Parallel Support, Fragmented Governance: Collaborative Public Administration for Women's Microenterprise Empowerment in Indonesia

Trimurti Ningtyas[1], Intan Nuzulis Naeni Puspitasari[1], Nur Lailis Saadah[1], Ardiyansah[2]*

[1]Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Wasil Kediri, Kediri, Indonesia

[2]Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

DOI: https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.101100262

Received: 08 November 2026; Accepted: 13 November 2026; Published: 25 November 2026

ABSTRACT

Women-led microenterprises are important to inclusive local development, yet the involvement of several support organisations does not necessarily amount to collaborative public administration. This study examines how municipal government, universities, businesses, communities, and media support women entrepreneurs in Kediri City, Indonesia, and whether women can influence policy decisions rather than only receive programme assistance. A qualitative single-case study draws on semi-structured interviews with five women microentrepreneurs and institutional representatives, field observations, programme documents, and municipal administrative indicators for 2021–2025. The analysis combines actor-based coding informed by the Penta Helix framework with an examination of institutional relationships, decision authority, beneficiary representation, and shared accountability. Municipal statistics document growth in registered microenterprises from 5,808 in 2021 to 10,322 in 2025. Public agencies coordinate licensing and training; universities contribute knowledge; financial and business organisations provide selected resources; and community and media actors support networking and visibility. However, these contributions largely remain bilateral, project-based, and organised around separate programmes. The findings identify a pattern of parallelised collaboration in which specialised contributions coexist without a durable joint forum, integrated referrals, or shared monitoring. They also reveal a beneficiary–governance gap: women entrepreneurs are recognised as programme recipients but have limited formal influence over agenda-setting, resource allocation, and evaluation. The study argues that actor participation and programme expansion are insufficient measures of collaborative governance. It recommends a standing cross-sector policy platform, coordinated referral and information arrangements, shared performance indicators, and formal channels for women entrepreneurs to participate in policy design and assessment. Although based on one city and a small qualitative sample, these insights offer a practical framework for evaluating gender-responsive collaboration in decentralised local government.

Keywords: collaborative governance, public administration, women entrepreneurs, institutional coordination, local development

INTRODUCTION

Women-led microenterprises occupy an important place in Indonesia's local economy and in the policy agenda surrounding employment, household resilience, and inclusive growth. In 2024, the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs reported that women represented 64.5% of national micro, small and medium enterprise actors, equivalent to about 37 million entrepreneurs (Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024). Yet the policy challenge is not only whether governments provide training, finance, licensing, digital promotion, or market access. It is also whether these interventions are governed as a coherent policy system and whether the intended beneficiaries can influence how support is

designed, sequenced, and evaluated. For local governments, this is a problem of policy coordination as much as service delivery.

Kediri City in East Java provides a useful setting for examining this problem. Municipal administrative data show that registered microenterprises increased from 5,808 in 2021 to 10,322 in 2025, a cumulative increase of approximately 77.7% (Government of Kediri City, 2026). During the same period, the city developed a dense support ecology involving municipal agencies, universities, banks, businesses, communities, and media channels. Programmes included entrepreneurship training and mentoring, corporate social responsibility support, product-photography services, licensing assistance, and promotional collaboration (Government of Kediri City, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2023). The resulting policy environment is therefore multi-actor, but the presence of multiple organisations does not by itself demonstrate integrated governance.

This distinction is especially important in Asian local governance, where decentralisation often expands the formal responsibilities of subnational governments without automatically producing strong coordination or accountability. Research in Asian Politics & Policy has shown that the quality of local governance can substantially shape decentralisation outcomes in Indonesia (Lele, 2019), while district-level crisis governance in Bangladesh demonstrates how coordination and information sharing can enable local administrations to mobilise multiple stakeholders effectively (Alam et al., 2024). These studies suggest that policy performance depends not simply on institutional mandates, but on how authority, information, and relationships are organised across actors.

Research on collaborative policy implementation in Asia underscores the importance of coordination, institutional leadership and local knowledge. Alwi et al. (2025) examine how policy entrepreneurs and resource exchange supported food-security policy change in Indonesia, while Alam et al. (2024) discuss the coordination challenges of local governance responses during the COVID-19 pandemic. These studies establish that mobilisation of different actors may enable policy innovation, but they do not in themselves demonstrate sustained joint authority, integrated administrative pathways or effective beneficiary representation. The present case focuses on precisely these institutional conditions in local enterprise-support policy.

The gender dimension makes this question more consequential. Entrepreneurship programmes frequently count participants or resources delivered without asking whether women have institutional influence over agenda-setting and evaluation. Kabeer's (1999) distinction between resources, agency, and achievements suggests that empowerment cannot be inferred from programme access alone. Gendered entrepreneurship research likewise shows that finance, networks, legitimacy, and time are structured by institutional expectations and unequal care responsibilities (Brush et al., 2019; Jennings & Brush, 2013). In Asian Politics & Policy, Lee and Doucette (2025) show that gender equality and civil-society participation depend on domestic institutions capable of translating normative commitments into policy change. This directs attention to the institutional position of women within local policy processes, not only to the benefits they receive.

Collaborative governance scholarship provides a framework for examining this gap. Collaboration requires more than actor plurality: it involves joint problem definition, resource coordination, shared decision processes, and mutual accountability (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012). Cross-sector arrangements can nevertheless remain government-centred and bilateral when one actor controls convening, information, and programme design (Bryson et al., 2015; Provan & Kenis, 2008). The unresolved issue is therefore how to distinguish a plural support ecology from a genuinely collaborative policy regime, particularly in decentralised Asian settings where local governments operate through a mixture of formal authority and informal partnerships.

This article asks three questions: How are government, business, academic, community, and media contributions organised in Kediri's policy support system for women entrepreneurs? Why does a multi-actor support ecology fail to develop into an integrated collaborative policy regime? What does this arrangement imply for local governance and women's policy agency? The article makes three contributions. First, it

reframes multi-actor participation as a problem of collaborative policy capacity rather than actor count. Second, it develops the concept of parallelised collaboration to describe complementary programme activity that remains institutionally separate. Third, it identifies a beneficiary-governance gap in which women are visible recipients of support but weakly institutionalised in agenda-setting, resource allocation, and evaluation. These concepts connect a local Indonesian case to wider debates on policy implementation, local governance, and gender-responsive public policy in Asia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This distinction has practical consequences for programme evaluation. An administrative report may count training sessions, licences issued or promotional campaigns as evidence of partnership success even when enterprises must independently navigate different offices. Such measures describe activity but reveal little about whether support is sequenced, whether agencies exchange information or whether entrepreneurs can challenge programme priorities. A governance-oriented assessment therefore requires evidence about the relationships connecting interventions, not only evidence that each intervention occurred.

