

BIAK WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN VILLAGE FUND MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF SORYAR VILLAGE, EAST BIAK DISTRICT, BIAK NUMFOR REGENCY, PAPUA

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INFO ARTIKEL	ABSTRAK
Diterima: 16 Juni 2026 Direvisi: 27 Juli 2026 Disetujui: 11 Agustus 2026 Tersedia Daring: 10 September 2026 Kata Kunci: Partisipasi Perempuan; Pengelolaan Dana Desa; Kesetaraan Gender; Pemberdayaan Perempuan.	Penelitian ini menganalisis partisipasi perempuan Biak dalam pengelolaan Dana Desa di Desa Soryar, Distrik Biak Timur, Kabupaten Biak Numfor, Papua, dengan fokus pada bentuk keterlibatan, pengaruh, hambatan, dan peluang penguatan partisipasi perempuan dalam pembangunan kampung. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan enam informan yang dipilih purposive, terdiri atas perempuan yang terlibat dalam kegiatan dan musyawarah kampung serta pihak yang mengetahui proses pengelolaan Dana Desa. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi, dianalisis melalui kondensasi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Tingkat partisipasi dianalisis menggunakan <i>Arnstein Ladder of Citizen Participation</i> berdasarkan kemampuan perempuan menyampaikan aspirasi, memengaruhi keputusan, memperoleh kewenangan, dan mengendalikan pengelolaan Dana Desa. Hasil menunjukkan perempuan memiliki pengetahuan lokal dan peran penting dalam mengidentifikasi kebutuhan pembangunan, terutama terkait keluarga, pendidikan, kesehatan, ekonomi, pangan, dan kesejahteraan masyarakat. Perempuan telah memperoleh akses untuk hadir dalam musyawarah, menyampaikan aspirasi, terlibat dalam pelaksanaan, dan menerima manfaat pembangunan. Namun, terdapat kesenjangan antara keterlibatan perempuan dan kemampuan memengaruhi keputusan strategis. Partisipasi relatif lebih kuat pada pelaksanaan dan penerimaan manfaat, sedangkan pengambilan keputusan, pengawasan, dan evaluasi masih terbatas. Berdasarkan tangga Arnstein, partisipasi perempuan cenderung berada pada tingkat consultation dan placation, belum mencapai partnership, delegated power, maupun citizen control. Hambatan utama meliputi dominasi laki-laki, keterbatasan akses informasi dan literasi anggaran, keterbatasan kapasitas, dan beban ganda domestik-publik. Penelitian menyimpulkan perempuan Biak di Soryar telah menjadi aktor sosial aktif, namun partisipasinya belum sepenuhnya berkembang menjadi kekuasaan substantif. Penguatan literasi anggaran, keterwakilan perempuan, Forum Perempuan Kampung, transparansi, dan musyawarah inklusif diperlukan mendorong partisipasi lebih substantif, berpengaruh, dan memberdayakan.

ABSTRACT
Keywords: <i>Women's Participation; Village Fund Management; Gender Equality; Women's Empowerment.</i> <i>This study analyzes Biak women's participation in Village Fund management in Soryar Village, East Biak District, Biak Numfor Regency, Papua, focusing on forms of involvement, influence, barriers, and opportunities for strengthening women's participation in village development. The study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with six</i>

purposively selected informants: women involved in village activities and deliberations, and parties familiar with Village Fund management. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, analyzed through data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. Participation level was analyzed using Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation based on women's ability to convey aspirations, influence decisions, obtain authority, and control Village Fund management. Results show women possess local knowledge and an important role in identifying development needs, related to family, education, health, economy, food, and community welfare. Women have gained access to attend deliberations, convey aspirations, be involved in implementation, and receive development benefits. However, a gap exists between women's involvement and their ability to influence strategic decisions. Participation is stronger in implementation and benefit-receiving, while decision-making, oversight, and evaluation remain limited. Based on the Arnstein ladder, participation tends toward consultation and placation, not yet reaching partnership, delegated power, or citizen control. Main barriers include male dominance, limited access to information and budget literacy, limited capacity, and the domestic-public double burden. Biak women in Soryar have become active social actors, though participation has not fully developed into substantive power. Strengthening budget literacy, representation, the Village Women's Forum, transparency, and inclusive deliberation are needed to foster empowering participation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Community development at the local level is an essential component of efforts to promote social welfare and improve the quality of life of local communities. In this context, the existence of government institutions at the level closest to the community is particularly important, as they play a key role in identifying community needs, planning development initiatives, and delivering public services. Villages, or other locally used designations (referred to as *kampung* in the context of Papua), constitute a strategically important level of government in community development (Ilham et al., 2020).

The provision of Village Funds has created substantial opportunities for village governments to accelerate development, improve the quality of public services, strengthen community empowerment, and enhance community welfare. According to Wardan (2026), Village Funds constitute a strategic instrument for implementing national development policies, aimed at improving community welfare, reducing poverty, strengthening economic capacity at the local level, and promoting village self-reliance.

The success of Village Fund management is determined not merely by the size of the budget or the capacity of village governments to manage public finances (Hutabarat et al., 2022). Equally important is the extent to which communities are actively involved throughout all stages of Village Fund management, including needs identification,

planning, decision-making, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (Hatu et al., 2024). Furthermore, Fetomalae et al. (2024) argue that the extensive delegation of authority over Village Fund management needs to be accompanied by effective, optimal, and high-quality internal oversight to ensure that budget management is implemented in accordance with applicable regulations.

In the context of community participation, women constitute a social group with a direct interest in both the processes and outcomes of village development (Sittah et al., 2025). Women play vital roles in family life, child education, health, economic activities, household management, social activities, and various forms of community engagement (Tuwu, 2018). Thus, women should not be positioned merely as beneficiaries of development, but also as development actors who are provided with opportunities to participate in decision-making processes (Frank et al., 2024; Sofiani, 2013).

In Biak society, women occupy an important position in social and family life. They actively participate in various social, economic, and cultural activities, as well as in family caregiving. However, these roles and positions have not always been accompanied by a commensurate level of women's involvement in public decision-making processes, including Village Fund management. This situation indicates that women's roles in community life have not yet been fully reflected in their proportional participation in determining the direction and priorities of village development (Leni et al., 2026).

In Soryar Village, the management of Village Funds constitutes an important instrument for addressing various community needs. Village Funds can be utilized to support infrastructure development, the improvement of basic public services, community empowerment, economic strengthening, education, health, and various social and community activities. However, a key issue concerns the extent to which women in Soryar Village have the space and opportunities to participate in determining the allocation and use of Village Funds. The presence of women in village deliberations does not necessarily indicate that they have meaningful influence over the decision-making process. Therefore, it is important to examine whether women are able to express their aspirations and influence decisions, whether women's needs and interests have been incorporated into development priorities, and whether women have opportunities to monitor the use of Village Funds.

