

## **The role of "The Power of Mama" in addressing fires and forest degradation in Ketapang, Indonesia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In recent years, the destruction of forests, which can take many forms including deforestation and forest fires, has emerged as a major concern worldwide, and Indonesia is no exception. The deforestation rate in Indonesia is rising annually due to a number of factors, including decentralization and illegal land conversion. Kalimantan, known as the "lungs of the world," is the most impacted area, accounting for 51% of total tree cover loss between 2001 and 2022. This situation is alarming as it undermines the sustainability of the flora and fauna ecosystem and directly affects global warming. The government has intensified its efforts to prevent and manage forest fires, working in collaboration with businesses and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Greenpeace to reduce the risk of forest damage. In addition to these efforts, a protection initiative by a group of women in Ketapang, West Kalimantan, has gained public attention. Known as The Power of Mama, this group, as the one most affected by forest fires, undertakes heroic efforts to stop forest destruction. This research aims to examine the impact of The Power of Mama on forest degradation and fire management in Ketapang, West Kalimantan. Using a nonviolence approach that emphasizes alternative strategies and tactics leading away from violence, this study demonstrates the long-term positive impact of The Power of Mama through patrols, outreach, counselling, and third-party intervention in managing forest damage and fires. Furthermore, using qualitative methods and focusing on secondary data collection, this research reveals several challenges encountered by The Power of Mama in implementing its actions. Despite these challenges, The Power of Mama's nonviolent strategies and efforts have achieved widespread recognition and have positively impacted sustainability. This is particularly evident in the recognition that women are not only victims of environmental degradation but also play a significant role in environmental protection.

**Keywords:** Non-violence; The Power of Mama; forest destruction; forest fires; women community

### **ABSTRAK**

*Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir, kerusakan hutan, yang dapat terjadi dalam berbagai bentuk, termasuk deforestasi dan kebakaran hutan, telah menjadi kekhawatiran utama di seluruh dunia, termasuk Indonesia. Laju deforestasi di Indonesia meningkat setiap tahunnya karena sejumlah faktor, termasuk desentralisasi dan konversi lahan ilegal. Kalimantan, yang dikenal sebagai "paru-paru dunia", merupakan wilayah yang paling terkena dampak, menyumbang 51% dari total hilangnya tutupan pohon antara tahun 2001 dan 2022. Situasi ini mengkhawatirkan karena merusak keberlanjutan ekosistem flora dan fauna dan berdampak langsung pada hutan. pemanasan global. Pemerintah telah mengintensifkan upayanya untuk mencegah dan menangani kebakaran hutan, bekerja sama dengan dunia usaha dan organisasi non-pemerintah (LSM) seperti Greenpeace untuk mengurangi risiko kerusakan hutan. Selain upaya tersebut, inisiatif perlindungan yang dilakukan sekelompok perempuan di Ketapang, Kalimantan Barat,*

*juga mendapat perhatian publik. Dikenal dengan sebutan The Power of Mama, kelompok yang paling terkena dampak kebakaran hutan ini melakukan upaya heroik untuk menghentikan perusakan hutan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dampak The Power of Mama terhadap degradasi hutan dan penanggulangan kebakaran di Ketapang, Kalimantan Barat. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan non-kekerasan yang menekankan strategi dan taktik alternatif yang menghindari kekerasan, penelitian ini menunjukkan dampak positif jangka panjang dari The Power of Mama melalui patroli, penjangkauan, konseling, dan intervensi pihak ketiga dalam menangani kerusakan hutan dan kebakaran. Lebih lanjut, dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dan berfokus pada pengumpulan data sekunder, penelitian ini mengungkap beberapa tantangan yang dihadapi The Power of Mama dalam melaksanakan tindakannya. Terlepas dari tantangan-tantangan ini, strategi dan upaya non-kekerasan The Power of Mama telah mendapat pengakuan luas dan berdampak positif terhadap keberlanjutan. Hal ini terutama terlihat dari pengakuan bahwa perempuan tidak hanya menjadi korban degradasi lingkungan tetapi juga memainkan peran penting dalam perlindungan lingkungan.*

**Kata Kunci:** Nir-kekerasan; The Power of Mama; perusakan hutan; kebakaran hutan; komunitas perempuan

## Introduction

Indonesia is home to the third-largest tropical rainforest in the world and has 10% of the global forest cover. Data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) reports that Indonesia's forests cover a land area of 125.76 hectares, or 62.97% of Indonesia's total land area. 40.8 million hectares of these forests are located in one of the world's largest areas, the island of Kalimantan. However, it is unfortunate that this number has decreased massively over the last few decades. Exploitation, land clearing, and high deforestation rates are the causes of the decline in the amount of forest land in Indonesia, including Kalimantan<sup>1</sup>.

