



The Urgency of a Gender-based Approach to Counter Terrorism in Indonesia: A Look into the European Policies

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Article	Abstract
<p>Keywords: Gender-based Approach; Terrorism; Prevention; Gender</p> <p>Article History Received: Mar 31, 2022 Reviewed: Jun 12, 2022 Accepted: Sep 09, 2022 Published: Sep 16, 2022</p>	<p><i>In recent years, Indonesia has faced a rising rate of women participation in terrorism. The Presidential Decree No. 7 of 2021 concerning the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism that Leads to Terrorism 2020-2024 mentioned 'gender mainstreaming' to counter terrorism without elaborating how this gender-based approach was to be conceptualized into executing policy and regulatory framework. Therefore, this study analyzes the policies of European states. The objective of this study is to learn from the practice of European states to see how a gender-based approach could be further conceptualized under Indonesia's counter-terrorism policy and regulatory framework. This article was based on normative research, employing both primary and secondary data. Furthermore, the discussion was based on three approaches: statutory, comparative, and conceptual approaches. The result of the study shows that a gender-based approach requires the Indonesian policy and regulatory framework to treat counter-terrorism as a cross-cutting issue between gender and the fulfillment of human rights.</i></p>



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INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of 9/11, the international attention toward terrorism increased, as signalled by the reaction of the United Nations Security Council that issued numerous legally binding resolutions to counter terrorism, including Resolution S/RES/1373 which labelled terrorism as a threat to international peace and security (Margolin, 2016)(Martin & Mathias, 2014). According to a study by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia has long been particularly vulnerable to Islamic extremist ideologies and movements (Fitriani, Satria, Sari, & Adriana, 2018). Over the last 2 decades, Indonesia has experienced some major terrorist attacks (Al-Fatih & Aditya, 2019). One of the landmarks of such terrorist attack is Bali Bombing in 2002 that killed 88 Australian citizens and 38 Indonesian citizens. In the last 2 decades, there has been an estimation of 9 major terrorist attacks in total (Indonesia,

2021). Since the Bali Bombing in 2002, famous names such as Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Imam Samudera, Amrozi, Nazaruddin M Top have been known throughout the entire country as some of the most notorious terrorists in that period (Prakasa, Al-Fatih, & Haqqi, 2021). The perpetrator of the terrorist attacks during the last 2 decades consisted predominantly of male terrorists. However, in the past few years, there has been a shift in the pattern of terrorist attacks where women became more involved in terrorism.

Twenty years ago, women were seen only as sympathizers or supporting actors in terrorist attacks whose job was garnering support for the male terrorists to conduct the action. Contrary to the popular belief that women's place in terrorism only functions as a subordinate (Nuraniyah, 2018), more women seem to be partaking their fair share of involvement in recruiting, planning, and even carrying out terrorist attacks in recent years. In 2015, Aisyah Lina Kamelya created a group chat on WhatsApp titled "Baqiyah United Group" consisting ISIS sympathizers from Indonesia, India, Kenya, and Libya (Fullmer, Mizrahi, & Tomsich, 2019). In the same year, 6 Indonesian nationals were captured by Turkish police officials on their travel to Syria as they were suspected to be involved with ISIS (Fullmer et al., 2019). In 2016, the first would-be female suicide bomber, Dian Yulia Novi attempted to attack the Indonesian Presidential Office (Campbell, 2017). These incidents serve as evidence that women have played an active role in growing, planning, and carrying out terrorist attacks (Ingram, Whiteside, & Winter, 2020).

Despite the phenomenon, gender has often been excluded from definitions and process of terrorism. Consequently, it creates an incomplete understanding of how women are attracted to terrorism or how they can be disengaged from it (Patel & Westermann, 2018). The lack of awareness of a gender-based approach to counter terrorism can be explained as a result of an accustomed perception of gender in policy thinking. As pointed out by Elshtain and Skjelsbaek *et.al*, women are typically seen as 'beautiful souls' who would not be capable of committing atrocious acts, and men as 'just warriors' (Skjelsbæk, Hansen, & Lorentzen, 2021). This perception is accustomed to the extent that it rules out the possibility of women *willingly* engaging in terrorism. In this sense, women who do engage in terrorism are seen as deviations from gendered norms or acting against their nature of being a woman (Skjelsbæk et al., 2021). Women are instead portrayed as being victims or the unwitting pawns of men (Schmidt, 2020). Similarly, another study found that the media and the conventional wisdom have always perpetuated the same stereotypes about women who engage in terrorism (Bloom & Lokmanoglu, 2020). Consequently, women's involvement in terrorism has largely been seen through a patriarchal perspective which highlights the control of power by men over women (Bloom & Lokmanoglu, 2020).