These questions indicate that research on women's participation should not be limited to examining women's presence in development processes, but should also assess the quality and extent of their participation and whether such participation exerts a meaningful influence on decision-making processes.

Using Arnstein (1969) Ladder of Citizen Participation, participation can be understood as a process involving different levels, ranging from the lowest to the highest degree of participation. The presence of women in a forum does not automatically indicate that they are participating substantively. Higher levels of participation occur when women have opportunities to express their views, influence decision-making processes, occupy positions in which they can shape decisions, and exercise control over development processes.

Meanwhile, Cohen and Uphoff (1980) approach enables participation to be analyzed across several stages, namely involvement in decision-making, implementation, receipt or utilization of development outcomes, and evaluation. Furthermore, gender equality in development processes, as stipulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19 of 2010, can be assessed through four indicators: access, participation, control, and benefits.

Previous studies show that the Village Fund has opened space for women in development, but their involvement has not always resulted in substantive influence in decision-making. Nubzatsania and Siwi (2020) found a gap in access and women's participation, while Kushandajani and Alfirdaus (2019) showed the continued dominance of village heads and low priority given to gender issues. Syukri (2023) asserted that participatory village governance has not fully transformed gender relations, while Sofyan and Arenggoasih (2022) found elite dominance and women's subordination in the formulation of the Village Fund. Indriyany et al. (2025) also showed that women play a greater role in meeting social needs than in influencing the development agenda. These findings reveal a gap in the lack of clarity regarding how women, particularly in Papuan indigenous communities, obtain access, influence decisions, and control Village Fund management. This study offers novelty by analyzing the quality of Biak women's participation in Soryar Village through the aspects of access, participation, control, and benefits, thereby providing an empirical contribution regarding the gap between formal participation and women's substantive influence in Village Fund governance in the context of Papuan indigenous communities.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Community Participation

Community participation refers to the involvement of community members in development processes that concern their interests and needs. According to Muhammad, as cited in Sapri et al. (2019), community participation involves the engagement of community members in decision-making processes, the utilization of various resources, and efforts to address problems related to their interests and everyday lives.

Community participation in development can be understood as the active involvement of individuals and groups throughout various stages of the development process through contributions in the form of ideas, labor, time, expertise, and material resources (Sumaryadi, in Ginting et al., 2024). Participation should not be understood merely as attendance at an activity, but also encompasses the capacity and opportunities of community members to express their aspirations, participate in decision-making, implement activities, exercise oversight, evaluate development outcomes, and benefit from the development process.

In the context of this study, women's participation is understood as women's involvement in various stages of Village Fund management, ranging from identifying and determining community needs, participating in the planning of Village Fund allocation

and utilization, taking part in decision-making processes, implementing programs or activities, monitoring budget utilization, evaluating development outcomes, and benefiting from Village Funds.

2.2 Arnstein's Ladder of Participation Theory

The Ladder of Citizen Participation theory was introduced by Sherry R. Arnstein in 1969. The theory explains community participation in terms of the degree of power that citizens possess to influence planning and decision-making processes. Arnstein conceptualizes participation as a ladder consisting of eight levels or rungs, ranging from forms of participation that are merely symbolic to levels that provide citizens with genuine power in decision-making. Thus, the higher citizens are positioned on the ladder of participation, the greater their influence and power in the decision-making process (Arnstein, 1969).

Arnstein (1969) categorizes the eight levels of participation into three main groups: nonparticipation, tokenism, and citizen power. The three lowest levels represent forms of nonparticipation, the next two levels constitute tokenism, while the three highest levels reflect the exercise of citizen power in decision-making processes. Participation can be understood as occurring across eight progressively deeper levels, ranging from those that offer citizens little more than the appearance of involvement to those that grant them genuine authority over decisions affecting their lives.

At the lowest level, manipulation, citizens have no real opportunity to influence decisions, and their involvement is largely symbolic, often used by those in power to lend legitimacy to a program or policy. The second level, therapy, similarly offers citizens the appearance of involvement, but its real aim is to change their attitudes or behavior rather than to grant them any actual power in decision making. At the third level, informing, citizens begin receiving information about plans, programs, rights, and decisions that affect their interests, yet this communication remains largely one way, leaving citizens with little real opportunity to shape outcomes.

The fourth level, consultation, allows citizens to voice their views, aspirations, or input through forums, surveys, and meetings, though there is no guarantee that this input will actually be considered or reflected in final decisions. At the fifth level, placation, citizens gain somewhat greater opportunities to participate, sometimes through representatives placed on decision-making bodies, but ultimate authority still rests firmly with those in formal power.

The sixth level, partnership, marks a shift toward genuine shared responsibility, as citizens and power holders begin negotiating and cooperating as more equal parties in planning and decision making. At the seventh level, delegated power, citizens are granted substantial authority over specific plans or programs, giving them meaningful influence over the decisions ultimately made. Finally, at the eighth and highest level, citizen control, citizens hold full authority to determine programs, make decisions, manage processes, and oversee activities affecting their interests, exercising genuine control over the course of development.

In simple terms, Arnstein's eight levels of participation can be illustrated as follows:

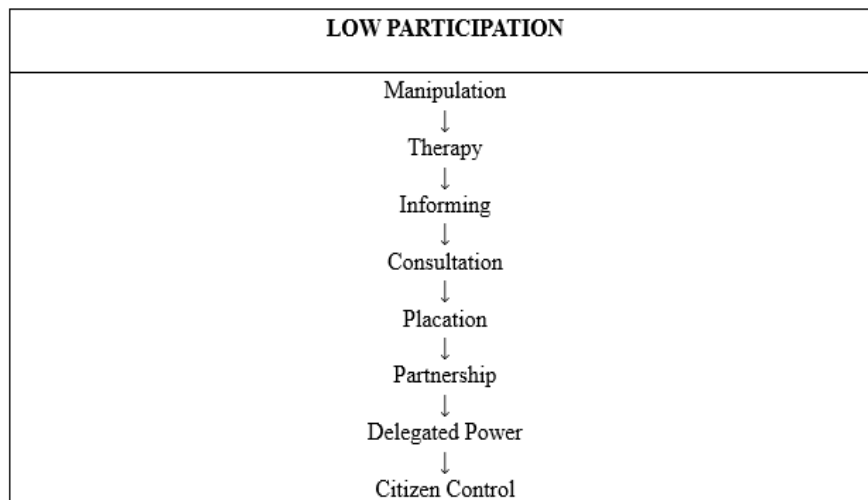


Figure 1. Arnstein's eight levels of participation
Source: Arnstein (1969)

This theory is highly relevant for analyzing the quality of Soryar women's participation, particularly in determining whether their involvement in Village Fund management is merely formalistic or whether it has provided women with meaningful opportunities to exercise genuine influence and power in the decision-making process.

