degree of dedication (dedicated vs. non-dedicated), as mapped below.

Table 3.1 Mapping of Actor Typology in the PPRG Policy Network of Mentawai		
Attitude & Dedication	Critical Actors	Non-Critical Actors
Dedicated	Dinsos P3A & YCMM (Active Allies / Main Drivers) Highly committed and continuing to drive the PPRG/GEDSI agenda despite limited operational budgets.	Active SKPD Focal Points (e.g., Dinas Kesehatan/PUPR) Technically motivated to integrate gender analysis into their sectoral programs.
Non-Dedicated	Bappeda & BKAD (Passive Key Actors / “Sleeping Dogs”) Hold substantial planning and budgeting authority, but perform their roles reactively and merely as a formality.	Passive SKPD Focal Points Prepare GAP/GBS documents merely to discharge administrative obligations without substantive understanding.

Source: Research findings (processed data), 2026

The mapping in Table 3.1 reveals a power paradox in the PPRG institutions of Mentawai. Actors holding the highest formal decision-making authority and budgeting channels, such as Bappeda and BKAD, are in a non-dedicated (passive/reactive) position. As a result, the network’s driving force rests entirely on Dinsos P3A and YCMM as dedicated actors, who

unfortunately are not equipped with adequate budgeting authority to press other SKPD for compliance.

Complexity in governance networks arises because each actor brings a different framing of the problem situation, the direction of solutions, and their institutional roles (Klijn et al., 2025: 213–216). In the institutional context of PPRG in Mentawai, problem perception is characterized by general agreement on the low technical understanding among SKPD in analyzing GAP/GBS and the high frequency of official rotation. However, there are rather contrasting differences in framing: the internal bureaucracy views the problem through the lens of limited bureaucratic capacity and geographic obstacles, while YCMM sees the fundamental problem as the absence of value ownership (lack of sense of urgency), because PPRG is regarded merely as an instructional burden from the central government.

These differing perspectives directly affect the solution preferences offered by each actor. Focal Points and Dinsos P3A want technical training and sustained assistance at the operational level. In contrast, BKAD pushes for compliance instruments and budget allocation locking so that SKPD are driven to comply with PPRG, while YCMM opts for an upstream intervention strategy by ensuring that inclusive indicators enter the Perda RPJMD.

This substantive tension is further reinforced by how actors define their own roles and assess the roles of other actors in the network. Bappeda defines itself as a passive coordinator acting merely as an administrative gateway. As stated by the Junior Expert Planner at Bappeda:

“So our role is more about data entry, document checking, and reporting only (so that it does not show red)...” (interview with the Junior Expert Planner at Bappeda, Mentawai Regency, 2025)

Bappeda’s passivity leaves Dinsos P3A feeling saddled with the entire operational burden (“going it alone, going it alone”), while BKAD and the Inspektorat limit their roles to providing regulations and overseeing documents after implementation. On the other hand, SKPD Focal Points position themselves as passive recipients of instructions, while YCMM takes an active role as a strategic advocate from outside the bureaucracy. Dinsos P3A and YCMM place great hope in Bappeda leading coordination actively and in the Inspektorat using its oversight authority to press SKPD for compliance. However, Bappeda instead views PPRG as the exclusive domain of Dinsos P3A. The details of this reconstruction of inter-actor perceptions are summarized in the following table.

Table 3.2. Inventory of Inter-Actor Perceptions in the PPRG Policy Network in Mentawai Islands Regency