However, development in research shows that there are many factors to explain why women join terrorist groups that expand from previous assumptions. This is because women seek to rectify grievance or to express their devout beliefs (Sawicki, 2016). Other studies suggest that women are motivated by ideology, the experience of being alienated, (Skjelsbæk et al., 2021) romance, peer influence, or seeking a sense of security (Gan, Neo, Chin, & Khader, 2019). Another study claims that women may be pulled into terrorism by ideas of femininity and their pursuit of empowerment that is caused by gender oppression.

The development of research has even reached to the point of realizing that terrorism itself is a gendered process where terrorists organisations prescribed different roles for women and men (Patel & Westermann, 2018; Laura Sjoberg & Gentry, 2011, 2015). One study claims that since the rise of Daesh in 2014, Indonesia has experienced a growth in violent extremism that is connected to the increase of conservative and patriarchal fundamentalism which is often signaled by gender-regressive behavior such as restricting women's movements (True & Eddyono, 2017). Furthermore, even though typical terrorist organizations are deeply enrooted within patriarchal values, women become involved in different capacities, from recruiters to frontline fighters including suicide bombers (Patel & Westermann, 2018). In addition, women may serve as organizers, teachers, translators, and fundraisers for terrorism purposes (Bloom, 2017). In terms of violence, while it is usually carried out by men, women are often able to carry out surprise attacks or transport weapons undetected (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017). In Indonesia, there are women who are involved in ISIS affiliated groups, which signals a new strategy employed by ISIS networks to recruit and involve women in terrorist actions (Musfia, Utomo, & Wahyudi, 2017) or in other activities in support of terrorism such as being jihadi brides.

Not recognizing gender in the discourse of terrorism would mean disregarding the relevance of male leaders' gendered strategies to recruit women. For instance, persuasion towards potential female martyrs may appeal to gender equality in martyrdom or offering salvation for women who have violated gender norms and had been shunned by their community (Banks, 2019). Similarly, Gordon and True argues that if P/CVE policies are inattentive to gender, they will be ineffective because it will not be able to address threats where women are involved in supporting and enabling violent extremism such as through logistics, financing, and recruitment. It will also fail to engage with the way gender identities play a role in radicalization and extremist messaging (Gordon & True, 2019).

In light of the newly evolved role of women in terrorism, the international community begins to recognise the urgency of a gender-based approach to counterterrorism strategy (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, 2019). For example, referring to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), states are obligated to ensure the full development and advancement of women for the enjoyment of human rights. In the context of terrorism, the CEDAW General Recommendation No. 30 of 2013 recommends that state parties support women's conflict prevention efforts and ensure their equal participation in prevention processes.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian policy on counter violent extremism (CVE) focuses primarily on terrorism in general which are mostly targeting male militants (Ingram et al., 2020). In Indonesia, counter-terrorism strategy is regulated under several laws including Law No. 5 of 2018 on Amendment to Law No. 15 of 2003 on Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law No. 1 of 2002 on Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism. The law stipulated that national prevention can be done through preparedness, counter-radicalization, and de-radicalization. Furthermore, the prevention is carried out through community empowerment, increasing the capacity of officials, protecting and improving infrastructure, research development, and locating areas prone to radicalism. The law also defined counter-radicalization as a process to stop the spread of radical understanding of extremism, directly or indirectly

through counter-narrative, counter-propaganda, or counter-ideology. The step to counter radicalization is through deradicalization, a process to eliminate or reduce and reverse the radical understanding of terrorism through 4 stages including identification and assessment, rehabilitation, re-education, and social integration. The prevention of terrorism is further stated in the Government Regulation No. 77 of 2019 concerning the Prevention of Terrorism Crimes and Protection of Investigators, Prosecutors, Judges, and Correctional Officers.

Despite the efforts in formulating counterterrorism strategies through regulations, Indonesia has not fully integrated gender. In Presidential Decree No. 7 of 2021 concerning the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism that Leads to Terrorism 2020-2024 (*Rencana Aksi Nasional Pencegahan dan Penanggulangan Ekstremisme Berbasis Kekerasan yang Mengarah pada Terorisme* hereinafter referred to as 'RANPE'), the wording of 'gender-mainstreaming' or '*pengarusutamaan gender*' was only mentioned once in the attachment on the Presidential Decree. Despite the lack of further elaboration, this may function as a leeway to further integrate a gender-based approach to counter terrorism in Indonesia.

Based on the above, the Author chose to discuss how a gender-based approach could be conceptualized in Indonesia's counter-strategy against terrorism. The article will first review gender in the discourse of terrorism and then make references to the practices in European states to extract lessons for Indonesia's future policies.