2.3 Cohen and Uphoff's Theory of Participation

Cohen and Uphoff (1980) conceptualize community participation as the involvement of community members across various stages of the development process. Participation is not limited to community involvement in decision-making but also encompasses participation in the implementation of activities, the utilization of development outcomes, and evaluation. Accordingly, participation can be examined comprehensively, from the initial stages through to the final stages of the development process. Cohen and Uphoff (1980) identify four main forms of community participation, namely:

Participation in Decision-Making

Participation in decision-making refers to the involvement of community members in identifying needs, establishing priorities, formulating plans, and making decisions related to development programs. In the context of this study, this dimension is used to assess the extent to which women are involved in identifying community needs, expressing their aspirations, participating in village deliberations, and influencing decisions regarding the allocation and utilization of Village Funds.

Participation in Implementation

Participation in implementation refers to the involvement of community members in carrying out planned development programs and activities. Such involvement may take the form of contributions of labor, time, skills, resources, and participation in various activities financed through the Village Fund. In this study, this dimension is used

to assess women's involvement in the implementation of village development programs and activities.

Participation in Benefits

Participation in benefits refers to the involvement of community members in accessing and utilizing the outcomes of development initiatives. These benefits may include material benefits as well as social and economic benefits and improved access to services resulting from development programs. In the context of this study, this dimension is used to assess the extent to which women in Soryar Village access and experience the benefits of programs funded through the Village Fund, as well as whether these benefits adequately address women's needs in Soryar Village.

Participation in Evaluation

Participation in evaluation refers to the involvement of community members in assessing the implementation and outcomes of development initiatives. Evaluation provides opportunities for community members to assess programs, express criticisms and suggestions, and provide feedback on implemented activities. In this study, this dimension is used to assess the extent to which women are involved in monitoring and evaluating the implementation and outcomes of Village Fund utilization, as well as in providing input on its effectiveness and relevance to community needs.

Based on these four forms of participation, Cohen and Uphoff's (1980) theory provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing women's participation in Village Fund management, encompassing the stages of decision-making, program implementation, the utilization of development benefits, and evaluation. This framework also enables the study to identify the stages at which women actively participate and the stages where their participation remains limited.

In the context of Soryar Village, Cohen and Uphoff's (1980) theory is particularly important because it explains the processes and forms of women's participation, while Arnstein's Ladder of Participation is used to assess the level and quality of women's influence and decision-making power within that participation. Accordingly, these two theoretical perspectives complement one another in providing a more comprehensive analysis of Biak women's participation in Village Fund management.

2.4 Gender Equality

Gender issues arise from gender disparities that may result in discrimination or insufficient attention to the interests and needs of either men or women. Such discrimination can contribute to conditions of gender inequality (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia, 2010). This study employs four main indicators to analyze gender equality in the development process, as stipulated in Regulation of the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia No. 19 of 2010. The first indicator, access, refers to the opportunities available to both men and women to access various resources, opportunities, and facilities associated with a particular activity or program. The second, participation, refers to the involvement of both men and women in taking part in the implementation of a particular activity or program. The third, control, refers to the

capacity and role of both men and women in exercising oversight and participating in decision-making processes related to a particular activity or program. The fourth, benefits, refers to the opportunities and capacities of both men and women to receive, obtain, and utilize the outcomes generated by a particular activity or program. Together, these four indicators are used to identify and analyze gender-related issues and disparities that arise throughout the development process.

3. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. Qualitative research is a research procedure that generates descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words obtained from individuals and through the observation of their behavior (Moleong, in Sapioper et al., 2021). The qualitative approach was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of women's experiences, perspectives, and involvement in Village Fund management, while the descriptive research design was used to describe the phenomenon based on the conditions observed in the field (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with purposive sampling technique. Informants were selected based on their involvement and knowledge regarding Village Fund management and women's participation in development in Soryar Village, East Biak District. Informants included women from the village community and parties involved in the planning, deliberation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation process of the Village Fund. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted using open-ended questions to explore informants' experiences, views, and involvement in Village Fund management, while observation was used to obtain information regarding the process and activities of women's participation. Documentation was used as supporting data, such as planning documents, deliberation outcomes, and documents related to Village Fund management.

Data were analyzed descriptively through the stages of data organization, coding, theme grouping, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. The main codes and themes included needs identification, village deliberation, decision-making, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, benefits, barriers, and budget literacy. The data were then analyzed using Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation and the participation dimensions of Cohen and Uphoff to identify the level and forms of women's participation. Data credibility was strengthened through source and technique triangulation, namely comparing information from various informants with the results of observation and documentation. The coding and data comparison process was carried out repeatedly to ensure that the interpretation of findings remained consistent with the information provided by informants.

The study was conducted in Soryar Village, East Biak District, Biak Numfor Regency, Indonesia. Informants were selected using purposive sampling and included village government officials, members of the Village Consultative Body (Bamuskam/Bumdes),

community leaders, women leaders, and women involved in Village Fund management. Purposive sampling was employed based on the consideration that the selected informants possessed relevant knowledge, experience, or involvement related to the focus of the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The data consisted of primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews and direct observation, while secondary data were obtained from documents related to the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of Village Fund management. The use of multiple data sources and data collection techniques was intended to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data analysis involved three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The analysis was conducted continuously throughout the research process, beginning with data collection and continuing until patterns and meanings relevant to the research focus were identified (Miles et al., 2018). Data trustworthiness was established through source and method triangulation to enhance the credibility of the findings and ensure that the information obtained was adequately substantiated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Role and Participation of Women in Village Fund Management in Soryar Village

Women's participation in village development in Soryar Village is closely connected to their everyday roles within families and the broader community. Their involvement extends beyond domestic responsibilities and encompasses various social, economic, educational, religious, and community-based activities. These roles provide women with practical experience and knowledge of the needs and challenges faced by their families and communities. The findings indicate that women in Soryar Village play a relatively important role in the social life of the community.

Interview with Maria Faidiban revealed that women are not only responsible for domestic roles within their families but are also actively involved in various social and economic activities, child education, religious activities, and other community-based initiatives. She further explained that women possess direct knowledge and practical experience concerning children's education, family health, household economic needs, food security, access to clean water, social facilities, and other needs affecting women as a social group (Interview, 7 August 2026).

However, women's close engagement with these issues and community needs has not been fully reflected in their position and influence in decision-making processes concerning Village Fund management. Their involvement in community social life does not automatically translate into equal opportunities to determine the direction and priorities of Village Fund utilization.