According to the World Population Review, Indonesia will even rank as the second nation with the worst rate of deforestation in 2024.<sup>2</sup> One of the areas with the highest rates of land conversion is Kalimantan Island. The logging industry, both legal and illegal, clearing land for plantations, human expansion into forests, and transmigration initiatives, and forest fires are seen to be major contributors to the rate of deforestation. But it's also thought that one of the main causes of Indonesia's high deforestation rates is palm oil plantations. This industry has had a profound impact on the region's forests, biodiversity, and climate. In 2020, approximately 8.3 million hectares of land in Borneo were dedicated to palm oil plantations, significantly contributing to deforestation. Additionally, these plantations have contributed substantially to carbon emissions, with land use in Borneo releasing 1.74 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> between 2000 and 2010. This practice has also had a detrimental impact on the biodiversity of Borneo's forests<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Environment and Forestry Republic of Indonesia, "The State of Indonesia's Forest 2022: Towards FOLU Net Sink 2030," September, 2022

<sup>2</sup> Global Forest Watch, "Indonesia Deforestation Rates & Statistics," 2023, <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/IDN/?category=undefined>.

<sup>3</sup> BNPB, "Tetap Waspada Karhutla, Meski Potensi Hujan Masih Terjadi di Kalbar," August 26, 2023, <https://bnpb.go.id/berita/tetap-waspada-karhutla-meski-potensi-hujan-masih-terjadi-di-kalbar>.

Despite certain misconceptions that they are caused by natural phenomena like the dry season, intentional human activity has been identified to be an important trigger to forest fires on the island of Borneo. One apparent example of the direct cause of forest fires is the practices of unethical businesses that believe that destroying forests is an effective and efficient technique of clearing land<sup>4</sup>. For example, according to researchers from Greenpeace International, the company PT Mayawana Persada has been blatantly engaging in reckless deforestation practices, estimated to cover an area about half the size of Singapore. Since 2016, this company has caused deforestation of approximately 35,000 hectares of land in West Kalimantan. Furthermore, inadequate government rules that allow financiers unfettered access to land removal are thought to contribute considerably to forest fires or perhaps total forest loss in Kalimantan<sup>5</sup>. Another example is from 2005 when Eyes in the Forest issued a press release revealing that 35 timber supplier companies had been granted concession and annual work permits that were legally questionable. These companies cleared at least 400,000 hectares of Sumatran forest. In 2015, several companies involved in forest burning were exonerated, and the police closed the cases. The ease or even illegality of land-clearing permits in Indonesia led to 616 companies operating illegally in forests by 2020<sup>6</sup>.

The government has also implemented various protection and mitigation measures to lessen the severity of forest damage. In 2024, the government aims to intensify efforts to control forest and land fires through integrated patrols, Total Management Campaigns (TMC), hotspot monitoring, and community empowerment in areas susceptible to forest and land fires. The Central Government is aggressively coordinating with local governments in Kalimantan as part of a prevention effort. As in the Central Kalimantan region, through the REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) method, the government directly empowers the role of the community through the coordination of working groups (POKJA) to carry out mitigation. Indigenous people's institutions from the Dayak Tribe in Central Kalimantan also provide support, as outlined in Regional Regulation No. 41 of 1999. West Kalimantan followed suit, encouraging REDD methods and establishing partnerships with the private sector, in this case, PT CUS and PT IDH, to support commodity-based sustainable development. In addition to the role of the government, there is also the role of NGOs, one of which is Greenpeace. Greenpeace emphasized the Forest and Land Use (FOLU) Net Sink 2030 initiative, aimed at implementing Indonesia's commitment to the Paris agreement, particularly the government's efforts to ensure that Indonesia's forests no longer contribute to the release of greenhouse gas emissions<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> William D Sunderlin, and Aju Pradnja, "Rates and Causes of Deforestation in Indonesia: Towards a Resolution of the Ambiguities, *CIFOR* 9, (December, 1996), <https://doi.org/10.17528/cifor/000056>.

<sup>5</sup> Scilla Alecci, "An "Anonymous" Company Secretly Linked to an Indonesian Billionaire Is Destroying Borneo's Rainforests, Environmentalists Say," *ICIJ*, March, 2024, <https://www.icij.org/investigations/deforestation-inc/an-anonymous-company-secretly-linked-to-an-indonesian-billionaire-is-destroying-borneos-rainforests-environmentalists-say/>.