The author chooses to refer to the practices in European states because of the following reasons. **First**, European states have faced similar situations of terrorism to Indonesia. In 2020, there have been 449 arrests related to terrorism in European Union Member States, despite the emergence of COVID-19 in European Union Member States, terrorist activity remains and threatens national security (Europol, 2021). European Union realises that the jihadist movement and terrorist groups also have female components especially in spreading extremist ideology to their community and children (Europol, 2021). This is evident in the fact that European foreign fighters have included women in the past. For example, when ISIS was first declared, 34% of Germans who left for ISIS were women (Seran de Leede, Hauptfleisch, & Korolkova, 2017). Meanwhile, around the same period, an estimated 850 civilians left the United Kingdom for ISIS—17% of which were women (Boutin et al., 2016). In another instance, from 2013 up until 2017, 21 Spanish women left their home country to join ISIS in Syria and Iraq (Falk & Vitéz, 2016). On a larger scale, from 2011 until 2015, a total of 3.710 foreign fighters had left the European region for Syria and Iraq (Boutin et al., 2016), in which it is estimated that 17% of them are women (Boutin et al., 2016). **Second**, to counter this, European Union and its Member States have enacted policies and initiatives that treat the gender-based approach as a cross-cutting issue between preventing terrorism and the fulfillment of human rights which will be explained further below.

The conditions in Europe are similar to the ASEAN context, where its Member States also faces trans-border terrorism. For example, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the Philippines and the Pattani United Liberation Organization in Thailand (Prakasa et al., 2021). In light of this, ASEAN has also formed soft initiatives for counter-terrorism as the basis for its Member States to further regulate their own counter-terrorism strategy. For example, the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism in 2007 which is used as a compass for Member States to construct their

policies on the prevention and counter-terrorism. Furthermore, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) serves as an important assembly to discuss and develop political consensus on strategies to counter transnational crimes, including terrorism (Wilujeng, Swastanto, & Joostensz, 2021).

Lastly, to construct the analysis, the Author refers to the feminist critical theory, which works to remove binaries of public and private to the extent that “personal is redefined as political, and the political as personal” (Brown, 2011). By removing the boundaries, we could gain a better understanding of how women participate in conflict and political violence as we begin to consider actions and interactions as being part of a gendered process (Patel & Westermann, 2018). Applying this perspective, the article presents how social issues faced by women including discrimination, have political relevancy in the discourse of countering terrorism. Therefore, the significance of this study is to contribute to the discourse of terrorism by showing how far gender perspective is relevant to countering the crime and how it could be integrated into policy.

METHOD

This article is based on prior normative research, utilizing both primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through an interview with AMAN Indonesia (hereinafter referred to as the “Interview”), meanwhile, secondary data consisted of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources consisted of policies and regulations from international, regional, and national level that apply to Indonesia and/or the European Union. On the other hand, secondary sources were obtained from relevant literature. Further, the research employed statutory, comparative, and conceptual approaches (Irwansyah, 2020). Statutory approach was used to lay out the overall framework of a gender-based approach in context of preventing terrorism both on international and national levels. Meanwhile, the conceptual approach was used to discuss how Indonesia’s preventive policy against terrorism can be framed according to a gender-based approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Women and Terrorism in Indonesia

The involvement of women in terrorism is not static, but it is rather dynamic over the course of time. To give an overall view of how women’s involvement in terrorism has evolved, this part describes several state-perceived terrorist groups to see how far they involve women who typically become affiliated with the group through marriage, family relations, or friends (Qori’ah, 2019). The discussion will basically show that the role of women gradually shifts from a domestic and passive role to a public and active role.

According to a report by Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC, 2017), women engaging in terrorism have been found since the 1980s when they were recruited by *Darul Islam* (DI), a group established in 1942 advocated for the establishment of an Islamic state of Indonesia. DI began recruiting women believing that they could spread the group’s ideology through study groups (True & Eddyono, 2017). During this time, women were tasked with attracting supporters. They persuaded other women to wear head scarfs and invited people to learn Islam,

eventually encouraging them to swear their allegiance to DI (Toyibah, 2021). However, DI forbade women from being involved in combat activities (Davey, Ebner, Kelmendi, Mahmood, & Margolin, 2019).