Network Actor	Problem Perception	Preferred Solution Direction	Perception of Own Role	Perception of Other Actors
Bappeda	Low SKPD understanding, official rotation, & slow document collection response.	Structured technical guidance & proactive collection assistance.	Passive/facilitative planning coordinator	Dinsos P3A as the main custodian of gender affairs.
Dinsos P3A	Absence of Driver Team coordination, budget cuts, & documents without follow-up.	Strengthening the Driver Team forum, upstream oversight, & budget allocation.	Main implementer & sole driver of the network (going it alone).	Bappeda should lead actively; the Inspektorat has not optimized its pressure.
BKAD	Limited regional budget & minimal understanding of PPRG substance.	Structured socialization & clarity of budget allocation.	Provider of the formal budget regulatory framework.	Dinsos P3A as the main initiator of PPRG activities.
Inspektorat	Low leadership concern & PPRG not regarded as a priority.	Strengthening leadership commitment & routine socialization.	Ex-post document quality assurance overseer.	Dinsos P3A is the main implementer; Bappeda is the system uploader.
Focal Point SKPD	Difficulty identifying sectoral gender issues & irregular training.	Consistent direct technical assistance.	Passive implementer waiting for instruction letters.	Dinsos P3A is the sole reference; no interaction with other Drivers.
YCMM	Gender perspective not yet internalized; PPRG limited to a formal obligation.	Strong integration into the RPJMD & regional leadership commitment.	External strategic advocate and partner.	Bappeda is the main RPJMD partner; the Driver Team has not yet worked in an integrated manner.

Source: Research findings (processed data), 2026

Relations among actors in a governance network are sustained by the exchange of and dependence on resources (resource dependency). Klijn et al. classify resources into six types, namely financial, production, authority, information/knowledge, strategic capacity, and legitimacy (Klijn et al., 2025: 216–218). Adopting Scharpf's (1978) taxonomy, the degree of inter-actor dependence is measured by the level of resource importance and the degree of substitutability, as mapped in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Degree of Inter-Actor Dependence in the PPRG Policy Network in Mentawai Islands Regency

Actor	Type of Resource	Availability of Alternatives	Level of Dependence
Bappeda	Authority (Planning Coordination) & Production (Access to the Reporting Application).	Cannot be replaced (Non-substitutable)	High (Reciprocal with Dinsos): Bappeda needs Dinsos data; Dinsos needs Bappeda's legitimacy.
Dinsos P3A	Information/Knowledge (GAP/GBS Technical) & Strategic Capacity (Assistance).	Very difficult to replace (Low substitutability)	High (Central): All SKPD & Bappeda depend on Dinsos's technical facilitation.
BKAD	Authority (Issuance of the RKA Circular Letter) & Financial (Budget Locking).	Cannot be replaced	High (Unilateral): SKPD depend on BKAD's budgeting norms.
Inspektorat	Authority (LHE Audit/Review) & Legitimacy (Quality Assurance).	Cannot be replaced	Moderate: Needed for the formality of the annual evaluation.
Focal Point SKPD	Production (Sectoral Disaggregated Data & Program Issues).	Cannot be replaced	High (Foundational): Dinsos & Bappeda cannot produce GAP/GBS without sectoral data.
YCMM	Information/Knowledge (GEDSI Expertise) & Strategic Capacity (Advocacy Network).	Alternatives exist (Substitutable), but highly trusted	Moderate-High: Bappeda depends on YCMM for drafting the inclusive RPJMD narrative.

Source: Research findings (processed data), 2026

The data in Table 3.3 show a highly critical interdependence between Dinsos P3A and SKPD Focal Points. Dinsos P3A commands the technical knowledge for preparing GAP/GBS but lacks sectoral data, while Focal Points hold sectoral data but lack technical understanding. This data dependence was confirmed by the Head of the PPUA Division at Dinsos P3A, who illustrated the audit-assessment risk when passive SKPD submit their documents.

“We cannot make it ourselves, because they are the ones who know the program activities, they are the ones who know the data... So if an OPD does not submit, maybe we should get (an ARG score of) 20%, but after the BPK audit we only got 0.1...” (Interview with the Head of the PPUA Division at Dinsos P3A, 2025)

This interaction dynamic and fragmented actor structure ultimately determine the quality of policy outcomes (network outcomes). In Mentawai Islands Regency, the outcomes of the PPRG network display a contrasting duality of achievement between the macro level upstream and the micro level downstream.