<sup>6</sup> Eko Priyo Purnomo, Abitassha Az Zahra, and Prathivadi Anand, "The Kalimantan Forest Fires: An Actor Analysis Based on Supreme Court Documents in Indonesia," *Sustainability* 13, no. 4 (2021).

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Environment and Forestry Republic of Indonesia, "The State of Indonesia's Forest 2022: Towards FOLU Net Sink 2030," September, 2022

In addition to these governmental and NGO-led initiatives, community-based organizations like The Power of Mama play a crucial role in forest conservation. The Power of Mama complements these efforts by mobilizing local communities, raising awareness, and implementing grassroots solutions to prevent deforestation and forest fires. Integrating The Power of Mama's role within the broader context of these initiatives highlights the importance of community involvement and provides a more comprehensive view of the strategies used to combat forest damage. However, despite several efforts, the movement of a women's group in Ketapang, West Kalimantan, managed to attract public attention. YIARI (The Yayasan Inisiasi Alam Rehabilitasi Indonesia), a non-profit organization dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation, and conservation of wildlife, including protected wildlife species in Indonesia, formed The Power of Mama Community, a women's group, on June 8, 2022, to combat dangerous forest fires, particularly in Ketapang, West Kalimantan. Ely Marlina, as one of the women who initiated the formation of The Power of Mama, said that the situation in which she saw her 2-year-old child experiencing symptoms of coughing and shortness of breath due to the fires was one of the factors in the formation of this community<sup>8</sup>.

Currently, The Power of Mama community has 92 members from six local villages, with ages ranging from 19 to 60 years old. Most members are housewives, but now young working women have also joined voluntarily and are committed to environmental protection actions. The women's group is active in various activities and actions to protect the forest and environment. They even have a systematically organized patrol schedule during the dry and rainy seasons. As a form of mitigation, the power of mama also actively provides education to surrounding farmers in the hope that the intensity of forest fires in the future can be reduced<sup>9</sup>.

This women's movement considers that the massive intensity of forest fires not only impacts the environmental sector but also the social and economic sectors of the local community, especially women. In the social sector, this community actively engages with the public. During the dry season, they patrol fire-prone areas from 10 AM to 4 PM. Conversely, in the rainy season, they conduct outreach programs for young people, especially young women, promoting values of empowerment and female involvement in activities typically dominated by men. The group also educates local farmers on alternative farming methods, specifically the use of organic fertilizers. Organic fertilizers help improve land productivity and increase farmers' incomes by 15-25% compared to chemical fertilizers. In addition, the lack of women's involvement in efforts to prevent forest fires and environmental damage has resulted in women consistently being the most concerned about the impact of these disasters. As a result, all members of The Power of

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<sup>8</sup> YIARI, "Yayasan IAR Indonesia Bentuk Komunitas The Power of Mama Sebuah Gerakan Perempuan untuk Pelestarian Alam," *YIARI*, October 2023, <https://internationalanimalrescue.or.id/yayasan-iar-indonesia-bentuk-komunitas-the-power-of-mama-sebuah-gerakan-perempuan-untuk-pelestarian-alam/>.

<sup>9</sup> Nada Nabila and Muhammad Hidayat, "Get to Know More About "The Power of Mama", Community- Based Disaster Preparedness and Female Heroes for Indonesia's Borneo Forests," *Jurnal Ekonomi* 13, no. 13 (March 2024).

Mama are currently committed to playing an active role in protecting the environment and providing education to the wider community<sup>10</sup>.

With a myriad of actions that attract public attention, the community's impact is evident through four key initiatives. First, their Women-Led Initiatives in areas dominated by men, such as forest fires and deforestation, highlight gender equality. Second, they have made a significant Environmental Impact by restoring peatlands, protecting wildlife, and preventing forest fires. Third, their Community Empowerment efforts have raised awareness among women, especially young women, about environmental and gender issues. Finally, their Cultural Significance challenges societal stigmas about women's roles, emphasizing the importance of grassroots movements. The existence of the power of mama is considered to have a significant impact as one of the mitigation movements. Although carrying out these heroic actions, things that are systematic to the stigma rooted in society are still a challenge. However, at least the power of mama is able to increase public awareness of the surrounding environment and encourage people to be active in directly protecting the land where they live. Therefore, the following research will conduct an in-depth analysis of the role of the power of mama in managing forest fires and environmental damage in Ketapang, Indonesia. Using a non-violence approach, known as "The Power of Mama," they channel their aspirations to the government and other involved parties, such as companies operating in the forest. This approach helps readers understand how "The Power of Mama" addresses their issues without resorting to violence, using civil disobedience to highlight the urgency of their cause. This research will describe the heroic actions taken by a group of women from Ketapang and analyze the impacts and challenges they face.

## Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The study of women's participation in deforestation and environmental damage management issues has become a popular topic recently. Several writings explore the impact of forest damage on women, as well as the emergence of women's movements aimed at protecting or managing such damage. Such as one of them writing *Deforestation and its Impacts on Indigenous Women: A Case from the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh* by Helal Hossain Dhali. This paper provides an overview of the phenomenon of deforestation that continues rapidly in Bangladesh. The research found that there is an interrelated relationship between indigenous women and forests. Forest destruction places a greater workload on Khyang women's groups in Bangladesh, which depend on forest products for their livelihoods<sup>11</sup>.

In addition to discussing the impact of forest destruction on women, there are several writings that discuss the efforts made by women in protecting forests or managing forest destruction. *The study "Roles of Indigenous Women in Forest Conservation: A Comparative Analysis of Two Indigenous Communities in*

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<sup>10</sup> YIARI, "Yayasan IAR Indonesia Bentuk Komunitas The Power of Mama Sebuah Gerakan Perempuan untuk Pelestarian Alam," *YIARI*, October 2023, <https://internationalanimalrescue.or.id/yayasan-iar-indonesia-bentuk-komunitas-the-power-of-mama-sebuah-gerakan-perempuan-untuk-pelestarian-alam/>.

<sup>11</sup> Helal Hossain Dhali, "Deforestation and Its Impact on Indigenous Women A Case from the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh," *Gender Technology and Development* 12, no. 2 (2008). <https://doi.org/10.1177/097185240801200204>.

*the Philippines*" is among them. With a comparative analysis of two indigenous communities in Nueva Ecija, Philippines, this study seeks to provide an overview of the role of indigenous women in forest conservation and how the intersectionality of gender, ethnicity, and traditional knowledge impacts forest conservation. The study shows that indigenous communities that apply gender restrictions create greater levels of environmental degradation<sup>12</sup>.

Then Sareth Nhem and Young Jil Lee's *Women's Participation and the Gender Perspective in Sustainable Forestry in Cambodia: Local Perceptions and the Context of Forestry Research* also highlighted the low participation of women in forest protection efforts. This paper analyzes local stakeholders' perceptions of women's involvement in sustainable forestry and the challenges faced. Using Kendall's W method, this paper finds that women's low participation in decision-making bodies is one of the factors regarding the main obstacles that prevent women from participating effectively in sustainable forest protection<sup>13</sup>.

Research by Oktarina, T.N., and Yulianti, A., titled *The Role of Women in Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection: A Discourse of Ecofeminism in Indonesia*, provides case studies on the role of women in environmental protection in Indonesia. By raising the case of the Tarakan forest and the application of ecofeminism, this paper also emphasizes that the advancement of women is truly a prerequisite for the realization of sustainable development. This paper demonstrates the international recognition of women's role in environmental protection and management, as exemplified by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. However, local and national levels continue to overlook the role of women<sup>14</sup>.

Previous research findings have successfully provided an overview of the impact of forest and environmental damage on women. Several other studies have also succeeded in providing an overview of the role of women in managing forests and environmental damage. However, none of the aforementioned writings specifically address the role of the Mama Power, a women's movement from Ketapang, Indonesia, which has taken concrete actions to combat forest destruction and promote long-term environmental management. Therefore, the following research will specifically analyze the role of the power of the Mama Women's Movement in managing forest damage and fires in Ketapang, Indonesia. In contrast to the findings presented above, this research will apply a non-violence approach to analyzing the actions taken by The Power of Mama community.

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<sup>12</sup> Arneil G. Gabriel, Marianne De Vera, and Marc Anthony, "Roles of Indigenous Women in Forest Conservation: A Comparative Analysis of Two Indigenous Communities in the Philippines," *Cogent Social Sciences* 6, no. 1 (January 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2020.1720564>.

<sup>13</sup> Sareth Nhem and Young Jin Lee, "Women's Participation and the Gender Perspective in Sustainable Forestry in Cambodia: Local Perceptions and the Context of Forestry Research," *Forest Science and Technology* 15, no. 3 (July 2019): 93–110, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21580103.2019.1595174>.