The next development could be seen in how women were involved in Jemaah Islamiyah ('JI') which is an organization affiliated with Taliban and Al-Qaeda that promotes *salafi jihadi* to establish an Islamic state. In this organization, women were also strictly prohibited from having an active role in terrorist attacks (Abdul Nasir, 2019). In JI, women can only perform the domestic role including generating income and securing the regeneration of fighters (Azca & Putri, 2021). Women also carry the supporting operational role of their terrorist husbands. For example, the wives of Nurdin M. Top were prosecuted for hiding terrorists from the legal enforcers (Qori'ah, 2019). The furthest women can contribute to JI is to act as propagandists and recruiters to expand the membership of such terrorist group (Abdul Nasir, 2019).

After DI and JI, Indonesia also saw the rise of other terrorist groups such as *Jama'ah Ansharud Daulah* (JAD) which is a supporter of the Islamic State (IS) established in 2014. In terms of networking, JAD was affiliated with other similar groups including militant groups *Mujahidin Indonesia Timur* (MIT) and *Mujahidin Indonesia Barat* (MIB) that also promote *salafi jihadi*. In these organisations, women played a more active role at the forefront. This is because JAD and its affiliates wanted to obscure the traces of their male members and to spread the word that women and children can also become brave martyrs (Qori'ah, 2019). It was during the rise of JAD that Indonesia saw the first female terrorists who attempted to commit suicide bombings, Dian Yulia Novi and Ika Puspitasari. Furthermore, women involved in MIT also played active roles. For example, the wives of three MIT leaders were trained to use firearms and explosive devices (IPAC, 2017) and other women were trained for self-defense and throwing grenades (Davey et al., 2019). Another example is that women were also involved in seeking funding for the operations of the organisation.

The role of women in terrorism reached its higher potential during the rise of IS, which, in turn, had shifted the way women are perceived in terrorism. The organisation took a different approach to emphasising the role of women in terrorism, in which, women are placed in a more strategic position aside from being combatants (Abdul Nasir, 2019). For example, IS uses women to spread propaganda and conduct indoctrination including in the recruitment of children (Qori'ah, 2019). Women have also been found to occupy leadership positions in IS-affiliated groups. A prominent example is Aisyah Lina Kamelya whose role in the Baqiyah United Group extended to recruiting followers and seeking funding for IS. Aside from Aisyah, there had been many other women acting as leaders within the IS networking (Musfia et al., 2017). This evolving role of women indicates the growing gendered extremism in Indonesia.

Moreover, the rapid progression of social media use has also improved the role of women in IS. Social media becomes a platform for women to seek their own roles aside from the roles set out by male members of IS, particularly because social media allow these women to voice their opinions and engage with like-minded followers. In turn, women became more aware and independent, leading them into a more active role in terrorism, this phenomenon is what is deemed to be an independent radicalisation (Abdul Nasir, 2019). Through social media, women organise *hijra* to Iraq and Syria where IS operates and migrate from their countries and glorify the idea of women as suicide bombers (Abdul Nasir, 2019; Patel & Westermann, 2018).

State of the art regarding a gender-based approach to prevent terrorism

Gender is defined as the social construction of masculinity and femininity and the values attached to these constructions (Cohn, 2013). A gender-based approach is meant to integrate a gender perspective into policies and regulatory frameworks as a way to ensure the needs of both men and women are addressed, promote gender equality and mitigate discrimination, in hopes of generating better outcomes (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2019). As stated in the ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2, gender mainstreaming as part of a gender-based approach is defined as: “...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”

Approaching terrorism through the lens of gender has multiple benefits. Mainly, it can assist in understanding the relationship between women and men and the inequalities in those relationships (Phelan, 2020). This perspective is important considering that women’s and men’s life experiences, needs, and priorities are often different due to differences in social, cultural, and economic roles and expectations (Phelan, 2020). Thus, the benefit of a gender-based approach includes its ability to enhance our understanding of motivation, participation, and experience amongst women and men in terrorism (Phelan, 2020) which often reflects the gender-unequal world and the complicated personal and political choices of both men and women (Laura Sjoberg & Gentry, 2011).

As a result of this realization, global policy has pushed for a gender-based approach to acknowledge the role of women in terrorism that emanates from the concept of women, peace, and security agenda (WPS). WPS is a policy framework that aims to promote gender equality and enhancing the rights, participation, as well as the protection of women related to conflict situation. In October 2000, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325, the landmark resolution on WPS. Resolution 1325 asserted the important role of women in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace negotiations, peacebuilding in post-conflict reconstruction. This resolution also demands an equal participation in promoting and maintaining peace and security. Currently, there are about ten UN Security Council resolutions that were adopted under the WPS framework, one of which includes Resolution 2242 which recognises “...the differential impact on human rights of women and girls of terrorism and violent extremism...” and thus called for integration by UN Member States “...of their agendas on women, peace, and security, counter-terrorism and counter-violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism.” Furthermore, Resolution 2178 recognized the connection between terrorism and preventing/countering violent extremism (P/CVE) where it states that countering violent extremism can be conducive to preventing terrorism. The novelty of P/CVE agenda lies on the fact that it does not primarily meant to preempt terrorist activities, but to counter the potential drivers of radicalization by focusing on the socio-economic and macro political root causes (Ucko, 2018).