At the macro level upstream, the network showed substantive success by integrating gender and social inclusion (GEDSI) narratives into the Perda RPJMD of Mentawai 2025–2029. This upstream success was triggered by the advocacy intervention of a non-governmental actor, YCMM, which used its communication relationships to lobby Bappeda. As explained by the GEDSI Project Manager of YCMM:

"We kept giving input... until it finally became the Perda RPJMD... in the final draft the inclusive language had appeared... That is thanks to the interventions from our work." (Interview with the GEDSI Project Manager of YCMM, 2026)

Unfortunately, this macro-level success did not carry over to the operational level downstream. At the level of the SKPD RKA/DPA, network outcomes deteriorated into shallow administrative compliance (pro-forma compliance). The absence of a routine coordination forum among the Driver Team meant that GAP/GBS documents prepared by SKPD were merely collected, without follow-up or verification of the quality of their analysis. This lack of oversight potentially harms the region's overall performance, as SKPD negligence in submitting GAP/GBS documents threatens Mentawai's Gender-Responsive Budget (ARG) assessment when it is evaluated by the BPK.

This phenomenon demonstrates that the existence of formal regulations and the establishment of a team alone will not produce effective policy outcomes unless accompanied by network management that can align perceptions and collectively activate resource interdependence among actors (Klijn et al., 2025: 235).

3.2 Process Analysis of Gender Integration in the Budgeting Cycle

Within the governance network theoretical framework, public policymaking and implementation do not occur in a sterile, linear space, but evolve within various interaction arenas. Klijn et al. (2025: 220–221) define arenas as institutional settings where actors meet, negotiate, and enact their strategies. The analytical indicators of arenas include mapping formal settings, namely official bodies or forums required by legal procedure; informal settings, namely ad hoc channels outside official mechanisms; and the accessibility and inclusiveness of the arena, which determine who is allowed to enter and how crucial the arena is to the fate of the policy.

Applying the arena indicators to the empirical PPRG data of Mentawai Islands Regency reveals a sharp split between the availability of formal public arenas and the absence of an internal arena for the Driver Team. At the level of general regional planning, the available formal arenas include the development planning deliberations (Musrenbang) from the sub-district to the regency level, the SKPD Forum, and the KUA-PPAS Budget Deliberation Forum between the Regional Government Budget Team (TAPD) and the DPRD. However, the function of Musrenbang as an inclusive arena for aggregating community interests has not operated substantively. The presence of women and vulnerable groups in Musrenbang arenas remains symbolic, with proposals from women's groups often eliminated when they enter the compilation of the region's physical development priorities.

On the other hand, empirical findings reveal a fundamental fact regarding the absence of a dedicated arena for the internal consolidation of government institutions. Throughout the

PPRG formulation process, there was never a single dedicated formal arena that brought the four members of the Driver Team (Bappeda, Dinas Sosial P3A, BKAD, and the Inspektorat) together at one scheduled coordination meeting table. As confirmed by the PUG Strengthening Officer at Dinsos P3A of Mentawai Islands Regency:

"But up to now there has been no meeting specifically for the four of us. As far as I know. But when it comes to evaluating and all that, all the program sub-division heads, that is, the Focal Points, that has been done..." (Interview with the PUG Strengthening Officer at Dinsos P3A of Mentawai Regency, 2025)

The absence of a dedicated official arena for the Driver Team caused interaction among the driving agencies to shift entirely to reactive and ad hoc informal settings, such as personal communication by telephone or text message between Dinsos P3A and Bappeda staff as the national reporting deadline approached. Meanwhile, informal arenas outside the bureaucracy were used effectively by Yayasan Citra Mandiri Mentawai (YCMM) through direct audiences, personal lobbying, and technical assistance to Bappeda planners, which proved able to open access for introducing ideas from outside the bureaucracy.

Decision-making in governance networks proceeds asymmetrically and is divided into rounds of interaction called policy rounds. Klijn et al. (2025: 222–225) explain that the analytical indicators of policy rounds are measured by identifying crucial events or decisions that change the direction of the agenda, actors' strategy patterns, and action-reaction dynamics that trigger deadlock or policy chain decoupling. In the context of regional financial governance in Mentawai Islands Regency, these policy rounds develop across the stages of the annual planning and budgeting cycle.