These distinctions matter for public administration because organisational coordination, citizen participation, and territorial governance intersect in the design of local enterprise policy. The analytical focus here is not entrepreneurial motivation or individual business performance. It is the administrative choices through which municipal authorities and external partners configure a policy network and decide whose knowledge and preferences shape collective priorities.

Collaborative governance and institutional capacity

Collaborative governance is commonly understood as a process in which public agencies engage non-state actors in collective decision-making or implementation around public problems (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Emerson et al. (2012) extend this view by treating collaboration as a governance regime whose effectiveness depends on principled engagement, shared motivation, and capacity for joint action. The implication for public policy is straightforward: participation lists, partnership events, or sponsorship arrangements do not by themselves demonstrate collaborative implementation. A policy system becomes collaborative when separate organisational resources are connected through routines that allow actors to define problems, exchange information, coordinate decisions, and adapt implementation collectively.

Evidence from Asian governance research shows that successful implementation depends on administrative interfaces as well as on the number of stakeholders. Alam et al. (2024) highlight the importance of local information and coordination, and Alwi et al. (2025) emphasise resource mobilisation by policy entrepreneurs. Hidayat et al. (2025) similarly find that the outcomes of decentralisation in Indonesia are shaped by local institutions and collective action rather than formal restructuring alone. The implication is that collaborative capacity must be examined through routines for sharing knowledge, coordinating action and learning from the intended beneficiaries. In a qualitative study of local government and people's organisations in the Philippines, Bacalla et al. (2026) likewise identify institutional barriers and resource constraints that complicate local collaboration. This comparative example reinforces the need to distinguish the existence of partnerships from the quality of their governance.

Collaborative policy capacity has an institutional dimension. Provan and Kenis (2008) distinguish participant-governed, lead-organisation, and network-administrative modes, each of which places different demands on coordination. Government leadership is not inherently incompatible with collaboration, particularly where public agencies possess legal authority, data, and convening resources. The key question is whether leadership is connected to a recognised forum, role clarity, shared information, referral mechanisms, joint performance criteria, and opportunities for collective revision. We refer to these durable interfaces as institutional connectivity. Where they are absent, multiple actors may contribute to the same policy field while continuing to operate through separate bilateral channels.

Power, beneficiary voice and gender-responsive administration

Institutional coherence also depends on practical administrative arrangements: clear communication, formal operating procedures, and accountable implementation. In the absence of common decision rules, organisational partnerships can deliver useful individual activities while failing to produce a durable public-management system. For women-led microenterprises, that distinction affects both the continuity of programme support and the capacity to question how public resources are allocated.

Power is therefore central to collaboration. Purdy (2012) proposes examining authority, resources, and discursive legitimacy to understand whose preferences shape collaborative processes. In the Kediri case, local government holds statutory authority and programme access; financial institutions control capital and eligibility rules; universities hold technical expertise; communities hold situated knowledge and social legitimacy; and media actors influence visibility. These resources are complementary but unequal. If one actor controls convening, programme rules, and performance information, a network can remain hierarchical even when partnership language is widely used.

Gender-responsive policy requires an additional shift from beneficiary access to beneficiary agency. Kabeer (1999) conceptualises empowerment through resources, agency, and achievements, implying that policy support can expand resources without changing who sets priorities or defines success. Brush et al. (2019) and Jennings and Brush (2013) similarly show that women's entrepreneurial trajectories are shaped by institutionalised differences in finance, networks, legitimacy, and time. Lee and Doucette (2025) further demonstrate that gender-oriented policy change depends on institutional actors and civil-society participation capable of converting normative commitments into governance practice. The relevant question is therefore not only whether women receive support, but whether their experiential knowledge enters policy decisions.

Recent empirical evidence and the institutional gap

Recent Indonesian evidence helps clarify what enterprise-centred studies can, and cannot, explain about public administration. In a survey of 542 women entrepreneurs, Lestari et al. (2025) find that financial literacy, inclusion and access are related to entrepreneurial development and business sustainability. Yolanda et al. (2026), analysing survey responses from 230 women business owners, identify women’s cooperatives as a pathway through which literacy and financial inclusion are strengthened. These studies substantiate the importance of resources and support institutions. However, because their principal units of analysis are individual firms or programme users, they do not establish whether municipal agencies and external partners jointly set priorities, exchange administrative information, or share accountability.

Pranitasari et al. (2026) use mixed methods to show that digital and financial capacities are not automatically converted into women-owned enterprise performance; social ties, household roles and institutional constraints condition that conversion. From a public-administration perspective, Nurdin et al. (2025) examine local-government resilience and women's MSMEs in Yogyakarta, identifying a gap between commitments to inclusion and institutional arrangements for participatory decision-making. Whereas these studies highlight capacity conversion and inclusion as policy concerns, the present case traces a narrower governance mechanism: how several organisations can provide complementary assistance without building durable joint decisions or representative channels for women entrepreneurs. The comparison is analytical, not an assertion that the Kediri evidence establishes prevalence across Indonesia.

We analyse the case through four dimensions. Actor contribution identifies the resources each sector supplies. Relational architecture examines whether contributions are connected through shared forums, agreements, data, referral pathways, or routines. Decision authority traces who frames problems, determines eligibility, allocates resources, and defines performance. Beneficiary representation examines whether women entrepreneurs participate in agenda-setting and evaluation as policy actors rather than only as programme users. Together, these dimensions distinguish a plural policy support ecology from an

institutionalised collaborative regime and allow us to identify the mechanisms through which collaboration builds, or fails to build, local policy capacity.

METHODOLOGY

The case was selected for its ability to illuminate an apparent tension rather than for representativeness. On one hand, municipal reporting documents an expanding target population and visible programmes; on the other, the qualitative material describes discontinuities between providers. Examining that tension allows the study to distinguish the reach of policy activity from the institutional capacity to connect the activities into a cumulative support pathway. This is an analytic, not statistical, use of the case, and alternative explanations cannot be excluded by a single-city design.