In Southeast Asia, ASEAN had issued a Joint Statement on Promoting Women, Peace, and Security in ASEAN which was adopted in 2017. Following the landmark

Resolution 1325, the Joint Statement pushed for “the integration of gender perspective in all conflict prevention initiatives and strategies” including the full participation of women, and inclusion of WPS agenda in policies for the protection of women and girls in conflict and post-reconstruction. With regards to radicalization and violent extremism, ASEAN issued the Workplan of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2019-2025) which was adopted in 2019. One of the objectives is to empower women and promote gender equality. In the framework of preventing radicalization and violent extremism, the Workplan included the need for gender equality “to enhance the capacity, participation, and leadership of women in the promotion of moderation and tolerance to prevent the rise of radicalization and violent extremism.”

Despite the vast policy framework, Eddyono and Davies addressed the importance of acknowledging women’s roles and agency within efforts of P/CVE (Eddyono & Davies, 2018) which unfortunately, the current responses to terrorism and violent extremism have not yet integrated gender approach in the design, implementation, and review process (True & Eddyono, 2017) particularly in Indonesia. Considering this, the following discussion will investigate how the gender-based approach policies could be conceptualized into the domestic framework.

How a gender-based approach can be conceptualized into counter-terrorism policy in Indonesia

According to a study by Gordon and True (Gordon & True, 2019) there are key criteria for a gender-responsive policy in addressing violent extremism which revolves around the attentiveness to gender dynamics in the recruitment to violent extremism; the awareness of gendered indicators of rising intolerance and extremism; and the investigation of gendered impacts of violent extremism.

Furthermore, Skjelsbaek, Hansen, and Lorentzen previously studied 46 policies from a variety of jurisdictions to discover how gender is framed within policies to prevent violent extremism and terrorism. The study revealed that gendered roles can be used as prevention models in families and communities (Skjelsbæk et al., 2021) as they often serve as early indicators of fundamentalism that may support violent extremism (True & Eddyono, 2017). As argued by Schlaffer and Kropiunigg (Schlaffer & Kropiunigg, 2015) and confirmed by our Interview, a woman’s position is central within the family. In playing their roles as wives and mothers, women are in the strategic position to detect early behaviors of radicalism or extremism within the family. For this role to succeed, the Interviewee revealed that women must be empowered through education and advocacy that is gendered and peace oriented in the hopes that it will create women-led community resilience. In other words, a gender-based approach requires women to be empowered as agents of peace.

The following discussion shows how the European region integrates a gender-based approach into their policy against terrorism. In essence, a pattern was found where a gender-based approach is concretized by promoting gender equality in the context of social issues including discrimination, gender-based violence, and empowerment as well as protection for women and girls from the impact of conflicts (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, 2019). This can be seen as a testament to the feminist critical theory as it treats social issues often faced and suffered by women as one of the political concerns to counter terrorism.

A Gender-based approach in EU policies on preventing violent extremism and terrorism

In general, the European Union Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was established in 2005, rests upon four pillars: prevent, protect, pursue, and respond (Boutin et al., 2016). With regards to the pillar to prevent terrorism, the Strategy puts its focus on preventing radicalization by addressing its root causes and averting recruitment network. In this context, the European Union has put in place a number of legal instruments to encourage Member States to apply a gender-based approach to prevent radicalization. Particularly, in 2015, the European Parliament stresses the growing number of women who have been radicalized to join terrorist organizations. Such growth was acknowledged as evidence of women's rising role in violent extremism. Thus, the European Parliament made two recommendations. First, to encourage its Member States to take gender into account in developing strategies for the prevention of radicalization. Second, to support programs that engage women in their endeavor for greater equality (Dati, 2015). In that same year, the Radicalisation Awareness Network Centre of Excellence was established as a platform for information and experience exchange as well as identifying good practices and develop initiatives to address radicalization. In meeting these objectives, the Centre brings together actors from different fields, including legal enforcers, educators, social workers, community leaders, and NGOs.

Furthermore, the Revised Guideline for the EU Strategy for Combating Radicalisation and Recruitment to Terrorism (2017) calls for the integration of gender into counter-radicalization efforts by promoting research on the role of women to understand how to build greater resilience to radicalization. In its development, the European Union Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security 2019-2024 was enacted to supplement the UNSC Resolution 1325 with a particular focus to reduce the impact of conflict suffered by women and girls and ensure their participation in conflict prevention and resolution.