The findings reveal a gap between women's involvement in social and community life and their participation in public decision-making. Women are relatively more likely

to be involved as beneficiaries and implementers of development activities. However, when participation extends to strategic domains, such as determining budget priorities, making decisions, monitoring, and evaluating Village Fund utilization, their opportunities for involvement and their influence remain relatively limited. This condition indicates that women's significant roles in community life have not yet been fully accompanied by meaningful participation in determining the direction and priorities of Village Fund management.

Based on the ladder of participation framework (Arnstein, 1969), which divides citizen participation into three categories: nonparticipation (manipulation, therapy), tokenism (informing, consultation, placation), and citizen power (partnership, delegated power, citizen control). In the first two categories, citizens are involved to be heard or asked for their opinions, but final decisions remain in the hands of those holding power; only in the third category do citizens genuinely hold control over planning and decision-making (Bammer, 2022). Based on the findings in Soryar Village, women's position tends to fall between the informing and placation levels, involved as beneficiaries and implementers, occasionally asked for their opinions, but not yet reaching the level of partnership or delegated power in determining budget priorities and Village Fund oversight.

This finding is consistent with the study by Monica and Fauziah (2017), which showed women involved at the planning stage but not to the point of substantially advocating for their interests, and at the implementation stage only carrying out technical roles. A similar pattern was also reported in a study on gender inequality in NTT, where structural barriers such as patriarchal norms and limited access continued to constrain women's participation despite their increasing involvement in village forums (Chika et al., 2025). Compared to these studies, the contribution of this study lies in the explicit mapping of women's participation position onto the levels of the Arnstein ladder, thereby clarifying that the issue is not merely whether participation exists, but the quality of power that women genuinely hold within that process.

4.2 The Role of Women in Identifying Village Needs

Women in Soryar Village play an important role in identifying various community needs. Their close proximity to family life and everyday social activities provides them with direct knowledge and practical experience of the challenges faced by the community. These needs include children's education, maternal and child health, household food security, access to clean water, household economic needs, livelihood activities, the needs of women's groups, educational facilities, family protection, and other social needs within the community.

This close engagement places women in a strategic position to identify development-related problems, particularly those originating at the household level. Women possess local knowledge of the needs and challenges experienced by families and community groups. Such knowledge constitutes an important source of information for

the planning process and for determining development priorities financed through the Village Fund.

The findings indicate that women in Soryar Village have opportunities to express their needs and concerns through village forums. However, such involvement has not yet fully provided women with the opportunity to determine whether the needs they raise will be established as priorities in Village Fund utilization. Thus, women's participation at the needs-identification stage primarily reflects their involvement in expressing aspirations rather than their involvement in determining final decisions.

This finding is reflected in the statement of one informant, Maria Faidiban, who explained that women provide responses when they are asked during meetings and express their needs in accordance with the questions raised (Interview, 7 August 2026). This condition indicates that women have been given space to provide information and articulate their needs; however, their initiative and influence in determining the discussion agenda remain limited.

Based on these findings, women's participation in identifying village needs can be characterized as consultative participation. Women have opportunities to express their opinions and needs, but they do not yet possess sufficient power to determine which needs should be prioritized in decision-making concerning Village Fund utilization. This illustrates a distinction between having an opportunity to express aspirations and having the capacity to influence decisions.

Conceptually, the Arnstein ladder of participation consists of eight rungs divided into three main categories: nonparticipation (manipulation and therapy), tokenism (informing, consultation, and placation), and citizen power (partnership, delegated power, and citizen control/oversight) (Arnstein, 1969). At the consultation stage, citizens, in this case the women of Soryar Village, are given space to express opinions through surveys, forums, or deliberations, but there is no guarantee that these aspirations will influence the final decision (Arnstein, 1969). The placation stage is slightly higher because citizens are included in certain bodies or forums, but decision-making power remains dominated by those holding authority. Conversely, at the partnership stage, power begins to be distributed through negotiation between citizens and power holders, for example through a joint planning body; at the delegated power stage, citizens obtain dominant authority over specific programs; and at the highest stage, citizen control, the community holds full control over policy and its management. Based on this framework, the position of Soryar Village women in the needs identification stage lies at the consultation rung, because they obtain the opportunity to convey aspirations through village forums, but do not yet have control over decisions regarding the priorities for use of the Village Fund.

This finding is consistent with a number of previous studies that also place women's participation in village fund management at the tokenism level. A study in Jeblog Village, Blitar Regency, for example, showed that women's participation at the planning stage was at the placation rung, although at the implementation and budgeting stages it actually increased to delegated power and partnership (Baihati et al., 2021).

Similarly, a study in Berakit Village found variation in women's participation between the delegated power, placation, and consultation rungs at the planning and village fund management stages (Nurhalimah, 2018). Meanwhile, a study in Marisi Village asserted that community participation, including women's groups, in village deliberation remains stuck at the consultation and placation rungs, because the space to convey aspirations is not accompanied by real power in decision-making (Harahap, 2026). The similarity between these findings and the results of this study confirms a general pattern that women's participation in village fund management in various regions tends to stop at the tokenism level, particularly consultation. However, this study offers a new contribution by showing that in the context of Soryar Village, this limitation occurs consistently at the needs identification stage even though women possess local knowledge that is highly relevant to household-based development planning, a gap between women's substantive capacity and the formal space of power available to them, which has not been extensively highlighted explicitly in previous studies.

4.3 Women's Role in Village Deliberations

Village deliberations constitute an important forum for development planning and decision-making. The findings indicate that women in Soryar Village have been given opportunities to attend and participate in village deliberation forums. However, the findings also reveal a distinction between women's presence in the forum and their ability to influence the decisions produced through the deliberation process.

Several conditions may constrain women's substantive involvement in village deliberations, including: (1) a deliberative culture that remains predominantly male-dominated; (2) some women's lack of confidence in expressing their views in front of other forum participants; (3) women's limited experience in government and decision-making processes; (4) insufficient technical understanding of planning and budgeting processes among some women; (5) strategic decisions being discussed primarily among village leaders or local elites; and (6) domestic responsibilities that prevent some women from participating throughout the entire deliberation process.

These conditions indicate that providing women with access to village deliberation forums does not automatically constitute power sharing. Women's presence primarily reflects formal access to decision-making spaces, whereas *power sharing* requires substantive capacity to articulate interests, influence the agenda, negotiate, participate in decision-making, exercise oversight over implementation, and ensure that development decisions generate equitable benefits for women.