The first round develops in the Planning Cycle (Upstream Round), triggered by the crucial decision to establish the region's master planning document following the regional head elections (Pilkada). In this planning stage, YCMM used an upstream advocacy strategy by weaving the Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) perspective into the formulation of the Perda RPJMD of Mentawai 2025–2029. This strategy succeeded in encouraging Bappeda to adopt inclusive indicators in the region's medium-term planning document, which were then translated into the preparation of technical analysis documents, namely the Gender Analysis Pathway (GAP) and Gender Budget Statement (GBS), by Focal Points at the SKPD level.

However, the interaction dynamics reversed drastically upon entering the second round, in the Budgeting Cycle (Downstream Round). The formal entry point of budgeting begins with the issuance by BKAD of the Regent's Circular Letter (SE) on Guidelines for RKA Preparation. Although the Regent's SE is routinely promulgated every year, at this budgeting stage a systemic phenomenon of decoupling, or policy chain disconnection, occurs between the technical-level gender analysis documents (GAP/GBS) and the regional budget policy documents (KUA-PPAS and APBD).

This policy chain disconnection in the budgeting cycle is evident in the case of budget allocation for PUG assistance activities at Dinsos P3A. In the Fiscal Year 2025 GBS document prepared by Dinsos P3A, the operational cost requirement for cross-SKPD PPRG assistance was set at Rp110,139,200. However, when the proposal entered the KUA-PPAS deliberation arena at BKAD and TAPD, the provisional budget ceiling for that sub-activity was drastically cut to only Rp10,980,000. This reality of budget cuts was described by Dinsos P3A technical staff as a source of operational confusion in the field:

“Recently it went from I don’t know how many millions down to 10 million. The funds we receive are very unrealistic. Even to get moving, we still need a budget. To Sikakap, to Siberut, wherever, the funds are only 10 million. A single trip is not enough, not to mention chartering a boat. What are we supposed to use?” (Interview with a technical staff member at Dinsos P3A of Mentawai Regency, 2025).

This decoupling phenomenon in the budgeting cycle occurs because BKAD runs a passive verification strategy that merely checks the completeness of the RKA format without testing whether the gender narrative in the GAP/GBS has been accommodated in the KUA-PPAS allocation figures. As acknowledged by the Head of the Budget Division at BKAD of Mentawai:

“As for budget involvement, we no longer check whether it is based on [gender analysis] or not. There is none. Yes, we no longer check. Because from the start they should already have made it, whether based on that or not. We just deal with the money, that’s all.” (Interview with the Head of the Budget Division at BKAD of Mentawai Regency, 2025).

This statement demonstrates that in the budgeting cycle, not a single actor at the planning-to-budgeting transition point is tasked with ensuring that gender analysis documents remain tied to APBD allocation figures.

In policy network process analysis, the position and strategy of the legislature in the budgeting arena is a key factor determining the final legitimacy of a policy. Klijn et al. (2025: 224) emphasize that interaction in the budgeting arena is influenced by the discourse and meaning-making of issues constructed by political actors, as well as by the presence or absence of strategic alliances between the executive and the legislature.

In the KUA-PPAS and APBD Draft Regional Regulation (Ranperda) deliberation arena of Mentawai Islands Regency, the DPRD occupies a reactive position and tends to be isolated from the PPRG framework. Based on empirical findings, the DPRD has never rejected the gender-responsive agenda, but the legislature has never made PPRG a specific topic of discussion in hearings with the TAPD. The DPRD’s involvement in gender issues is implicit and sectoral, with Council members considering that approving budget allocations for health items, such as stunting prevention and support for pregnant women, automatically fulfills the mandate of gender-responsive budgeting.

This sectoral understanding is confirmed by the explanation of a Member of the DPRD of Mentawai Islands Regency for the 2024–2029 term:

“Specifically, it is not discussed separately, right. But from our side in the DPRD, in the health sector we have already included it. That is the budget for handling stunting, for handling pregnant women, right? It is already there.” (Interview with a Member of the DPRD of Mentawai Islands Regency, 2024–2029 Term, 2026).