A Gender-based approach within counter efforts against violent extremism and terrorism in European states

In **Austria**, the National Network for Prevention and Countering Violent Extremism and De-radicalisation promotes gender equality by calling for efforts to create a more resilient community against radicalization and terrorism. It recognizes the significance of gender as an interdisciplinary issue in the spread of violent extremism and deradicalization. The efforts regulated in the National Network include, among others, educating citizens on gender equality; strengthening social and emotional competences and measures for the prevention of violence, involving gender-specific violence; as well as analyzing conflict with viewpoints of gender role. The implementation of the National Network brings together collaborative efforts between legal enforcement, civil society organizations (CSO), and academic institutions (Boutin et al., 2016). Similarly, the **Finland** National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violent Radicalisation and Extremism 2019 – 2023 emphasize the urgency of gender viewpoint in the prevention of violent radicalization and extremism. In **Denmark**, the issue of gender and terrorism is regulated in the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Extremism and Radicalisation. According to which, gender equality is promoted through the emphasis of non-discrimination

principle and acknowledgement of women's rights in preventing terrorism and extremism.

Germany, through its Federal Government's Strategy for Preventing Extremism and Promoting Democracy, is another European state that stresses the importance of prohibiting gender discrimination, condemning group-related ideologies that promote hostile behavior towards certain social groups driven by perceived superiority in terms of social, religious, ethnic, origin, sexual or gender identities or other distinctive characteristics. On the other hand, Germany promotes the acceptance and inclusion of differences, condemning stigmatization and rejection of vulnerable groups, and noting it as an important part of social phenomena. Based on this framework, Germany has put in place, a variety of initiatives. One of which is *Die Freiheit die ich meine* ("the freedom that I mean"), a project that aims to empower Muslim girls and women. The project operates on three pillars: workshops with student groups, educational courses, and thematic events while addressing their participants' experiences of discrimination and inequality (Seran de Leede et al., 2017). Another initiative includes *Frauen stärken Demokratie* ("women strengthen democracy") that is committed to preventing gender violence, as well as cultural, religious motivated violence. This project recognizes the role of women within their families and communities and, thus, focuses on empowering women to convey democratic values to their surroundings.

Further, the **French** National Plan for the Prevention of Radicalization offered another approach to promoting gender equality, namely the mobilization of women's rights networks through non-governmental organizations to prevent radicalism amongst women and monitor radicalized individuals. **Hungary** and **Luxembourg** are among the European states that underscored the importance to protect women and children from the impact of conflict, particularly on account of the vulnerability of women and girls to being victimized by sexual violence. Uniquely, Luxembourg's policy recognizes women as agents of change as opposed to strictly perceiving them as victims of conflicts and other forms of violence. In this context, Luxembourg's policy advocates for gender mainstreaming and the meaningful participation of women within peace processes, conflict resolution, decision-making, and institution-building in the security framework as part of an effort to implement UNSC Resolution 1325. The policy also emphasized that in seeking the meaningful participation of women, there needs to be consideration for the diverse life experiences, including radicalized women, women with disability, and those living with low-income. It also calls for the promotion of social inclusiveness as part of the effort to counter the spread of violent extremism.

The Netherlands possesses a vast range of programs that focuses on preventing radicalization, particularly, among women. One example is *SIPI-DIAMANT method* by the Foundation for Intercultural Participation and Integration. This institute conducts research, consultation, training, and education in the field of integration, reintegration, and education with the inclusion of gender focus. Training offered by the institution focuses on building resilience and awareness amongst boys and girls concerning radicalism. The training includes a program that prepares young individuals in becoming ambassadors against radicalization in their environment. Another part of SIPI is the intervention and de-radicalization program which focuses on resilience for girls that is supplemented by personal coaching and family support.

Furthermore, *Steunpunt Sabr* is a Dutch non-profit organization that supports women and their families in need of care for social and psychological problems (Seran de Leede et al., 2017). On account of many young men and women being radicalized, this organization offers a program to raise the radicalization awareness of mothers. In the implementation, the program works closely with community workers, teachers, and local legal enforcers. It consists of modules to equip mothers with knowledge regarding radicalization, how it happens, how it can be detected, and how to respond to it.