<sup>14</sup> Tri Nurmeqa Oktarina and Anisa Yulianti, "The Role of Women in Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection: A Discourse of Ecofeminism in Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Environmental Law and Sustainable Development* 1, no. 2 (2022).

As one of the most popular researchers on the concept of non-violence, Jørgen Johansson describes non-violence as a condition in which there is no direct, structural, or cultural violence. In conflict situations, non-violence is usually not the first choice in the process of resolving or dealing with conflict. In a conflict, the need for non-violence is to avoid further damage. This approach stems from the belief that using violence to address a problem can trigger counter-violent conditions, leading to an uncontrollable spiral of violence. People view non-violent resistance as more effective than violent action because it stems from the moral belief that harming others, particularly without provocation, is immoral and unjust<sup>15</sup>.

Technically, the non-violence movement is defined as a term for various methods of resistance that do not use violence against others. This method is considered effective for opposing or overcoming violence without using violence. In addition, this approach is considered capable of creatively resolving conflicts and developing just and peaceful alternatives.

In his writing, Jørgen Johansson classifies the non-violence tradition into two parts, namely the pacifist tradition and the pragmatic tradition. The pacifist view accepts no justification at all for the use of either direct or psychological violence. Religious teachings support this view, asserting that violence violates the norm of non-violence. Mahatma Gandhi is one of the pacifist figures who employed the non-violence movement in the AHIMSA concept. AHIMSA prioritizes human values by not attacking, hurting, or even harming others. Although, in practice, this concept is considered too passive towards life.<sup>16</sup> Next, the pragmatist view encompasses a spectrum, primarily focusing on 'not killing' or refraining from violence that only causes serious harm. On occasion, pragmatists consider violence that is less harmful to be acceptable. According to the pragmatic group, it is not enough to avoid violence; there must be action to stop the violence<sup>17</sup>.

Then, Jørgen Johansson explained that there are three categories in the pragmatic non-violence movement. First, non-violence protest, which is a peaceful opposition where the perpetrator expresses support or disagreement with a particular cause by communicating messages to the public. These messages are usually conveyed through symbols or slogans, marches, and protest meetings. Second is non-cooperation, where the perpetrator not only expresses opposition to something but also withdraws their participation in the disapproved practice. Forms of this category can be seen in embargoes, strikes, and boycotts. In the practice of non-cooperation, parties use influence to change the level of cooperation that may exist because of the benefits or fear of the consequences. Third, non-violence intervention: at this stage, the perpetrator not only withdraws from participation but also actively tries to stop the practice he opposes. The level of intervention can be determined by presenting a third party on a small or large scale.

Non-violence movements can be found in efforts to achieve democratic conditions in a region, human rights struggles, opposing racism and sexism, demanding economic and political justice, and

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<sup>15</sup> Jorgen Johansen, "Nonviolence: More than the Absence of Violence," in *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies* (London: Routledge, 2020), 159–75, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203089163-18>.

<sup>16</sup> S. K. Chakraborty, "Ahimsa (Non-Violence) in the Indian Ethos," *Journal of Human Values* 8, no. 1 (2002).

<sup>17</sup> Jorgen Johansen, "Nonviolence: More than the Absence of Violence", in *Handbook of Peace and Conflict Studies* (London: Routledge, 2020), 159–75, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203089163-18>.

environmental protection movements. Non-violence movements tend to be successful because non-violent methods have greater potential to attract mass participation from all walks of life. While not all non-violence campaigns are successful, if they fail, there is no systematic evidence to suggest that violent rebellion will yield better results<sup>18</sup>.

Furthermore, Chenoweth and Stephan's 2011 research cites at least four factors that can support the success of nonviolent resistance. First, a high level of participation is followed by diversity of participation in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, ideology, profession, and social status. Second, the emphasis is on shifting loyalties, where defections from the elite or just below the elite can shift power relations towards the regime. Third, the use of mixed resistance methods as a special tactic in nonviolence resistance. The concentration method, one of these mixed methods of resistance, involves a large number of participants gathering collectively in a public space to carry out resistance. Fourth, resilience, which can be measured through the ability to gain and maintain large participation and to continue resistance despite oppression<sup>19</sup>.

## **Methodology**

This research utilizes a qualitative methodology, emphasizing the detailed analysis of issues. The qualitative method is employed through the analysis of literature studies or secondary data sources. The data sources include books, journals, websites, and official reports from news sites that provide academically accountable updates related to the Power of Mama. The initial step in the research process is to search for and identify data from official reports and news directly covering the Power of Mama. Subsequently, this data is meticulously collected and analyzed in detail using non-violence theory to provide a discussion and depiction of the research results.