Case context and administrative indicators

The study uses a qualitative single-case design to examine how a rapidly expanding local enterprise-support policy system is governed. Kediri is analytically useful because the municipality combines visible growth in microenterprise registration with multiple forms of public, private, academic, and community support. The case is not treated as statistically representative of Indonesian local government. Instead, consistent with case-study logic, it is used to investigate a governance mechanism through which actor proliferation can coexist with limited collaborative policy capacity and to develop concepts that may be transferable to comparable decentralised settings (Yin, 2018).

Official administrative indicators are used to establish the scale and trajectory of the policy field, not to estimate causal effects of the support system. Table 1 shows a steep increase in registered microenterprises between 2021 and 2025. Growth was especially high in 2022 and 2023, while the number of enterprises and the officially reported share with increased turnover also rose. Because the municipal dataset consists of administrative programme indicators rather than a research panel, these measures should not be interpreted as evidence that any specific intervention caused business growth. They are used to demonstrate the increasing coordination challenge facing local policy implementation.

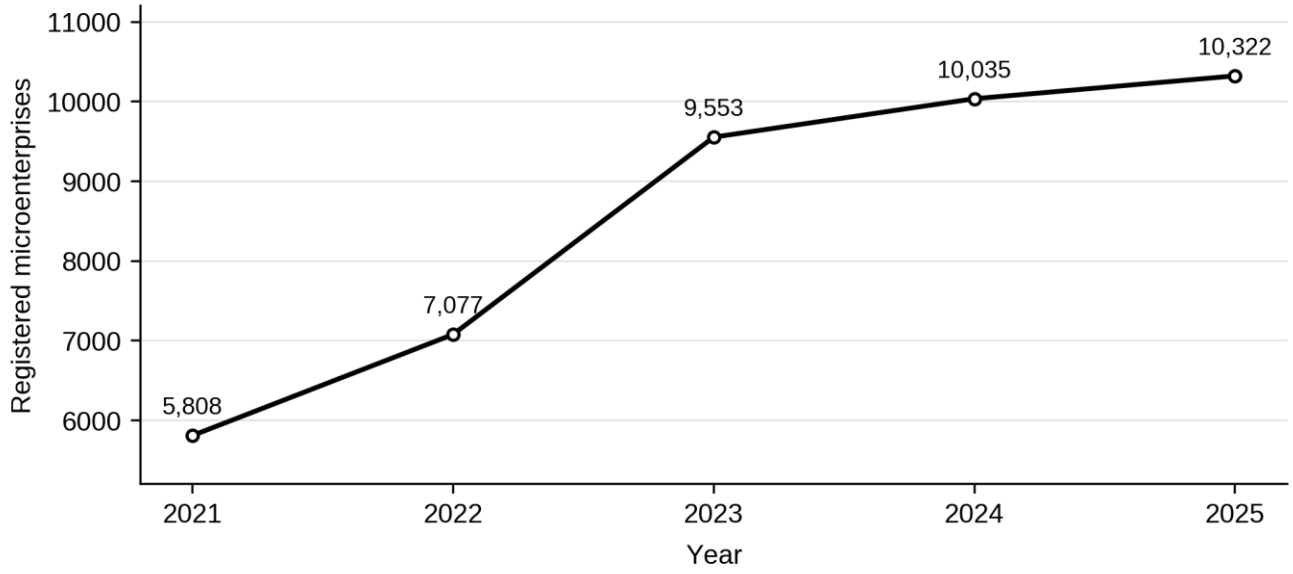
Table 1. Microenterprise development indicators in Kediri City, 2021–2025

Year	Registered microenterprises	Reported annual growth (%)	Enterprises with increased turnover	Reported turnover-increase share (%)
2021	5,808	14.56	121	2.08
2022	7,077	21.84	667	7.34
2023	9,553	34.09	695	7.28
2024	10,035	5.05	794	7.91
2025	10,322	2.78*	1,044	10.20*

Source: Government of Kediri City, Satu Data, Kinerja Dinas Koperasi, Usaha Mikro dan Tenaga Kerja (2026). Note: The annual-growth and turnover-share percentages are reproduced exactly as published in the official Satu Data indicator series and are not recalculated from the adjacent count columns. The 2025 percentage values are marked provisional in the source dataset.

As shown in Figure 1, the number of registered microenterprises increased steadily from 2021 to 2025, providing the administrative context for the coordination challenge examined in this study.

Figure 1. Registered microenterprises in Kediri City, 2021–2025



Source: Authors' visualisation based on Government of Kediri City (2026).

Qualitative material and sampling

Primary material includes semi-structured interviews with five women microentrepreneurs in Kediri City. The identifiable inclusion criterion in the available study documentation is that their businesses operated before, during and after the most disruptive period of the COVID-19 pandemic; this permitted discussion of changing business conditions and support experiences over time. The group was selected for its relevance to the governance questions, not to estimate the distribution of experiences among all women-owned firms. The records available for preparing this article do not provide a defensible breakdown by age, education, industry, household income, firm size or precise recruitment pathway. Those characteristics are therefore not inferred or used to make subgroup claims. The five cases provide situated accounts of how programmes were accessed and navigated, but they do not establish saturation or statistical representativeness.

Institutional interview material covers representatives connected to municipal agencies responsible for cooperatives and microbusinesses, trade and industry, and investment and licensing, together with actors from business and finance, universities, community organisations and media or communication channels. These are categories of institutional engagement, not a claim that every listed category was represented by the same number of interviewees. Neither the total institutional interview count nor a verified sector-by-sector distribution is recoverable from the retained material, and consequently no institutional sample size is stated. This restricts the study's ability to assess balance across sectoral perspectives or to compare the frequency of particular viewpoints.

Interview material was organised around programme experiences and stakeholder roles, especially forms of assistance received or provided, links across organisational programmes, who influenced decisions, and opportunities for entrepreneur feedback. Field observations and public documents were used to compare accounts of programme activity with the existence or absence of documented shared forums, referral rules and monitoring arrangements. The retained methodological record does not establish uniform interview durations, recording arrangements, transcription protocols or dates for each interview. To avoid implying a degree of procedural standardisation that cannot be verified, none is claimed here. Findings are consequently presented as analytic patterns supported by multiple types of material, not as exhaustive participant-level or frequency-based results.

Observations focused on women-led business activities, interactions within local enterprise networks and settings in which support was delivered. Documentary material included municipal programme information,

policy announcements, official websites, social-media documentation and administrative datasets. These documents were not treated as neutral evidence of programme success. They were used to reconstruct formal objectives, eligibility arrangements, reported outputs and public narratives, and were then compared with interview and observational accounts. Table 2 summarises the empirical materials and the analytical purpose for which each source type was used.