Slovakia is another European state that addresses social issues in connection to extremism. According to the Slovak National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security for 2021 – 2025, the government places special emphasis on two plans. The first is ensuring access to psychologist care for women who were victims of discriminative threats or extremism based on their nationality, origin, religion, or color, as well as preventing women from becoming victims to such treatment. The second is the professionalism of the Police Force and their training to respond to violence against women including domestic violence as well as other perceived vulnerable persons. Moreover, **Sweden**, through the Government Communication 2014/15:146 Prevent, Preempt and Protect, develops gender perspective to safeguard democracy against violent extremism by providing children and young people with media and information literacy and the ability to question gender stereotypical norms relating to masculinity and violence. In June 2013, the Swedish government tasked the Swedish Media Council with implementing the Council of Europe's No Hate Speech Movement in Sweden. The aim of this campaign is to raise awareness against xenophobia, sexism, and similar forms of intolerance found on the internet, in addition to mobilizing people to promote human rights, democracy, and gender equality online.

Lastly, the **United Kingdom** also provide an interesting example of how a gender-based approach is integrated into preventive policy against extremism and terrorism. According to the United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism, and Counter-Extremism Strategy, the government underlines the following main points. *First*, understanding and collaborating in partnerships with individuals, groups, and communities from different backgrounds including gender, ethnicity, religion, and social background as part of an effort to promote social inclusiveness. This includes addressing the promotion of hatred, the erosion of women's rights, the spread of intolerance, and the isolation of certain communities. *Second*, collaborating with industries and the legal enforcers to remove extremist materials targeting women and youth. *Third*, strengthening and supporting places of worships to increase their capacity to engage with women and young people, challenging intolerance, as well as building resilience against extremism. *Fourth*, addressing violence against women and girls and actively delivering a comprehensive program to prevent female genital mutilation as well as forced marriage.

Based on the above framework, the UK has established initiatives and programs in collaboration with grassroots organizations that focuses on outreach to people who are perceived most vulnerable in society including women. Examples include Inspire and Women Against Radicalisation Network or WARN. Women that had faced social issues as a result of culture practices such as forced marriages, honor killings, and domestic violence were included in policy-making process of the government (Seran

de Leede et al., 2017) to gain an understanding of the social issues and suggest ways to address them. Eventually, the government endorsed initiatives to empower women as role models and increase their civil participation (Rashid, 2014).

What can Indonesia learn from these examples?

From the examples above, we can extract two findings. *First*, the gender-based approach to preventing terrorism is concretized by promoting gender equality in the context of social and community issues often experienced by women. Reverting to the study by Skjelsbaek *et.al.* which suggests that gendered roles can be used as prevention models in families and communities, the examples above show how European states attempt to empower women's role by reinforcing their rights and their protection against gender-motivated discrimination. Gender equality is important to be included in preventive policies against terrorism because the social construction of gender, the changes in gender relations, and women's empowerment in terrorist groups constitute a global phenomenon that affects the security sector (Bloom & Lokmanoglu, 2020).

The prevailing assumption is that if gender equality is not addressed properly, women who experience oppression or inequality may turn to extremist group seeking for empowerment. As argued by Pearson and Winterbotham, women and girls who do not feel heard or recognized could be more vulnerable to radicalism (Pearson & Winterbotham, 2017). This hypothesis was also addressed by Narozhna and Knight who put forward two main theories to explain the reason behind female suicide bombings. The first theory is the "romantic dupe" which interprets women's involvement in bombings in sexualized terms. The second theory is the feminist warrior that is based on the assumption that female suicide bombers are fighting for political equality and women's rights (Narozhna & Knight, 2016). Similarly, the Interview also revealed that promises or narratives of women empowerment offered by extremist groups are often used to attract women. Further, Bloom and Lokmanoglu argued that the notion where women are equal to men in violent "jihad" has become popular among extremist ideologues, providing an avenue for women to express their national, religious, or individual identities (Bloom & Lokmanoglu, 2020).

At the international level, gender equality has been acknowledged as an integral part to prevent violent extremism. In this regard, several points can be highlighted from the UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism which was adopted in 2015. *First*, gender inequality in the context of socioeconomic opportunities, marginalization, and discrimination, poor governance, violations of human rights, and the rule of law is perceived to be conditions conducive to violent extremism. *Second*, achieving gender equality and empowerment for women and girls is expected as one of the means to address the root causes of violent extremism, and subsequently, terrorism. *Third*, therefore, national plans should fortify the social compact against violent extremism by promoting respect for the principle of equality which includes equal protection in all government-citizen relations. *Fourth*, in doing so, states are encouraged to convene both regional and national dialogues on preventing violent extremism with a range of actors on a variety of issues related to violent extremism, which includes gender equality. According to research by Brookings Institute, there are several indicators that can be used to see how far gender equality is embodied within the social sphere. Those indicators are: 1) gender parity in primary, secondary, and tertiary enrollment (socio-economic); 2) seats occupied by women in parliament

(political); 3) unmet need for family planning (social); 4) contraceptive use by women (social); 5) employment rate of women (socio-economic); and 6) literacy rate for women (socio-economic) (Couture, 2014). This indicates that the gender-based approach in the framework of preventing violent extremism and terrorism is a cross-cutting issue.