The absence of PPRG discussion in the DPRD arena is due to two institutional factors. First, the KUA-PPAS document submitted by the TAPD to the DPRD is already in the form of a gender-blind document because the GAP/GBS analysis is not attached as a supporting document to the KUA-PPAS. Second, members of the Mentawai DPRD have never received socialization or technical briefing on the PPRG framework, so the legislature has no critical instruments with which to question or oversee the allocation of the Gender-Responsive Budget (ARG) during APBD deliberations. As a result, PPRG budget allocations at the SKPD level are highly vulnerable to being cut or ignored without any political defense in the council.

The dynamics of policy chain decoupling occurring in the upstream phase directly affect the subsequent operational stages, namely the implementation cycle and the monitoring and evaluation cycle. Klijn et al. (2025: 225–228) formulate that process evaluation is measured by three types of policy outcomes, namely substantive outcomes, process outcomes, and institutional outcomes, which are then linked to network management actions to determine whether network managers make planned efforts to oversee the entire policy cycle.

In the Implementation Cycle (Implementation Round), the minimal budget allocation approved in the DPA causes the implementing SKPD and Dinsos P3A to experience operational paralysis. Limited operational funds, especially for reaching archipelagic areas that require high sea transportation costs, such as Sikakap and Siberut Sub-districts, mean that PPRG assistance and facilitation activities cannot be carried out sustainably. Consequently, PPRG implementation at the dinas level degenerates into mere cosmetic, pro-forma compliance, in which SKPD prepare makeshift technical documents solely to discharge monthly administrative obligations.

Subsequently, in the Monitoring and Evaluation Cycle (Monev Round), the network’s oversight function operates rigidly and in isolation. The Inspektorat conducts its review of the Evaluation Results Report (LHE) focusing only on the completeness of files after the activity (ex-post audit), without testing the quality of the substance of the gender analysis produced by SKPD. The absence of a periodic evaluation meeting forum among the four Driver Team members means that obstacles arising in the implementation phase are never jointly addressed. This passivity in the monev cycle has serious consequences, in that massive SKPD negligence in submitting GAP/GBS documents potentially threatens the region’s Gender-Responsive Budget (ARG) evaluation score when it is reviewed by the BPK.

Applying the outcome and network management evaluation indicators of Klijn et al. (2025: 225–228) across all stages of the budget cycle leads to four main conclusions. First, in terms of substantive outcomes, there is a duality of achievement in which macro-level success in the RPJMD contrasts with micro-level failure at the SKPD RKA/DPA level. Second, in terms of process outcomes, network interaction is unbalanced and carries high transaction costs because the energy invested in the planning phase evaporates in the budgeting phase. Third, in terms of institutional outcomes, network institutionalization is very fragile owing to the absence of incentive-sanction mechanisms and the high key individual dependence that is vulnerable to official transfers. Fourth, the main weakness of this entire cycle is the absence of an internal Network Manager from the local government tasked with overseeing the transition of documents from planning to budgeting.

A comprehensive synthesis of the application of the Process Analysis Dimension indicators of Klijn et al. (2025: 220–228) across the four stages of the budget cycle in Mentawai Islands Regency is summarized systematically. As can be seen in Table 3.4, the entire flow of interaction processes, strategy choices, and forms of deadlock at each stage of the policy cycle has been comprehensively mapped.

Table 3.4 Summary of Process Analysis and Governance Network Indicators in PPRG of Mentawai Islands Regency