Table 2. Empirical material and analytical use

Material	Coverage	Analytical use
Semi-structured interviews	Five women entrepreneurs whose businesses operated before, during and after pandemic disruption; representatives of municipal agencies and business, academic, community and media environments.	Experiences of support; actor roles; authority; coordination; sequencing; perceived gaps.
Observations	Women-led business activities and interaction settings within local enterprise networks.	Business practices, adaptation, programme access and situated forms of social support.
Documentary and administrative material	Municipal programme information, policy announcements, official websites and social media; Satu Data indicators for 2021–2025.	Formal objectives, eligibility and reported outputs; institutional context; comparison with interview and observation accounts.

Source: Authors' research design, informed by qualitative case-study and reflexive thematic-analysis guidance (Yin, 2018; Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Analytical procedure

Analysis proceeded in two stages. First, material was coded by actor contribution: regulation and licensing, finance and equipment, training and knowledge, community support, marketing and communication. This retained the empirical usefulness of the locally familiar Penta Helix categories without assuming that the presence of five sectors constituted collaboration (Sudiana, Sule, Soemaryani, & Yunizar, 2020). Second, the coded material was re-analysed through the four dimensions developed above: relational architecture, decision authority, beneficiary representation and joint accountability.

The process was iterative and interpretive. Apparent examples of collaboration were examined to determine whether they involved joint problem definition and decision-making or were better characterised as sponsorship, service delivery, bilateral cooperation or information dissemination. Evidence of shared forums, joint agreements, referral protocols, common indicators, integrated monitoring and mechanisms for women entrepreneurs to influence programme design was sought across source types. Divergent evidence was retained rather than compressed into a single success narrative, and documentary claims were checked against interview and observational material where possible (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

For transparency, evidence was interpreted at three distinct levels. First, official reports were treated as evidence that a programme or administrative output was publicly documented, not proof of its effect on an individual enterprise. Second, qualitative accounts and observations informed the interpretation of programme navigation and interaction, but are reported without invented quotations or precise participant attribution. Third, claims about the absence of integrated governance refer to mechanisms not identified in the materials examined; they should not be read as proof that no informal coordination occurred at any time. This distinction also guided the search for negative or alternative explanations, including the possibility that flexible bilateral arrangements may work effectively for particular short-term needs.

The analysis has three evidentiary boundaries. First, the number of interviewed entrepreneurs is small and does not permit subgroup comparison. Second, the institutional material provides stronger evidence on programme activities than on closed-door deliberation among organisations. Third, administrative indicators measure reported programme and enterprise conditions rather than causal impacts. The analysis therefore addresses governance mechanisms: how support is organised, where coordination stops, and how beneficiary voice is institutionalised, rather than estimating the effect of particular programmes on firm performance.

RESULTS

An expanding support system with fragmented pathways

The evidence shows substantial programme activity. Municipal agencies facilitate business registration, training, access to selected finance, product promotion and administrative information. Universities supply studies and technical training. Financial and business organisations provide equipment, financing or sponsorship. Communities contribute peer networks and place-based branding, while digital and conventional communication channels increase programme and product visibility. This activity expanded in a context where the registered microenterprise population increased sharply, raising the number of potential users who must navigate different administrative pathways.

Yet the growth of activity did not produce an integrated support journey. Programme documents typically describe outputs within organisational boundaries: licences issued, participants trained, equipment distributed, products photographed or events organised. These outputs are tangible, but the evidence does not show a common administrative process linking an entrepreneur's licensing status to financing needs, training history, market-development stage and subsequent business outcomes. The support ecology therefore contains many entry points but limited system-level navigation.

Government-centred policy architecture

Municipal government occupies the central position because it controls formal policy instruments and the principal channels through which entrepreneurs enter public programmes. The office responsible for cooperatives, microbusinesses and labour operates enterprise clinics and development activities; trade and industry functions support training and market development; and investment and licensing functions facilitate business identification and permits. Municipal agencies also produce the administrative data used to describe enterprise growth and programme performance.

This centrality is institutionally understandable. Local government possesses statutory authority, administrative staff, programme budgets and convening legitimacy that other actors do not. It can determine eligibility, authorise activities and connect external partners to recognised public programmes. However, the case material shows that public leadership frequently becomes the organising centre of otherwise separate partnerships. Universities, banks, communities and media actors are typically connected to the government around specific programmes rather than through a standing arena in which needs, resource commitments and results are negotiated collectively. The pattern is reinforced by performance practices. Administrative indicators place strong emphasis on enterprise counts, programme participation and observable outputs. The Satu Data system also publishes separate indicators for the number of microenterprises with increased turnover and the reported turnover-increase share, which is a useful step beyond activity counting. Even so, the available material does not show a shared cross-actor performance architecture connecting these outcomes to sequences of support received by individual enterprises. Government therefore acts as a programme hub, but not as the steward of a fully integrated collaborative system.

Specialised contributions and weak integration

Non-government actors contribute resources that the municipality cannot easily provide alone. Business actors offer equipment, finance and market connections. In 2021, Bank Jatim corporate social responsibility assistance provided production equipment to 57 microenterprises that had been screened by the municipal

microenterprise office and the bank (Government of Kediri City, 2021a). The arrangement demonstrated resource complementarity, but eligibility, verification and delivery remained tied to the specific programme. The evidence does not show that financing or equipment decisions were pooled with other actors through a common enterprise-development plan.

Community and communication initiatives were often more responsive to immediate operational needs. A municipal product-photography service reported that 80 microenterprises had used the facility by October 2021, combining professional photography with training intended to improve online marketing (Government of Kediri City, 2021c). Place-based initiatives such as Kampung Jamu mobilised neighbourhood identity and producer networks, with the local government reporting more than 59 self-producing herbal-drink sellers in the area in 2019 (Government of Kediri City, 2019). These initiatives demonstrate locally embedded capacity, yet community knowledge remained weakly linked to city-wide priority-setting and evaluation.

Documented illustration 1, equipment assistance: a municipal account states that Bank Jatim's corporate social responsibility programme supported production equipment for 57 microenterprises after screening involving the bank and the municipal microenterprise office (Government of Kediri City, 2021a). This is a specific, verifiable instance of a public-financial partnership. Its administrative account does not report whether the recipients subsequently accessed coordinated mentoring, licences or market support, so it cannot demonstrate a fully integrated service pathway. The illustration supports the narrower conclusion that a bilateral arrangement supplied resources without documenting cross-sector continuity.