Interview with Hendrika W. further revealed that women's participation in village deliberations continues to face these limitations. Although women have opportunities to attend meetings and express their views, such opportunities have not yet been fully accompanied by the capacity to influence the substance of decisions (Interview, 5 August 2026). This finding is further supported by the accounts of other women interviewed in Soryar Village. Interviews with Selfina Naa and Rosina Korwa similarly indicated that women's participation in village deliberations remains limited, particularly in terms of their ability to influence the substance of decisions (Interviews, 8 August 2026).

Accordingly, women's participation in village deliberations tends to remain at a limited level of involvement and may constitute symbolic participation or tokenism when their presence is not accompanied by meaningful influence over development decisions

4.4 Women's Participation in Decision-Making

Decision-making is a critical dimension for analyzing women's participation in Village Fund management. Participation at this stage is not limited to women's opportunities to express opinions or propose initiatives but also concerns the extent to which their views can influence the decisions ultimately reached.

In the context of Soryar Village, the findings indicate that women have been provided with opportunities to put forward proposals related to community needs. However, such involvement has not yet been accompanied by commensurate authority to determine final decisions. As explained by Yosian, the determination of deliberation outcomes remains largely in the hands of actors who hold strategic positions within the village government (Interviews, 10 August 2026).

This condition is further reflected in the statement of Aksamina:

"We usually do not make the decisions. The KPK administrators, the village head, and their staff are the ones who determine the outcome of our meetings." (Interviews, 10 August 2026).

The accounts of Yosian and Aksamina illustrate a gap between women's opportunities to participate in deliberative processes and their actual influence over decision outcomes. Although women have opportunities to express their views and participate in discussions, authority over final decision-making remains largely vested in other actors. Thus, access to deliberative spaces does not necessarily translate into substantive influence over decisions.

These findings indicate that women's participation in decision-making in Soryar Village has not yet become fully substantive. Although women have access to deliberative spaces, they do not yet possess equal authority to determine decision outcomes. From the perspective of Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation, this condition suggests that women's involvement remains limited and has not reached a level of citizen power that would enable them to exercise meaningful control over decisions.

Accordingly, women's participation in decision-making in Soryar Village can be understood as a process that has progressed beyond information provision and consultation toward greater involvement, but has not yet fully reached the level of partnership in decision-making. Women have been given space to articulate their aspirations; however, authority and influence over final decisions remain predominantly concentrated among the village government and other actors occupying strategic positions.

4.5 Women's Role in Village Fund Implementation

At the implementation stage, women's involvement in Village Fund management is more visible than at the decision-making stage. Women may be involved in various activities related to community empowerment, social affairs, education, health,

productive economic activities, women's groups, public services, and initiatives addressing household needs.

Interview with Maria Faidiban revealed that women are actively involved in various social and economic activities within the village, including activities related to family and community needs (Interview, 7 August 2026). This involvement demonstrates that women contribute directly to the implementation of activities that affect their families and the wider community.

In Soryar Village, women's involvement at the implementation stage tends to be more readily accepted because such roles are perceived as being directly related to social activities and family needs. This condition indicates that women have been provided with opportunities to make active contributions to the implementation of various programs financed through the Village Fund.

However, involvement as program implementers cannot be equated with involvement in decision-making. Women may play an active role in carrying out activities while not necessarily having equal authority to determine program design, budget allocation, or the direction of the programs to be implemented.

The findings from Soryar Village, East Biak District, indicate that this condition remains one of the challenges in promoting more substantive forms of women's participation. Women have opportunities to contribute to program implementation, but their opportunities to determine strategic decisions concerning programs and the utilization of Village Funds remain relatively limited. Therefore, strengthening women's participation cannot rely solely on involving them as program implementers; it also requires greater opportunities for women to participate meaningfully in planning and decision-making processes.

4.6 Women as Village Fund Monitors

Monitoring is an important aspect of Village Fund management. The findings indicate that women in Soryar Village have a strong interest in knowing and ensuring that Village Funds are utilized in accordance with the needs and interests of the community. Women's involvement in monitoring may take various forms, including participating in village deliberations, requesting information from the village government, observing the implementation of development activities, expressing concerns and criticisms, and providing input regarding both the implementation process and the outcomes of development programs.

Interview with Selfina Naa revealed that women's involvement in monitoring Village Fund management is constrained by limited access to information and a lack of understanding of monitoring mechanisms (Interviews, 8 August 2026). These limitations may reduce women's ability to obtain relevant information, assess the implementation of Village Fund programs, and exercise active oversight of development activities.

However, women's involvement in monitoring continues to face several challenges. These include limited access to information, insufficient understanding of budgeting processes, reluctance to express criticism toward village government officials, the dominance of certain actors in decision-making processes, and limited access to

budgetary documents and financial information. These conditions may constrain women's capacity to exercise active and substantive oversight of Village Fund management.

4.7 Strengthening Budget Literacy among Women in Soryar Village

In the context of Soryar Village, strengthening budget literacy is important because women's participation in development cannot be adequately demonstrated merely through their presence in village deliberations. Women need to possess the knowledge and capacity to understand how Village Funds are planned, allocated, implemented, and monitored. Budget literacy is not limited to the ability to understand financial figures or documents; it also encompasses the ability to access information, understand budgetary priorities, assess the alignment between budget allocations and community needs, raise questions and criticisms, and provide input regarding the utilization of Village Funds.

Accordingly, budget literacy can serve as an important instrument for women's empowerment. Knowledge and understanding of budgeting processes can strengthen women's position from merely being beneficiaries of development to becoming actors who are capable of articulating their aspirations, exercising oversight, and contributing to decisions concerning development policies and Village Fund utilization. The better women understand budgeting processes, the greater their opportunity to participate substantively in ensuring that Village Funds are utilized in accordance with community needs, including the specific needs of women.

Strengthening budget literacy among women in Soryar Village is therefore important for enhancing their position in village development governance. Women need to understand that village development is supported by financial resources that must be properly planned, managed, and accounted for in accordance with applicable regulations. This basic understanding includes knowledge of Village Funds, their objectives and utilization, the village budgeting process, the actors involved in budget preparation, the types of programs that may be financed, and the mechanisms available to community members for obtaining information about budget utilization.

Budgetary knowledge is important because limited access to information may cause women to depend on other actors who possess greater knowledge of and control over budgeting processes. Therefore, budget literacy should not be directed solely toward the ability to understand financial figures or documents but also toward developing women's understanding of the relationship between budget allocations and community needs.

Interview with Selfina Naa revealed that some women continue to have limited understanding of Village Fund mechanisms, the Village Budget (APB Kampung), development planning processes, monitoring mechanisms, and their rights to access information and participate in development (Interviews, 8 August 2026). This condition may limit women's ability to formulate proposals, articulate their interests, and exercise meaningful oversight over the utilization of Village Funds.