Analytical Indicator	Application to Empirical PPRG Data of Mentawai Islands Regency	Policy Implications and Network Dynamics
Interaction Arenas (Relevant Arenas)	Formal arenas include Musrenbang, SKPD forums, and KUA-PPAS forums. No dedicated coordination forum exists for the Driver Team. Coordination relies on informal communication and ad hoc lobbying	Limited coordination leads to fragmented collaboration and weak participation in gender-responsive policymaking.
Policy Rounds in the Budget Cycle	Gender analysis documents (GAP/GBS) are prepared, but gender considerations are not consistently incorporated into KUA-PPAS. The PPUA budget was reduced from Rp110 million to Rp10.9 million.	The disconnection between planning and budgeting weakens the implementation of gender-responsive policies.
Role of the DPRD in Budgeting	The DPRD discusses budgets with the TAPD but addresses gender issues mainly through sectoral concerns. PPRG is rarely discussed explicitly.	Limited understanding and oversight of gender-responsive budgeting weaken political accountability.
Implementation, Monev, & Outcome Evaluation Cycles	Budget constraints limit field assistance. Monitoring focuses on administrative audits, while regular Driver Team evaluations are absent. Staff transfers also disrupt continuity.	Gender-responsive policies remain largely administrative and are vulnerable to budget constraints and staff changes.
Network Management	Government coordination is reactive and fragmented. Bappeda does not effectively manage the transition from planning to budgeting, while YCMM plays an informal coordination role.	Stronger internal coordination and network management are needed to translate regulations into gender-responsive budget allocations.

Source: Research findings (processed data), 2026

As can be seen in Table 3.4, testing the Process Analysis Dimension across the four stages of the budget cycle demonstrates that the main weakness of PPRG in Mentawai Islands Regency lies not in the availability of formal rules, but in the absence of an integrated coordination

arena and the lack of network management capable of overseeing the transition of documents from the planning, budgeting, and implementation phases through to monitoring and evaluation.

3.3 Institutional Analysis: Interaction Patterns, Perceptions, and Network Rules

The institutional analysis dimension in the governance network framework focuses on mapping the enduring structural context within which inter-actor interaction takes place. Klijn et al. (2025: 228–231) explain that policy networks are formed not only by ad hoc events but by structures of settled relationships (institutionalized relation patterns). The analytical indicators at this step include interaction density, communication frequency, the degree of network centralization or fragmentation, and patterns of inter-actor trust, which determine the extent to which actors can predict one another's behavior and reduce transaction costs.

Applying the relational structure indicators to the empirical PPRG data of Mentawai Islands Regency shows that the regional institutional network is highly fragmented, with low interaction density (low density). Although four government agencies (Bappeda, Dinsos P3A, BKAD, and the Inspektorat) are formally united in Regent's Decree No. 264 of 2025 on the PPRG Driver Team, the actual relational patterns that have developed among these agencies are intermittent. Fairly intensive communication occurs only bilaterally between Dinsos P3A and SKPD Focal Points during technical assistance, and between Dinsos P3A and Bappeda when inputting final reporting documents. By contrast, interaction between BKAD and the Inspektorat and the other driving agencies lies on a very minimal periphery.

This low interaction density directly implies weak patterns of trust within internal bureaucratic institutions. Klijn et al. (2025: 230) assert that trust is the "glue" that allows collaboration to proceed without relying on rigid hierarchical control. In Mentawai, the absence of a routine Driver Team forum erodes mutual trust among institutions. Dinsos P3A perceives the other driving agencies as lacking moral commitment and as leaving Dinsos P3A to work alone (going it alone). On the other hand, Bappeda and BKAD view all technical matters and the achievement of PPRG targets as the sectoral responsibility of Dinsos P3A alone.

Interestingly, high patterns of trust are in fact built in cross-boundary relations between the government bureaucracy and non-governmental actors. The cooperation between Dinsos P3A and YCMM, and between Bappeda and YCMM, is grounded in trust in YCMM's technical capacity and GEDSI subject-matter expertise. However, because this trust is not housed in formal and binding institutional procedures, this social capital fails to be transformed into permanent institutional trust across the regional bureaucracy.

Within the governance network theoretical framework, institutional rules (network rules) define the boundaries, opportunities, and mechanisms that direct actors' behavior. Klijn et al.

(2025: 231–234) classify network rules into three main analytical domains, namely access and membership rules, interaction rules, and evaluation/decision rules. The existence of these rules is tested to see whether the written formal rules operate in alignment or are instead overridden by informal rules that develop in the field.