Documented illustration 2, market visibility: the municipal product-photography programme reported use by 80 microenterprises by October 2021 and linked professional product images to digital-marketing assistance (Government of Kediri City, 2021c). This example shows how targeted administrative support may meet an immediate marketing need. The published information does not show that the 80 recipients overlapped with the equipment programme or that their later outcomes were jointly monitored. The two illustrations are therefore intentionally not presented as a longitudinal narrative about the same women or as interview quotations. Together, they reveal the difference between verified programme delivery and the still-unobserved institutional connection between services. Universities and media actors show the same pattern in different forms. Academic contributions provide research, standards, training and advisory input, while media and government communication channels distribute information and amplify visibility. The function of these contributions is specialised and potentially valuable. What is missing is an institutional mechanism through which evidence from a university, financing criteria from a bank, community knowledge and entrepreneurs' feedback are deliberated together and translated into shared programme priorities. Table 3 summarises these sector-specific contributions and the corresponding limits to collaborative capacity identified in the analysis.

Table 3. Actor contributions and limits to collaborative capacity

Actor	Main contribution	Observed limit to collaborative capacity
Local government	Licensing, regulation, training, programme information, selected finance/equipment facilitation and promotion.	Controls convening and principal programme channels; integration remains centred on separate administrative outputs.
Universities	Studies, training, standards, certification advice and skills development.	Contributions are episodic and project-based; no durable role in joint priority-setting is evident.
Business and financial actors	Finance, corporate social responsibility, equipment, sponsorship and market connections.	Schemes are bilateral and eligibility-based; resources are not pooled within a common support strategy.
Communities	Peer support, product photography, local branding, networks and place-based	Influence is localised; community knowledge lacks a formal route into city-

	knowledge.	wide allocation and evaluation.
Media and digital channels	Information dissemination, product visibility and digital promotion.	Primarily amplify programmes and decisions made elsewhere rather than participating in joint governance.
Women entrepreneurs	Experiential knowledge, business adaptation and use of multiple support channels.	Highly visible as beneficiaries but weakly institutionalised in agenda-setting, allocation and evaluation.

Source: Authors' analysis of interviews, observations and documentary material, including Government of Kediri City (2019, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2023, 2026).

Parallelised collaboration

Across sectors, the pattern is best characterised as parallelised collaboration. The actors recognise the same broad policy objective: supporting microenterprises and women's economic participation, and they sometimes cooperate directly. However, the connections are predominantly bilateral, project-specific, and routed through the municipal government. Activity is therefore more coordinated than isolated action but less institutionalised than a collaborative policy regime.

Four absences are particularly consequential. First, the material does not identify a durable cross-sector forum with recognised membership and regular deliberation. Second, there is no shared agreement specifying roles, decision rules, conflict-management arrangements or data responsibilities across the support system. Third, programmes do not appear to operate through an integrated referral process that follows entrepreneurs across licensing, finance, skills and market-development needs. Fourth, performance information remains programme-specific rather than organised around jointly defined outcomes and the cumulative support journey of entrepreneurs.

These absences explain why programme proliferation does not automatically build collaborative capacity. An entrepreneur can obtain training from one institution, licensing support from another and marketing assistance from a third, while no actor is responsible for the coherence of the sequence. Each organisation can report successful delivery within its own mandate even when gaps between programmes remain unobserved. The system is active but only partly cumulative: resources are added without the governance infrastructure needed to convert them into shared learning and joint administrative capability.

The beneficiary–governance gap

Women entrepreneurs are the most visible beneficiaries of the support system but have limited collective representation within its governance. The interviewed entrepreneurs demonstrate adaptation and the practical use of multiple support channels, and women-centred programmes explicitly recognise their economic role. Nevertheless, the material does not identify a standing women entrepreneurs' council, representative seat or formal co-design mechanism through which participants can shape city-wide programme priorities. Participation is organised mainly through programme registration, training, mentoring, consultation or receipt of assistance.

This creates a beneficiary-governance gap. Women are recognised as a target group and as evidence of programme relevance, but their experiential knowledge is not consistently converted into authority over agenda-setting, allocation, or evaluation. The gap is important because administrative organisations may define empowerment through what they can deliver, such as training, equipment, licences, credit, or promotion, rather than through the strategic priorities women identify across their business and household contexts. It also limits feedback about barriers that cut across programmes, including activity scheduling, care responsibilities, informal business status, digital access, or the need to combine finance with market development.

The language used in some programme contexts also reflects gendered expectations. The term mompreneur has been used to describe women who combine enterprise and household responsibilities. Rather than treating care as women's natural or primary duty, the policy significance of this language is that entrepreneurship is often organised around existing domestic expectations. A gender-responsive local policy system would treat time and care constraints as design variables and would give women institutional routes to influence how support is scheduled, sequenced, and assessed.

DISCUSSION

Read together, the findings suggest a mismatch between the architecture used to implement interventions and the policy ambition of integrated empowerment. Each participating organisation can make a defensible contribution within its mandate, yet the combined arrangement may still impose navigation and coordination burdens on intended beneficiaries. This outcome does not establish that every bilateral arrangement is ineffective. Rather, it indicates that bilateral cooperation has limits when a policy problem requires multiple services to be connected over time.

Policy coordination and the limits of actor plurality

The Kediri case shows why actor participation is an insufficient measure of collaborative policy implementation. The Penta Helix vocabulary is useful for identifying sectors, but it can obscure the institutional connections that turn separate contributions into collective capacity. In Kediri, actor plurality expanded the range of resources available to women entrepreneurs, yet shared problem definition, common performance arrangements, and beneficiary representation remained weak. This finding shifts attention from the number of partnerships to the quality of the policy relationships among them.

The concept of parallelised collaboration captures this intermediate condition. It is more than isolated action because actors recognise interdependence and sometimes coordinate directly. It is less than a collaborative policy regime because information, resource sequencing, decision-making, and accountability are not jointly organised. The distinction is important for Asian policy systems in which governments increasingly mobilise non-state actors as part of implementation. Partnership proliferation can therefore coexist with fragmented governance when the institutional interfaces that connect programmes remain underdeveloped.