## **Analysis**

### **The Power of Mama as a non-violence movement**

As previously explained, non-violent movements and resistance methods not only foster democratic conditions in a region but also find popularity in the environmental protection movement. Although it is not always the first choice in the process of resistance or achieving demands, non-violence methods are considered effective in carrying out creative resistance so as not to cause further damage. One example of the use of non-violence methods in environmental protection can be seen from The Power of Mama movement group in Ketapang, West Kalimantan. Departing from concerns about the destruction of the surrounding environment and the high ratio of forest fires, The Power of Mama community was formed

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<sup>18</sup> Michelle Nicholasen, "Nonviolent Resistance Proves Potent Weapon," *The Harvard Gazette*, 2019, <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/02/why-nonviolent-resistance-beats-violent-force-in-effecting-social-political-change/>.

<sup>19</sup> Erica Chenoweth and Maria J Stephan, "*Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*," (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2011).



with the aim of making women and mothers pioneers in mobilizing public awareness in the village where they live to care about the environment and nature conservation activities.

Non-violence is quite popular for actions related to environmental damage management and forest fire prevention. This is based on several factors, one of which is that non-violence offers an alternative that emphasizes community involvement. Non-violence in environmental damage management also offers an alternative to militarism, with actions that significantly reduce economic and social impacts. Additionally, through non-violent campaigns, environmental activists can influence government and corporate policies to adopt more sustainable practices. For example, these peaceful actions can lead to stricter environmental protection laws<sup>20</sup>.

In the case of the protection movement initiated by The Power of Mama community, the method of the movement can be categorized as pragmatic tradition. This is based on the condition that, in the face of the phenomenon of massive environmental damage around them, The Power of Mama is not enough just to avoid these conditions as embedded in the pacifist view; there must be action to stop or just manage the condition of the damage. The Power of Mama categorizes the movement or action it undertakes into formal and informal traditional strategies. In its formal form, The Power of Mama usually achieves demands using communication approaches such as dialogue, negotiation, or cooperation with the government as a medium for delivering demands. Meanwhile, informal conventional strategies are carried out through direct patrols at the location of forest damage.

In more detail, the non-violence movement method applied by The Power of Mama group can be seen from the specification of the categories classified by Jørgen Johansson, namely the categories of non-violence protest and non-violence intervention. In the non-violence protest category, the non-violence method used by The Power of Mama community can be seen in the rotating patrol activities carried out around fire-prone areas in Ketapang, West Kalimantan. The Power of Mama patrols every day in the forest and land areas around where they live by motorcycle and on foot. During the rainy season and floods, they will use boats to cross the flooded areas. The women's group wholeheartedly identifies hotspots, extinguishes fires when they occur, and provides basic education for farmers<sup>21</sup>. The power of Mama goes from door to door and field to field, meeting with farmer groups to educate them about using ancient traditional techniques for land management. The power of Mama strongly encourages farmers to use a mix of natural ingredients like young pineapple and brown sugar as plant fertilizer. The power of Mama also believes this method can prevent peat soil from becoming acidic and easily catching fire.

This patrol is carried out regularly by the Power of Mama community, both during the dry and rainy seasons. Especially during the dry season, patrols are carried out from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. When a fire occurs, one mama and another will give instructions to each other to carry out their heroic patrols to extinguish the fire directly. The women will go directly to the fire location armed with basic fire-fighting methods, drones,

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<sup>20</sup> Marty Branagan, "Nonviolence and Sustainability: An Indivisible Connection," *Sustainability* 14, no. 11 (June 2022), <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14116426>.

<sup>21</sup> Abdul Muamar, "The Power of Mama: Peran Perempuan Desa Dalam Menjaga Hutan Dan Lahan Di Ketapang," *Green Network*, August 8, 2023.

smartphones, hoses, and pumps to put out the fire. Under certain conditions, it is not uncommon for this group of women to get reports of fires that even come from hard-to-reach areas<sup>22</sup>.

During the rainy season, when the intensity of forest fires decreases, patrols by The Power of Mama community will be held with the aim of providing socialization and basic education to farmers of beans, chilies, and pumpkins in the surrounding villages. The group of women, ranging in age from 19 years to 60 years, systematically provides socialization on land fire control by teaching traditional land clearing practices. The Power of Mama reintroduces ancient farming methods to prevent peatlands from becoming acidic, such as using a mixture of natural ingredients during the plant fertilization process. Socialization related to the use of organic fertilizers for farmers is also massively carried out for farmers. This is aimed at maintaining ecological diversity and protecting the community from the threat of more severe fires<sup>23</sup>.