Applying the network rule indicators to the PPRG institutions of Mentawai Islands Regency reveals a wide gap between formal rules and informal practice. This gap is identifiable in all three network rule domains. In the domain of access and membership rules, network membership is formally determined top-down through Regent's Decree No. 264 of 2025 for the Driver Team and Regent's Decree No. 262 of 2025 for PUG Focal Points. Informally, however, Focal Point membership at the SKPD level lacks certainty about operational standing. Focal Point appointments often amount to merely listing a name in the annex of the decree without clear operational task descriptions, so that Focal Points' participation in the network tends to be passive.

The next gap is seen in interaction rules, where the PPRG network in Mentawai lacks incentive and sanction mechanisms (lack of reward and punishment rules). There is no rule instrument that imposes administrative sanctions or budget allocation cuts on SKPD that refuse or neglect to prepare GAP/GBS documents. As a result, the preparation of PPRG documents by SKPD is perceived as a voluntary task. This absence of sanctions was confirmed by a Dinsos P3A technical staff member who complained about the passivity of implementing SKPD:

"Yes, there are no sanctions at all if they do not submit. At most we can only WhatsApp them again, remind them again. If they still do not make it, well, we cannot do anything, we can hardly take action against another dinas..." (Interview with a technical staff member at Dinsos P3A of Mentawai Regency, 2025).

Meanwhile, in the domain of evaluation and decision rules, the Inspektorat applies evaluation rules through the Evaluation Results Report (LHE) based on post-activity administrative compliance criteria (formal compliance rule). The Inspektorat evaluates PPRG only on the physical availability of GAP/GBS documents as an administrative reporting requirement, without using assessment rules that test the quality and depth of gender analysis. These shallow evaluation criteria make SKPD feel it is sufficient to submit duplicated (copy-paste) documents without conducting a genuine gender needs analysis in their sectors.

One characteristic of an immature institutional network is a high dependence on particular individuals (key individual dependence). Klijn et al. (2025: 233) explain that when shared rules and procedures have not been internalized into organizational routines, the sustainability of network processes is highly vulnerable to personnel changes.

Empirical findings in Mentawai Islands Regency demonstrate that the institutionalization of PPRG is in a very fragile position owing to the massive rotation and transfer of officials. Because the technical capacity for GAP/GBS analysis is not institutionalized through a

knowledge transfer system within SKPD, PPRG knowledge and skills are attached personally to particular planning officials or Focal Points. When staff transfer policies are enacted within the Mentawai Regency Government, planning officials who have received PPRG training are moved to other dinas that do not handle planning, while the new officials who replace them have no understanding of the PPRG framework at all.

This condition causes the PPRG network in Mentawai to suffer repeated collective memory paralysis (institutional amnesia) every year. Dinsos P3A, as the leading sector, is forced to restart the process of technical guidance and training from scratch whenever officials are transferred at the SKPD level. As acknowledged by a Bappeda planner, the high turnover of planning personnel in the dinas is the main obstacle that undermines the continuity of regional PPRG document collection:

"Our obstacle is that official rotation is very fast. Just when we have guided the planner until they understand how to make GAP GBS, the next month they have moved to another dinas. Someone new comes in, again knowing nothing. So we start from the beginning again..." (Interview with the Junior Expert Planner at Bappeda of Mentawai Regency, 2025).

This dependence on key figures confirms that the PPRG institutions in Mentawai are only at the stage of formalistic, paper-based institutionalization, and have not yet transformed into informal rules that become the working culture of the regional bureaucracy.

The comprehensive application of the Institutional Analysis Dimension indicators to the empirical context of PPRG in Mentawai Islands Regency produces a complete picture of regional institutional fragility. All structural elements, from interaction density and patterns of trust to network rules and the impact of official transfers, interlock and produce stagnation in the institutionalization of PPRG.

The analytical synthesis of applying these network institutional indicators is summarized in detail. As can be seen in Table 3.5, the comprehensive mapping of relational structure, types of network rules, and their institutional implications shows the weak points that hinder the effectiveness of PPRG in Mentawai Islands Regency.