The finding is consistent with research on the institutional conditions of multi-actor policymaking. Dai and Azhar (2024) draw attention to the challenges of collaborative governance for sustainable development, while Alam et al. (2024) show why coordination and information sharing matter in complex local policy responses. The Kediri case adds a more specific institutional mechanism: the actors share a policy field and occasionally cooperate but do not jointly govern the sequence of services experienced by women entrepreneurs. This accounts for continued fragmentation despite a visible expansion of programme participation.

Decentralisation and collaborative administrative capacity

The findings also extend Alwi et al.'s (2025) analysis of Indonesian policy entrepreneurship and resource exchange. Their study shows how bureaucrats and community actors can mobilise networks and resources to advance policy implementation, while still facing bureaucratic and institutional constraints. Kediri similarly contains resource complementarity across local government, universities, financial actors, communities, and media. However, no equivalent mechanism consistently links those resources across the full trajectory of enterprise support. Parallelised collaboration therefore identifies a governance problem that can persist even when resource exchange and local initiative are present.

The case also contributes to debates on decentralisation and local governance in Indonesia. Lele (2019) argues that the quality of governance, including accountability and transparency, helps explain variation in decentralisation outcomes. The present study identifies institutional connectivity as a related local governance condition. Formal authority to coordinate economic policy does not guarantee that dispersed organisational resources will be connected. Decentralised capacity should therefore be assessed not only in

terms of legal mandates or programme portfolios, but also in terms of cross-organisational interfaces, shared information, and mechanisms for learning across implementation channels.

Gender-responsive governance and representation

The beneficiary-governance gap adds a gendered dimension to this local governance problem. Women entrepreneurs are not excluded from programmes; they are highly visible as participants and recipients. Yet access does not consistently translate into influence over agenda-setting, resource allocation, or evaluation. Kabeer's (1999) distinction between resources and agency helps explain why this matters. Policy can increase access to training, equipment, finance, and promotion while leaving the governance of those resources largely unchanged.

The recent empirical literature reinforces this distinction but also identifies a different level of explanation. Lestari et al. (2025) and Yolanda et al. (2026) show how financial access, literacy and cooperative support may improve the conditions under which women develop enterprises. Pranitasari et al. (2026) find that capacities do not translate mechanically into business performance when household and structural constraints remain. Those studies illuminate mechanisms at the level of individual capabilities and entrepreneurial outcomes. The present case instead asks who governs the combination and sequencing of those supports. Nurdin et al. (2025) locate a related problem in local government, where inclusive intentions may outpace institutionalised co-creation. Kediri adds a specific relational diagnosis: beneficiaries can appear frequently in programme outputs without holding a recognised place in shared policy decisions. Its evidence, however, is too limited to show that this pattern applies to every entrepreneur or to rank individual constraints by prevalence.

This finding also speaks to Lee and Doucette's (2025) account of gender equality and civil-society participation in Asian policy change. Their analysis highlights the institutional conditions through which gender commitments and participatory actors acquire policy influence. In Kediri, the missing element is a durable representative channel through which women entrepreneurs can convert experiential knowledge into collective policy voice. The beneficiary-governance gap therefore concerns institutional representation, not simply consultation. A gender-responsive policy architecture would treat women as co-producers of policy knowledge rather than as a homogeneous target category.

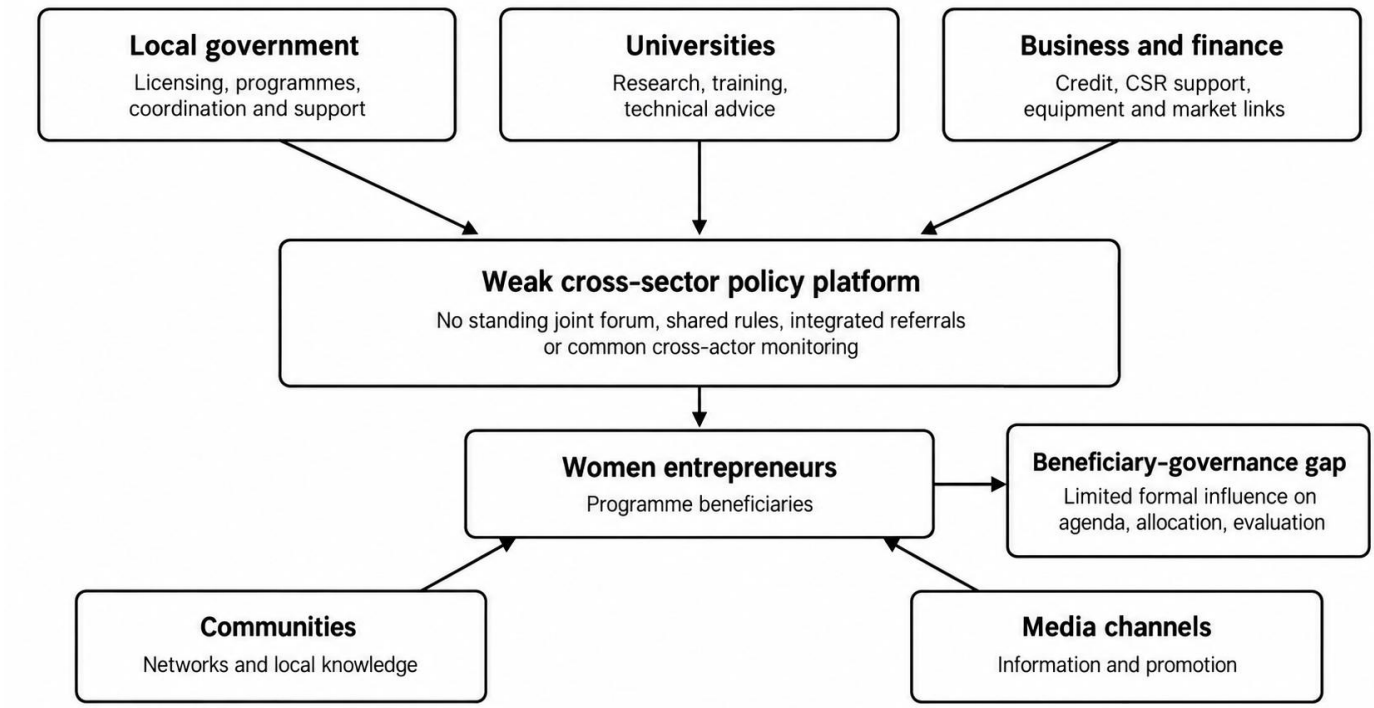
From parallel programmes to integrated policy capacity

Figure 2 summarises the observed parallelised support system and the beneficiary–governance gap, while indicating where institutional integration and beneficiary representation would be needed.