Then, in the category of non-violence intervention, the action of The Power of Mama can be seen in the approach of this women's community to actively try to stop or manage environmental damage by presenting third parties both on a small and large scale. On the scale of mitigating land damage and fires, The Power of Mama collaborates with village and local governments to identify groups of farmers who clear land. The identification process is crucial as farmers continue to use the popular clearing method of cutting down plants and burning them, which the government permits in areas less than 20,000 square meters.

The Power of Mama also actively coordinates with Manggala Agni, the national-level organization in charge of forest and land fire control. Coordination and cooperation between The Power of Mama community and authorities such as Manggala Agni is usually needed to expand the network in providing socialization, including procedures for land use without burning, mangrove nursery assistance, and other agricultural activities. The Power of Mama also presents another partner, MPA, which is a volunteer fire unit whose members are almost all men. Together with MPA, The Power of Mama divides their tasks in the fire extinguishing process to make it more effective. The process of presenting third parties, both on a small and large scale, carried out by The Power of Mama Group is also one of the debriefing steps to increase the group's capacity. By presenting interventions from the government and non-government parties, The Power of Mama has received a number of trainings, such as the use of drones to help monitor areas prone to fire, SMART Patrol, and public speaking<sup>24</sup>. Through SMART Patrol training, the Power of Mama will be trained to use an application that can manage a database directly integrated with field officers. This smartphone-connected system will enhance data management effectiveness, especially for mapping forest protection and security against activities that harm the forest ecosystem. The training on application

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<sup>22</sup> Aseanty Levi, "The Power of Mama: Kisah Emak-Emak Relawan Pemadam Kebakaran Hutan Di Kalimantan Barat," *BBC*, March 4, 2024.

<sup>23</sup> Abdul Muamar, "The Power of Mama: Peran Perempuan Desa Dalam Menjaga Hutan Dan Lahan Di Ketapang," *Green Network*, August 8, 2023.

<sup>24</sup> The Orangutan Project, "Meet the Power of Mama, Borneo's First Women Ranger Teams," *The Orangutan Project*, February 7, 2023.

and technology use for the Power of Mama is expected to improve their capacity to protect the environment, particularly in the Ketapang area.

The explanation above reflects that the efforts made by The Power of Mama can be categorized as a form of pragmatic non-violence approach in the categories of non-violence protest and non-violence intervention. In responding to the situation of forest fires and environmental damage that positioned women as the most affected party, The Power of Mama was not only silent but moved to strategize to manage the forest damage. The Power of Mama's non-violence strategy shows a spectrum of just 'not killing' or avoiding violence that causes serious impacts. In line with the explanation of non-violence protest and non-violence intervention, The Power of Mama expresses their concern about forest and environmental damage by using heroic actions in the form of direct patrols to forest fire points. The Power of Mama is also keen to collaborate with other parties, both government and non-government, to expand their reach in implementing the efforts they have compiled.

### **The Power of Mama's achievements and challenges in applying non-violence methods to protect forest destruction in Ketapang, West Kalimantan**

In discussing achievements or successes, supporters of the non-violence approach believe that at least non-violence does not make the damage worse or does not cause further negative impacts. Non-violence methods are considered powerful in creatively developing fair and peaceful alternatives to resolving an issue or demand on the basis of discrimination. In the case of the Power of Mama movement in managing forest damage and fires, the non-violence approach implemented, starting from patrols and socialization to bringing in third parties for intervention, shows that this approach has succeeded in creating environmental management solutions that are more peaceful, fair, and constructive for the community.

One of the heads of financial affairs in Sungai Besar Village, Ketapang, Zakaria, has stated that The Power of Mama's efforts have been successful. He said that thanks to the cooperation between the government and The Power of Mama community, fires did not occur in the village in 2023. The director of YIARI, the foundation responsible for overseeing and initiating The Power of Mama community, asserted that this women's community's approach has effectively changed people's behavior to prevent forest fires.<sup>25</sup> On November 17, 2023, The Power of Mama received the "Clean Air Championship Award 2023" for farmers, MPAs, and individuals in Kalimantan. The award has brought increased attention to the actions undertaken by the Power of Mama. Several seminars and talk shows have specifically invited representatives of the Power of Mama to serve as speakers and share their group's experiences in managing forest fires. One such talk show was held at IPB on March 27, 2024. During this seminar, Maimun, as a representative of the Power of Mama, shared their experiences regarding strategies for controlling forest and land fires in Ketapang. The award serves as further evidence of the cross-generational women's