Table 3.5 Summary of Institutional Analysis of PPRG in Mentawai Islands Regency

Institutional Indicator	Empirical Findings	Policy Implications
Network Structure	Coordination among Driver Team agencies is weak and fragmented. Bappeda handles administration, while Dinsos P3A leads operations.	Weak coordination limits collaboration and program alignment.
Inter-Actor Trust	Trust among government agencies is low, while cooperation with YCMM is stronger.	Low trust slows cooperation and weakens shared responsibility.
Access & Membership Rules	The Driver Team is established through Regent's Decrees No. 264/2025 and No. 262/2025. Focal Points lack clear operational duties.	Unclear responsibilities lead to passive participation and weak implementation.
Interaction Rules	No incentive or sanction rules exist for preparing GAP/GBS documents.	SKPD compliance remains low, with limited authority to enforce requirements.
Evaluation Rules	Inspektorat focuses on administrative compliance rather than the quality of gender analysis.	GAP/GBS documents tend to be prepared as formal requirements rather than substantive planning tools.
Institutional Memory	Frequent staff rotations and the absence of knowledge transfer systems disrupt continuity.	Technical knowledge is repeatedly lost, requiring PPRG guidance to be repeated without improving implementation quality.

Source: Research findings (processed data), 2026

As can be seen in Table 3.5, testing the Institutional Analysis Dimension demonstrates that the fundamental obstacle to PPRG in Mentawai Islands Regency lies in the weak institutionalization of interaction rules, the absence of sanction/incentive mechanisms, and the high institutional amnesia caused by staff transfers. Without improvements to institutional rules and the establishment of a permanent network manager, the PPRG policy network in Mentawai will remain trapped in a routine of administrative formality, unable to produce budget allocations that are truly gender-responsive.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the implementation of Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (PPRG) in Mentawai Islands Regency is characterized by a power paradox in the actor dimension, in which Bappeda and BKAD, which hold budgeting authority, are passive, while the network's driving force rests entirely on Dinsos P3A and YCMM, which are not equipped with adequate budgeting authority. In the process dimension, a systemic phenomenon of decoupling, or policy chain disconnection, was found, in which gender analysis documents (GAP/GBS) are severed from the preparation of the KUA-PPAS owing to the absence of a dedicated Driver Team forum and the reactivity of the DPRD. In the institutional dimension, the network is fragmented with low relational density (low density) and suffers institutional amnesia owing to the absence of sanction/incentive rules and the high frequency of transfers of planning officials in SKPD.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the analysis of Klijn et al. (2025) that formal regulation will not produce effective policy outcomes without internal network management by the local government. The policy implications call on Bappeda to take on the role of principal Network Manager by leading an integrated Driver Team coordination forum, implementing a mandatory budget lock that requires GAP/GBS documents in KUA-PPAS verification, and building a digital knowledge repository to maintain the continuity of gender analysis in SKPD.

The limitations of this study lie in its focus on a single qualitative case study in an archipelagic region, which has not measured the financial impact of Gender-Responsive Budget (ARG) allocations quantitatively and longitudinally. Accordingly, future research is advised to develop comparative network analysis between archipelagic and mainland regions, apply quantitative Social Network Analysis (SNA) methods, and longitudinally test the effectiveness of network management interventions in increasing gender-responsive budget allocations in the region.

5. Ethics Approval

This study does not involve human participants, personal data, or animal subjects. Therefore, ethics approval was not required.

6. Author Contributions

Ori Yesinta contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, data collection, formal analysis, and preparation of the original manuscript. Rozidateno Putri Hanida contributed to the conceptualization, supervision, validation, and critical review of the manuscript. Ilham Aldelano Azre contributed to the literature review, data analysis, and writing, reviewing, and editing of the manuscript. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

7. Declaration on the Use of AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in Writing

The authors declare that AI and AI-assisted technologies were used in the preparation of this manuscript to support language refinement and improve clarity. All AI-generated or AI-assisted content was reviewed and verified by the authors, who take full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and originality of the manuscript.

8. Declaration of Competing Interest

The author declares that there are no known financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the research and writing of this article.

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11. Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to applicable confidentiality and ethical considerations.

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