Second, the role of CSOs is crucial to ensure gender perspective within preventive policies and regulations against violent extremism and terrorism due to their ability to bridge between communities and central government. Communities must be considered in preventive policies because the involvement of local actors including social programs, teachers, friends and families could create an environment conducive to social control. However, without a bridge to connect the communities to the central government, their needs could be left unattended. In this context, institutions, including CSOs, are the ones who create conditions that can facilitate or otherwise undermine the possibilities for empowerment (USAID, 2012). As seen above, building constructive collaboration between government and CSOs or NGOs have been one of the key strategies implemented by European states in the framework of preventing violent extremism and terrorism, as in Austria, France, Netherlands, and United Kingdom. Furthermore, in relation to building dialogue between the government and CSOs, according to the Interview, CSOs have been putting efforts to collaborate with the government to mainstream gender under the framework of WPS. Working groups were put into place in 2017 to join forces between CSOs and the government on preventive efforts as well as reintegration and rehabilitation measures. In this context, the CSOs operate to support governmental efforts. The working group succeeded in pressuring gender mainstreaming as can be seen in the RANPE that explicitly included gender mainstreaming as part of the planning and implementation process of preventing terrorism.

According to the Interview, there are two issues that need to be given attention in order to fully and effectively integrate the gender-based approach within preventive policies against terrorism. *First*, dialogue between governments and CSOs must continue to maintain momentum. Cooperation between these two parties is a form of a soft approach to countering violent extremism as well as terrorism. The soft approach encompasses a range of instruments that may directly or indirectly generate social change, as opposed to the hard approach which is oriented in legal, economic, and even military measures (Aly, Balbi, & Jacques, 2015). In this sense, the hard approach treats counter-terrorism as a security issue with social implications. In contrast, the soft approach treats counter-terrorism as a social issue with security implications (Aly et al., 2015) and seeks to address the root causes of terrorism. Following this definition, cooperation between government and CSOs constitutes a soft approach where, on one hand, CSOs are capable of providing insights based on the social situation and condition that exist in the field that may be found to be conducive to violent extremism or even terrorism. On the other hand, the government has the capacity to navigate regulatory framework related to the security implications based on the knowledge they receive from the CSOs.

Second, it is worth reiterating that regional policies in Southeast Asia do exist providing the basis for the gender-based approach to preventing and countering terrorism in Indonesia. However, in contrast to the relationship between the European Union and its Member States, the policies provided by ASEAN are the

recommendations at best which leave the ASEAN Member States to further concretize the recommendations by means of legally binding instruments. In this sense, the RANPE needs to be supported by executing policies, regulations, as well as tools in all levels of government that place women as agents of peace to prevent radicalism and terrorism. This also means including more women in the governmental structure that works on issues of radicalism and terrorism, as well as engaging and including women community figures in a social context. One area that is often overlooked is the practical details that could otherwise negatively affect the course of preventive efforts. For example, socializing radicalism in women's prayer groups and being attentive to the different needs of incarcerated women and children. The executing policies and regulations also need to start treating the prevention of terrorism as a cross-cutting issue as opposed to being a mere concern of security. From the perspective of gender, this means several points. First, strengthening the protection and fulfillment of the rights of women particularly in areas where discrimination commonly occur against them. Second, strengthening efforts to empower women in familial and socio-economic context. Both points would require the collaboration between government and CSOs.

CONCLUSION

Based on this study, a gender-based approach in counter-terrorism could be conceptualized as the following. First, treating gender as a cross-cutting issue between countering terrorism and human rights, particularly in the conflict and social context. For example, in a conflict situation, a gender-based approach could be instrumental to identify and enhance the protection of women, especially against terrorist networks. In the social context, addressing discrimination and inequality could contribute to preventing women from engaging in terrorism. Second, a gender-based approach should aim for empowerment or building the capacity of women so that they could be the agents of peace in their communities against terrorism. Third, enhancing women's participation in policy- and decision-making processes to ensure the perspectives of both men and women are accommodated, as per the CEDAW General Recommendation No. 7 of 2013 and the WPS agenda.

It is also important to mention that to fully integrate a gender-based approach in counter-terrorism, the fundamental modalities need to exist. Firstly, an executing regulatory framework to support the RANPE to navigate how a gender-based approach could be practiced and to assign which institution that could spearhead the implementation. Second, the collaborative relationship between the government and CSOs that could start with constructive and non-incident dialogues.

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