The mechanism suggests several feasible measures for local administrative reform. A standing cross-sector forum on women’s microenterprise development could agree on annual priorities, clarify roles and map referrals across licensing, finance, training and promotion. A small boundary-spanning secretariat could maintain the shared agenda, but its accountability should be located in the multi-actor forum rather than in an individual agency. Joint monitoring should combine outputs with entrepreneur-centred outcomes, including business continuity, market reach and the perceived usefulness of support. These are administrative design recommendations derived from the observed governance gaps; they are not interventions whose effectiveness has been tested in this study.

These recommendations are relevant to decentralised public administration beyond Kediri. Local governments commonly collaborate with banks, universities and community organisations without possessing a permanent institutional platform that connects their contributions. The resulting risk is not a shortage of programmes but the inability to make their benefits cumulative. Institutional connectivity provides an analytically useful criterion for comparing these policy arrangements, while the beneficiary–governance gap highlights whether citizens can shape the programmes intended to support them. Testing the proposed mechanisms in other cities would clarify their applicability beyond this exploratory case.

Figure 2. Parallelised collaboration and the beneficiary–governance gap



Source: Authors' analytical synthesis of interview, observational and documentary materials.

Translating the conceptual model into assessable administrative practice requires measures of joint decision-making, referral continuity, beneficiary representation and outcomes. Table 4 provides an illustrative monitoring design. Its thresholds are proposed operational benchmarks for local policy deliberation, not baseline values, findings from the Kediri dataset, or tested programme impacts. Specific targets should be negotiated with participating organisations and women entrepreneur representatives after an initial baseline assessment.

Table 4. Proposed implementation indicators for gender-responsive collaborative governance

Proposed action	Indicator and evidence	Indicative target*	Responsible parties
Joint policy forum	Meeting minutes documenting joint priorities and attendance	≥4 meetings per year	Municipality and sector partners
Women's policy voice	Share of decision-making seats occupied by women entrepreneur representatives; recorded votes	≥40% of voting seats	Forum and entrepreneur associations
Shared service referrals	Proportion of inter-agency referrals with a recorded disposition within 30 days	≥80% once baseline is set	Programme offices and referral coordinators
Integrated information	Quarterly dashboard covering referrals, participation and outcomes, disaggregated by gender	4 jointly reviewed reports per year	Municipal data team and partners

Beneficiary feedback	Proportion of recorded programme-design suggestions receiving a documented response	≥80% within 60 days	Forum secretariat and women's representatives
Programme continuity	Share of participating firms contacted for follow-up on support usefulness and business continuity	≥70% at 6 months	Municipality and evaluation partners

Source: Authors' proposed administrative monitoring framework. *All thresholds are illustrative, have not been implemented or validated in Kediri, and require participatory agreement and baseline measurement.

Limitations and future research

The study is exploratory and should be interpreted within substantial evidentiary boundaries. Five entrepreneur interviews cannot represent the range of industries, ages, household situations or business capacities among women entrepreneurs in Kediri, and the retained records do not permit those dimensions to be compared. The institutional material identifies actor categories but does not support a verified count or distribution of organisational interviewees.

The lack of attributable verbatim excerpts limits how directly readers can assess participants' own language. Documentary and administrative sources are more detailed about delivered programme outputs than about undocumented bargaining and informal coordination, so an absence of identified joint mechanisms is not proof that such interactions never happened. Finally, the study cannot estimate causal effects on turnover or enterprise survival. Triangulation across source types improves contextual interpretation, but does not remedy these limits or make the case statistically generalisable.

Future research should test the concepts of parallelised collaboration and the beneficiary-governance gap comparatively. Cross-city studies in Indonesia could examine whether similar patterns arise under different levels of fiscal capacity, political leadership, and civil-society organisation. Comparative work across Asian local governments could assess whether standing forums, integrated referral systems, and shared performance frameworks strengthen both policy learning and beneficiary agency. Cross-sector research could also identify when lead-organisation governance is sufficient and when more autonomous network-administrative arrangements become necessary.

CONCLUSION

Kediri has developed an active multi-actor policy support system for women-led microenterprises. Municipal agencies, universities, businesses, communities, and media contribute resources that are individually valuable, and the scale of the local microenterprise population has expanded substantially. Yet policy activity remains predominantly bilateral, project-based, and government-centred. The case therefore shows that actor participation and programme growth do not automatically produce integrated local governance.

We describe this configuration as parallelised collaboration: complementary activities coexist without sufficiently integrated decision-making, information sharing, or accountability. The case also reveals a beneficiary-governance gap in which women entrepreneurs are prominent as programme recipients but weakly institutionalised as policy actors. Together, these concepts explain how a local government can mobilise many partners while still lacking the institutional connectivity required for collaborative policy capacity.

For Asian public policy, the implication is that collaborative implementation should be assessed through the quality of institutional relationships and beneficiary voice, not the number of partnerships reported. Standing cross-sector deliberation, shared referral and monitoring arrangements, and formal representation for women

entrepreneurs would make specialised interventions more cumulative and adaptive. Comparative research should test whether the same mechanisms appear across other Indonesian cities and Asian policy sectors, particularly where decentralisation places increasing implementation responsibility on local governments.

Ethics and Participant Confidentiality

Interview and observational material is presented only as non-identifying thematic summaries; no participant names, attributable verbatim quotations, photographs or identifying records are disclosed. The documentation available for this manuscript does not contain an institutional ethics-committee approval letter, a written exemption determination, or a verifiable account of whether informed consent was obtained orally or in writing. Accordingly, the article makes no claim of formal ethics approval, an institutional exemption, or documented informed consent. This limitation is disclosed to avoid implying that an undocumented procedure was undertaken. The authors recognise the importance of voluntary participation, privacy protection and informed consent in human-subject research, and the original institutional records would be required to substantiate any additional statement about the procedures followed in this case.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no competing interests related to this manuscript.

Data Availability

The underlying interviews and field materials are not publicly deposited because they may identify research participants. Public municipal statistics and the cited policy documents are available from the governmental sources listed in the references.