Women in Soryar Village need to be able to identify whether village budget priorities adequately address their needs and those of their families. These needs may

include women's economic enterprise development, skills training, children's education, maternal and child health, household food security, literacy activities, women's and children's protection, support for women's groups, and the provision of facilities that support women's social and economic activities. Accordingly, the budget ought not be regarded merely as a compilation of financial figures, but rather as a development instrument responsive to the needs and challenges confronting the community.

Budget literacy can also strengthen women's position in village deliberation forums. Women who possess an understanding of planning and budgeting processes have a stronger basis for articulating their aspirations. Their aspirations can move beyond general statements concerning women's needs and become connected to development priorities, specific programs, and budget allocations. This shift is important because it represents a transition from merely expressing needs to the ability to articulate needs in the language of planning and budgeting.

In addition to strengthening participation, budget literacy provides a foundation for women to exercise social oversight. Women need not only to know the amount of funding allocated but also to be able to question the programs being financed, the beneficiaries targeted, the consistency between plans and implementation, the use of funds, and the outcomes generated. In this context, women can contribute to monitoring whether development activities genuinely correspond to community needs and generate equitable benefits, including for women.

Ultimately, strengthening budget literacy is intended to promote a transformation in women's position, from merely being beneficiaries to becoming actors capable of monitoring and influencing development decisions. Before acquiring an adequate understanding of budgeting, women may tend to depend on information provided by other actors, thereby limiting their ability to express their views and influence decisions. Conversely, with greater budget literacy, women are expected to be able to understand development priorities, identify needs, formulate proposals, articulate their aspirations in deliberation forums, question policies and budget allocations, exercise oversight, and assess development outcomes.

In the context of Soryar Village, budget literacy strengthening is undertaken through village women's forums, basic training sessions, group discussions, and mentoring. The process is implemented progressively, beginning with introducing the Village Fund, understanding village development plans, identifying budget priorities, identifying women's needs, formulating proposals, presenting proposals in deliberation forums, monitoring implementation, and evaluating development outcomes.

Accordingly, budget literacy strengthening in this study is not positioned merely as an administrative training activity but as part of a broader process of community education and empowerment. The study also provides opportunities for collaboration with the community through budget literacy initiatives for women in Soryar Village. Through this process, knowledge of budgeting is expected to become a resource that strengthens women's position in the village development process.

The better women understand how budgets are planned, allocated, implemented, and monitored, the greater their opportunities to participate substantively in decision-making. Thus, budget literacy can serve as a bridge from formal participation toward participation characterized by meaningful influence and control over village development.

The central premise of this strengthening initiative is that women who lack knowledge of budgeting are less able to influence budgetary decisions. Conversely, women who understand budgeting processes possess the knowledge base necessary to ask questions, formulate proposals, exercise oversight, and contribute to determining the direction of development in Soryar Village.

4.8 Women's Role in Evaluation

Evaluation is an important stage in Village Fund management for assessing the extent to which development programs and activities have been implemented and whether they have produced outcomes that correspond to community needs. At this stage, women occupy vital position as they can provide assessments based on their experiences and the benefits they directly perceive in their families and communities.

Women can assess various aspects of development, particularly those related to the benefits of programs for families, education, health, economic conditions, social facilities, community empowerment, and the needs of children and vulnerable groups. Such involvement enables development to be assessed not merely on the basis of whether an activity has been implemented, but also on the extent to which it generates tangible benefits for the community.

However, the findings indicate that formal evaluation processes are still predominantly conducted through village government mechanisms. Opportunities for community members, particularly women, to assess development outcomes remain in need of strengthening. This condition indicates that women do not yet have adequate opportunities to articulate their experiences, criticisms, and assessments concerning the achievements and shortcomings of implemented programs.

Interview with Selfina Naa further revealed that women's limited understanding of Village Fund mechanisms, development planning, monitoring, and access to information also affects their opportunities to become actively involved in assessing development outcomes (Interviews, 8 August 2026). This limitation may reduce women's capacity to critically assess whether Village Fund programs have been implemented appropriately and whether their outcomes correspond to community needs.

Therefore, women should be provided with greater opportunities to participate in participatory evaluation. Through participatory evaluation, women are positioned not merely as beneficiaries of development but also as actors capable of assessing outcomes, sharing their experiences, identifying shortcomings, and providing input for improving subsequent programs. In this way, development evaluation can move beyond the perspective of the village government alone and incorporate the experiences and assessments of community members as beneficiaries, including women.

4.9 Benefits of the Village Fund for Women

One of the important findings of this study is that women's participation in Village Fund management should not be assessed solely in terms of their involvement in planning, decision-making, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, but also in terms of the benefits received and experienced by women. Development financed through the Village Fund is ultimately expected to generate benefits that correspond to community needs, including the specific needs of women.

The benefits of the Village Fund for women in Soryar Village can be observed across several areas. First, the economic dimension. Empowerment programs and productive economic activities can provide women with opportunities to improve their skills, develop livelihoods or small businesses, and generate or increase household income. Second, the educational dimension. Support for children's education benefits women, particularly in fulfilling their roles as mothers and family caregivers. The availability of educational support can also help reduce the burden on families in meeting children's educational needs.

Interview with Maria Faidiban revealed that the benefits of Village Fund programs for women were experienced not only in economic terms but also through support for children's education and family needs (Interview, 7 August 2026).

Third, the health dimension. Health programs and activities benefit women and families by improving access to health services and information, as well as supporting maternal and child health. Fourth, the social dimension. Social activities involving women can strengthen social relationships and networks among women. These networks can provide spaces for sharing information and experiences while fostering cooperation in addressing issues related to family and community life. Fifth, the empowerment dimension. Village Funds can provide women with opportunities to improve their skills, knowledge, organizational capacities, and ability to participate in village development activities.

Thus, the benefits of the Village Fund for women should not be understood solely in terms of direct economic gains but also in terms of improved access to education and health services, strengthened social networks, enhanced skills, and increased individual and organizational capacities. However, these benefits become more meaningful when women are not merely positioned as beneficiaries but are also involved in determining the types and directions of programs that respond to their needs. Therefore, the relationship between participation in the development process and the benefits received is essential for assessing the extent to which Village Fund management has provided equitable opportunities and outcomes for women in Soryar Village.

4.10 Barriers to Women's Participation

The findings identified several barriers affecting women's involvement in Village Fund management in Soryar Village. These barriers are not limited to individual circumstances but are also shaped by the social environment, decision-making structures, levels of knowledge, economic conditions, and the distribution of roles and responsibilities within family life.

First, cultural barriers. Certain social norms and practices continue to position men as more dominant actors in public decision-making spaces. Interview with Rosina Korwa revealed that the prevailing social conditions may affect women's confidence and opportunities to express their views and advocate for their interests in village forums (Interview, 8 August 2026).