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<sup>25</sup> Aseanty Levi, "The Power of Mama: Kisah Emak-Emak Relawan Pemadam Kebakaran Hutan Di Kalimantan Barat," *BBC*, March 4, 2024.

community's successful efforts to manage and prevent forest fires and environmental damage, both locally and nationally.<sup>26</sup>

When referring to research conducted by Chenoweth and Stephan in 2011 related to factors that support the success of non-violence, at least the success achieved by The Power of Mama community is supported by several factors. High participation in the non-violence movement is the most important factor. In terms of participation, since its formation on June 8, 2022, the group has had 92 members with ages ranging from 19 years to 60 years. The women's group is spread across six villages in Ketapang, West Kalimantan, and comes from diverse backgrounds, ranging from housewives to young working women. This diversity of background, age, or profession is considered to be able to expand tactical diversity because each person has unique capacities and skills, so the possibility of success will be greater. Then the factor that drives the success of The Power of Mama is the type of tactics or mixed methods used. The application of direct patrol methods to the field, education through socialization, and the involvement of external parties such as the government and other supporting organizations are considered capable of encouraging massive involvement from various parties.

However, behind this success is the possibility of challenges that can hinder The Power of Mama community from achieving its goals. The first and biggest challenge for The Power of Mama community is the stigma in society about the role of women. Many still think that women should not do physical activities outside the home, such as patrolling and putting out fires. In addition to stigma and construction in society, there are some technical challenges in the field, such as communication barriers in providing socialization and the use of technology such as drones and GPS.<sup>27</sup> However, these technical obstacles are not considered to be a barrier for the Power of Mama community. Each member is considered to have a high commitment and interest in learning to improve their skills, both in the use of technology and public speaking.

## Conclusion

The Power of Mama community in Ketapang, West Kalimantan, has demonstrated how nonviolence can have a significant impact on managing forest fires and environmental damage. Through a pragmatic and participatory approach, they have successfully implemented effective nonviolent strategies, including anti-fire patrols, community education, and collaboration with various parties, including government and non-government organizations. Their activities not only demonstrate a commitment to environmental protection but also place women as pioneers and prime movers in these heroic actions. This is a reflection of the increasingly recognized role of women in natural resource conservation and

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<sup>26</sup> ANTARA, "Komunitas TPoM YIARI Ketapang Raih Penghargaan Nasional," *ANTARA*, November 22, 2023, <https://kalbar.antaranews.com/berita/557640/komunitas-tpom-yiari-ketapang-raih-penghargaan-nasional>.

<sup>27</sup> Mongabay, "'The Power of Mama': Saat Perempuan Ketapang Melawan Kebakaran Hutan Di Kalimantan," *Mongabay*, November 17, 2023, <https://www.mongabay.co.id/2023/11/17/the-power-of-mama-saat-perempuan-ketapang-melawan-kebakaran-hutan-di-kalimantan/>

management efforts, while also disproving the existing stigma about the limited role of women in outdoor activities and environmental conservation. Through concrete actions and the awards it has garnered, the power of Mama has successfully demonstrated that women also possess the capability and crucial role in managing environmental damage. Strategies emphasizing long-term positive effects and a non-violent approach have successfully raised public awareness about the importance of environmental protection and early mitigation of forest fires.

The Power of Mama's success also demonstrates the importance of high participation and diversity in nonviolent movements. With members of various ages and professions, the community has successfully applied diverse and adaptive methods to the social and environmental conditions they face. The "Clean Air Championship Award 2023" they received is not only a testament to their efforts but also signifies the effectiveness of nonviolent approaches in mobilizing communities and promoting sustainable behavioral change towards environmental management and protection. The Power of Mama has shown extraordinary resilience and adaptability in the face of various challenges, including social stigma against women's roles and technical obstacles in carrying out their duties. Their commitment and persistence in facing these challenges have not only strengthened their movement but also inspired many others to become actively involved in environmental protection. Through their nonviolent efforts, The Power of Mama not only contributes to the management of forest fires and environmental degradation, but also to women's empowerment and sustainable community development in Ketapang, West Kalimantan.

*The author consents that there are numerous limitations in how the data is presented in this research, so more research will be conducted to provide a more comprehensive data analysis.*

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