REFERENCES

1. Alam, E., Han, X., Islam, A. R. M. T., Alvarez, E., Islam, M. K., & Dominey-Howes, D. (2024). The local governance of COVID-19: Lessons learned and ways forward in rural Bangladesh. Asian Politics & Policy, 16(2), 165–190. https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12737
2. Alwi, Susanti, G., & Gani, H. (2025). Enhancing food security in Indonesia: The role of policy entrepreneurs in the promotion of policy change. Asian Politics & Policy, 17(4), e70052. https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.70052
3. Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). Collaborative governance in theory and practice. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 18(4), 543–571. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032
4. Bacalla, B., Orbeta, J. C. N., Pusta, J. F., & Galleto, R. F. (2026). Collaborative governance between local government units (LGUs) and people's organizations in Panabo City. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science, 10(5), 12566–12579. https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100500849
5. Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis? Qualitative Research in Psychology, 18(3), 328–352. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769238
6. Brush, C. G., Edelman, L. F., Manolova, T., & Welter, F. (2019). A gendered look at entrepreneurship ecosystems. Small Business Economics, 53(2), 393–408. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-018-9992-9
7. Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Stone, M. M. (2015). Designing and implementing cross-sector collaborations: Needed and challenging. Public Administration Review, 75(5), 647–663. https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12432
8. Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. (2024, July 23). Hadiri KOWANI Expo dan Hari Kebaya Nasional, Menko Airlangga tegaskan dukungan bagi pelaku UMKM dari kalangan perempuan. https://ekon.go.id/publikasi/detail/5890/hadiri-kowani-expo-dan-hari-kebaya-nasional-menko-airlangga-tegaskan-dukungan-bagi-pelaku-umkm-dari-kalangan-perempuan

9. Dai, J., & Azhar, A. (2024). Collaborative governance in disaster management and sustainable development. Public Administration and Development, 44(4), 358–380. https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.2071
10. Emerson, K., Nabatchi, T., & Balogh, S. (2012). An integrative framework for collaborative governance. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 22(1), 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mur011
11. Government of Kediri City. (2019, August 5). Wali Kota Kediri puji keberadaan Kampung Jamu. https://kedirikota.go.id/p/dalamberita/3903/wali-kota-kediri-puji-keberadaan-kampung-jamu
12. Government of Kediri City. (2021a, January 20). Dukung UMKM terus berkembang, Pemerintah Kota Kediri terima bantuan CSR Bank Jatim. https://kedirikota.go.id/p/berita/1019674/dukung-umkm-terus-berkembang-pemerintah-kota-kediri-terima-bantuan-csr-bank-jatim
13. Government of Kediri City. (2021b, September 30). Buka JAPRI WEE, Bunda Fey: Perempuan harus berdaya, punya semangat dan mau belajar. https://kedirikota.go.id/p/berita/10110226/buka-japri-wee-bunda-fey-perempuan-harus-berdaya-punya-semangat-dan-mau-belajar
14. Government of Kediri City. (2021c, October 12). Rambah pasar digital, Pemkot Kediri fasilitasi foto produk gratis untuk UMKM. https://www.kedirikota.go.id/p/dalamberita/11046/rambah-pasar-digital-pemkot-kediri-fasilitasi-foto-produk-gratis-untuk-umkm
15. Government of Kediri City. (2023, June 15). Karya Kreatif Mataraman: Kolaborasi Pemkot Kediri dan KPwBI untuk gerakkan perekonomian. https://www.kedirikota.go.id/p/berita/10111706/karya-kreatif-mataraman-kolaborasi-pemkot-kediri-dan-kpwbi-untuk-gerakkan-perekonomian-kita-kediri
16. Government of Kediri City. (2026). Kinerja Dinas Koperasi, Usaha Mikro dan Tenaga Kerja. Satu Data Kota Kediri. Retrieved August 29, 2026, from https://satudata.kedirikota.go.id/data_dasar/cetak/168-kinerja-dinas-koperasi-usaha-mikro-dan-tenaga-kerja
17. Hidayat, A. R., Hospes, O., & Termeer, C. J. A. M. (2025). Why democratization and decentralization in Indonesia have mixed results on the ground: A systematic literature review. Public Administration and Development, 45, 159–172. https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.2095
18. Jennings, J. E., & Brush, C. G. (2013). Research on women entrepreneurs: Challenges to (and from) the broader entrepreneurship literature? Academy of Management Annals, 7(1), 663–715. https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520.2013.782190
19. Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. Development and Change, 30(3), 435–464. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7660.00125
20. Lee, J., & Doucette, J. (2025). (En)Gendering democracy in an emerging donor? Gender equality and civil society participation in Korea's international development cooperation policies. Asian Politics & Policy, 17(2), e70016. https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.70016
21. Lele, G. (2019). Asymmetric decentralization and the problem of governance: The case of Indonesia. Asian Politics & Policy, 11(4), 544–565. https://doi.org/10.1111/aspp.12493
22. Lestari, E. D., Kurniasari, F., Pratiwi, P. Y., Thilaga, S., & Ooi, B. W. (2025). Empowering women entrepreneurs: The role of financial literacy, inclusion, and access in enhancing MSE's performance and sustainability via women development program in Indonesia. Cogent Business & Management, 12(1), 2593078. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2025.2593078
23. Nurdin, N., Prasetyanti, R., Gati, R. A., Posumah, R. Y., & Oktavia, S. N. (2025). Inclusive leadership and bureaucratic reform for local government resilience: A study of women's economic empowerment and MSMEs in Special Region of Yogyakarta. Jurnal Pembangunan dan Administrasi Publik, 7(2). https://doi.org/10.32834/jpap.v7i2.1002
24. Pranitasari, D., Harini, S., Nugroho, S. H., Harahap, S. S., & Sudiarso, A. (2026). Digitalization and financial inclusion among women-led micro and small enterprises in Indonesia: An empirical perspective. Frontiers in Sociology, 11, 1813070. https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2026.1813070
25. Provan, K. G., & Kenis, P. (2008). Modes of network governance: Structure, management, and effectiveness. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 18(2), 229–252. https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum015
26. Purdy, J. M. (2012). A framework for assessing power in collaborative governance processes. Public Administration Review, 72(3), 409–417. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02525.x

27. Sudiana, K., Sule, E. T., Soemaryani, I., & Yunizar. (2020). The development and validation of the Penta Helix construct. Business: Theory and Practice, 21(1), 136–145. https://doi.org/10.3846/btp.2020.11231
28. Yin, R. K. (2018). Case study research and applications: Design and methods (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.
29. Yolanda, Y., Lubis, I. S., Aditiya, R., & Hamdani, L. (2026). Empowering women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises: Does the women's cooperative support program matter? Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics. https://doi.org/10.1111/apce.70058