Second, structural barriers. Decision-making structures and mechanisms at the village level have not yet fully provided balanced opportunities for women to participate in development planning, decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation processes. Third, knowledge-related barriers.

Interview with Selfina Naa revealed that some women continue to have limited understanding of Village Fund mechanisms, the Village Budget (APB Kampung), development planning processes, monitoring mechanisms, and their rights to access information and participate in development (Interview, 8 August 2026). This limited knowledge may affect women's ability to formulate proposals, articulate their interests, and influence decisions concerning Village Fund management.

Fourth, economic barriers. Household economic conditions may lead some women to prioritize household needs and income-generating activities over participation in public affairs. Constraints in time and resources may consequently reduce women's opportunities to participate continuously throughout the development process. Fifth, the double burden. Women are responsible not only for domestic duties within their families but also for various social and economic activities. These multiple responsibilities can constrain the time and opportunities available to women to participate throughout the different stages of Village Fund management. Sixth, psychological barriers. Some women continue to lack confidence in speaking and expressing their views in forums dominated by men. This condition may lead women to adopt more passive forms of participation even when they have been given opportunities to attend and contribute to village forums.

These barriers demonstrate that increasing women's participation cannot be achieved merely by providing access to development forums. More comprehensive efforts are required to strengthen women's capacities, confidence, access to information, and position within decision-making processes.

4.11 Strategies for Strengthening Women's Participation

Based on the research findings, strengthening women's participation in Village Fund management in Soryar Village should focus on capacity building, expanding opportunities for participation, strengthening women's representation, improving budget transparency, and promoting more inclusive village deliberations.

First, strengthening women's capacity. Capacity building can be undertaken through activities related to budget literacy, development planning, leadership, village administration, Village Fund monitoring, and policy advocacy. Such capacity-building initiatives are expected to enhance women's knowledge and confidence to participate more actively in the development process.

This need is consistent with the account of Selfina Naa, who indicated that some women still have limited understanding of Village Fund mechanisms, village budgeting,

development planning, monitoring, and access to information (Interview, 8 August 2026). This condition highlights the importance of strengthening women's knowledge and capacity as a foundation for more substantive participation.

Second, establishing a Village Women's Forum. A women's forum can provide a dedicated space for women to identify their needs, discuss issues they face, establish priorities, and formulate proposals before bringing them to village deliberation forums. The forum is not intended to replace village deliberations but rather to serve as a preparatory space through which women's aspirations can be organized and articulated more effectively.

Third, strengthening women's representation. Women should be provided with more proportionate opportunities to participate in various stages of Village Fund management, including planning teams, activity implementation groups, community institutions, monitoring mechanisms, and evaluation forums. Such representation is important to ensure that women's perspectives and needs are incorporated throughout the development process. Fourth, improving budget transparency. Information concerning Village Funds should be disclosed openly using language and formats that are accessible and understandable to community members. Transparency should not be limited to reporting the amount of funding available but should also include information on funding sources, utilization priorities, types of activities, beneficiaries, implementation processes, and program outcomes. Fifth, promoting inclusive village deliberations. Village deliberation forums should provide women with meaningful opportunities to express their aspirations and influence decisions. Women's participation should not be measured solely by their attendance but also by whether they are able to speak, be heard, have their views considered, and participate in determining decisions.

Thus, strategies for strengthening women's participation in Soryar Village should aim to transform participation from presence to involvement, from involvement to influence, and from influence toward stronger control over Village Fund management. Such efforts are expected to contribute to a more inclusive village development process and ensure that women's needs are not merely expressed as aspirations but are also considered in determining development priorities and decisions.

4.12 Analysis Based on Arnstein's Ladder of Participation

Based on the research findings, the level of women's participation in Village Fund management in Soryar Village can be analyzed using the following levels of participation:



Figure 2. Arnstein's Ladder of Participation Applied to Women's Participation in Soryar Village

The findings indicate that women's participation in Soryar Village has not yet reached the levels of Citizen Control or Delegated Power, as women do not yet possess full authority or delegated power to determine decisions concerning Village Fund management. Women have been provided with opportunities to attend village deliberations, express their needs, put forward proposals, and participate in the implementation and monitoring of activities. However, their ability to influence final decisions and determine development priorities remains relatively limited.

Considering these findings, women's participation tends to fall within the levels of Consultation and Placation. At these levels, women are provided with opportunities to express their opinions and proposals and, under certain circumstances, are given space to participate in the development process. Nevertheless, authority over final decisions remains predominantly concentrated within the village government and other actors occupying strategic positions.

More systematically, the position of women's participation in Soryar Village can be mapped onto several levels of the Arnstein ladder. Consultation is seen when women are given the opportunity to attend deliberations, convey needs, express opinions, and submit proposals. However, as shown by the interview results, the opportunity to express opinions has not always been followed by the ability to ensure that these opinions influence the final decision. Within the Arnstein framework, this condition shows the characteristics of consultative participation because the community has space to voice views, but the power to determine outcomes still lies with those holding power. Placation is seen when women are not only asked to convey aspirations, but also begin to be involved in the development process and activity implementation. Nevertheless, this involvement has not been accompanied by adequate authority to determine priorities, budget allocation, and strategic decisions. Thus, the position of women in Soryar Village is more accurately understood as falling within the consultation–placation range rather than partnership. Arnstein places consultation and placation as forms of

tokenism, while partnership, delegated power, and citizen control are forms of citizen power marked by increased community power in decision-making (Arnstein, 1969).

At the partnership level, women should not only be present and convey aspirations, but hold a position relatively equal to the village government in negotiating priorities, determining programs, and making decisions. Findings in Soryar Village do not yet fully show this condition because final decisions are still largely determined by the village government and actors holding strategic positions. Furthermore, delegated power requires the transfer of a portion of decision-making authority to community groups, while citizen control is the level at which the community holds strong control over the planning, implementation, and decisions of a program. Neither of these levels was found in this study, as women have not yet obtained formal or substantive authority to determine the direction of Village Fund management. Thus, application of the Arnstein ladder shows a gap between access to participation and power to decide: women have gained access to participation space, but redistribution of power has not yet occurred adequately.

The findings of this study show both similarities and differences with research on women's participation in village development in Indonesia. Nurhalimah (2018), for example, found that women's participation in village fund planning was at the consultation, placation, and delegated power levels, dominated by tokenism because women could express opinions but had no guarantee that their aspirations would be considered by power holders. This finding aligns with conditions in Soryar Village, particularly regarding the existence of space for women to convey aspirations but limited influence over final decisions. However, this study shows a more limited position because the empirical evidence found does not yet show any real delegation of authority to women. Thus, this study shows that the existence of consultation space and involvement in activities does not automatically produce a redistribution of power.

In contrast, several studies show a stronger level of women's involvement. Wijaya et al. (2020) found that women's groups in Central Java villages used participatory planning processes to advocate for programs related to women's and family welfare. Another study on women's participation in the implementation of Village Fund programs in Armo Pesisir Kampung, Sarmi, Papua, also showed that women contributed to various stages of village fund management, from planning, implementation, administration, and reporting, to accountability. This difference is important because it shows that social and institutional context, access to information, and women's capacity can influence the level of power obtained in the participation process. In the context of Soryar Village, women's involvement is relatively visible in implementation and benefit-receiving, but not yet comparable to their influence in determining strategic decisions.

This finding also differs from the study by Kusumaningtyas and Fitriyah (2026), which found a relatively high level of women's involvement in Musrenbangdes, partly because leadership by a female village head opened wider opportunities for participation. This comparison reinforces the finding of this study that formal opportunities to participate cannot be separated from power structures and local

leadership character. The contribution of this study lies in pointing out more specifically the gap between women's presence, their involvement in program implementation, and their ability to influence Village Fund management decisions in the context of Biak society. By using the Arnstein ladder, this study not only shows that women "participate," but also identifies the quality of that participation and the extent to which power genuinely shifts to women.

The findings also indicate opportunities to advance women's participation toward the level of Partnership. These opportunities are reflected in the existing spaces for women to participate in village deliberations, articulate their needs, take part in activity implementation, exercise monitoring, and benefit from development programs. However, reaching the level of Partnership requires these forms of involvement to be accompanied by a more balanced distribution of authority and influence among women, the village government, and other relevant actors in decision-making processes.

Thus, women's participation in Soryar Village demonstrates that the process of empowerment has begun, but the redistribution of power has not yet fully occurred. Women are no longer positioned solely as beneficiaries or formal participants; they have opportunities to articulate their aspirations and participate in various stages of the development process. Nevertheless, such involvement has not yet translated into meaningful decision-making power over the direction, priorities, and management of the Village Fund.

4.13 Analysis Based on Cohen and Uphoff's Theory

Based on the research findings, women's participation in Village Fund management in Soryar Village can be examined across four main dimensions: decision-making, implementation, benefit utilization, and evaluation. The nature and extent of women's participation at each stage are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Women's Participation in Village Fund Management

Stages	Forms of Women's Participation	Conditions
Decision-Making	Attending village deliberations and expressing proposals or needs	Participation is present, but women's influence on final decisions remains limited
Implementation	Involvement in social, economic, educational, health, and community empowerment activities	Relatively active
Benefits	Receiving and utilizing the outcomes of development programs and empowerment initiatives	Present and experienced by women

Stages	Forms of Women’s Participation	Conditions
Evaluation	Providing input, criticism, and complaints regarding the implementation and outcomes of activities	Present, but not yet optimal

Source: Cohen and Uphoff (1980), processed (2026)

The findings indicate that women’s participation in Soryar Village varies across the different stages of Village Fund management. Women’s participation is relatively stronger at the implementation and benefit utilization stages, whereas their involvement in decision-making and evaluation remains constrained. This condition indicates that women have been provided with opportunities to participate in the development process, but their involvement has not yet been balanced across all stages.

The most significant limitations are evident in women’s ability to influence strategic decisions concerning Village Fund priorities and utilization. Therefore, efforts to strengthen women’s participation should focus not only on increasing their involvement in program implementation but also on expanding women’s opportunities to participate in decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation processes.

4.14 **A Model of Women’s Participation in Village Fund Management**

Based on the research findings, the model of women’s participation in Village Fund management in Soryar Village can be conceptualized as a process that begins with the prevailing socio-cultural conditions and access to information, progresses toward women’s involvement across the various stages of Village Fund management, and ultimately contributes to the generation of benefits and women’s empowerment.



Figure 3. Model of Women’s Participation in Village Fund Management in Soryar Village

The model demonstrates that women's participation in Village Fund management is a gradual and evolving process. Access to information provides the foundation for women to obtain opportunities to attend and participate in development forums. Such involvement should then progress beyond mere presence toward the capacity to articulate aspirations, participate in planning, influence decision-making, implement activities, exercise monitoring, and evaluate development outcomes.

Accordingly, women's participation should not stop at attendance in development forums or involvement as program implementers but should progress toward meaningful influence and control over the development process. When women possess adequate knowledge, access to information, opportunities to articulate their aspirations, and authority to influence decisions, the potential for more substantive forms of participation increases.

Ultimately, this process is expected not only to generate women's involvement in Village Fund management but also to produce benefits that correspond to the needs of women and the broader community. Therefore, the model positions the empowerment of women in Soryar Village as the expected outcome of a participatory process that becomes increasingly strong, inclusive, and influential in shaping village development.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, Biak women in Soryar Village have played a role in Village Fund management, particularly in identifying development needs related to family, education, health, economy, food security, and community welfare. Women's participation is also seen in village deliberations, program implementation, and utilization of development outcomes. However, involvement in decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation remains limited because strategic authority rests mostly with the village government and actors holding strategic positions. From the perspective of Arnstein's Ladder of Participation, women's participation tends to fall at the Consultation and Placation levels and has not yet reached Partnership, Delegated Power, or Citizen Control. From the perspective of Cohen and Uphoff, participation has emerged in the dimensions of decision-making, implementation, benefit utilization, and evaluation, but its intensity and quality remain unbalanced. Main barriers include male dominance, limited access to information and budget literacy, limited capacity, double burden, and limited access to strategic spaces.

Based on these findings, the Soryar Village Government needs to strengthen women's participation from formal involvement toward substantive participation. This effort can be pursued through establishing a Village Women's Forum, strengthening budget literacy and women's capacity, increasing women's representation in planning and oversight forums, and providing transparent and easily understood Village Fund information. Village deliberations also need to provide real space for women to convey aspirations, influence priorities, be involved in decision-making, and monitor and evaluate Village Fund use.

This study has limitations because it focuses on a single village, Soryar, so the findings cannot be directly generalized to all villages or indigenous communities in

Papua. In addition, the qualitative approach emphasizes participants' experiences and perceptions, so it has not measured women's level of influence quantitatively and has not systematically compared women's perspectives with those of the village government or other community groups.

These limitations offer opportunities for future research to conduct comparative studies across villages or indigenous communities and to combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to measure the level and factors influencing women's participation. For village governance, the research findings confirm that increasing women's participation cannot be achieved merely by providing space for attendance, but needs to be directed toward increasing voice, influence, control, and access to development benefits so that Village Fund management becomes more inclusive, responsive, and equitable.

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