



**Parahyangan Catholic University**  
**Faculty of Social and Political Sciences**  
**Department of International Relations Bachelor's Degree**

*Accredited Distinguished*

*SK BAN-PT No. 2579/SK/BAN-PT/AK-ISK/S/IV/2022*

**The UNFPA's Influence on Indonesian Governmental  
Response Regarding Gender-Based Violence  
Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Undergraduate Thesis

Study of International Regimes and Organizations

By

Mattea Marjorie Tane

6091901077

Bandung

2023



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Bandung  
2023

Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik  
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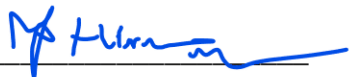
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Hereby states that this thesis is the writer's own research, and has not been presented, proposed, or published by other institutions to obtain any scholarly degree prior to the creation of this thesis. Any quoted idea or information from other parties is written in accordance with the principles of the research paper.

I declare this statement with fully responsibility and am prepared to accept any consequences given by the established regulations, if later this statement was found false.

Bandung, 16 June 2023



Mattea Marjorie Tane

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## ABSTRACT

Name : Mattea Marjorie Tane  
Student ID : 6091901077  
Title : The UNFPA's Influence on Indonesian Governmental Response Regarding Gender-Based Violence Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Gender-based violence has been a long-standing national issue in Indonesia, but the COVID-19 Pandemic has caused new challenges in GBV responses by the Indonesian Government, such as physical distancing directives that increase difficulties in accessing vital help services. Consequently, it is expected that an intergovernmental organization such as the UNFPA can influence the Indonesian Government's GBV response to be more holistic. Thus, this research aimed to explore **“How has the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) influenced the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (MOWECP) and the National Commission on Violence Against Women's (NCVAW) actions regarding gender-based violence prevention and mitigation during the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020-2021)?”** Measurement of the UNFPA's influence utilizes Mingst and Schechter's assessment of an intergovernmental organization's impact. By contextualizing GBV in Indonesia during the pandemic, findings show that the pandemic has created new challenges for effective governmental responses on GBV, requiring further assistance from the UNFPA. Examining the UNFPA's positions on GBV through its programs in Indonesia and cooperation with the MOWECP and NCVAW showcases how their assistance to GBV programming and coordination has created a beneficial consultative relationship. Further, measuring the influence of the UNFPA towards the Indonesian Government's GBV response at this time, whereby the role and function of the UNFPA during the pandemic did not change significantly due to needs that emerged from the systemic context and the organization's position as an IGO. From this, the research found that the UNFPA's influence towards the Indonesian Government's response towards gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic is limited to a certain extent, as it has maximized its position as an IGO to spread international values.

**Key Words:** Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Influence, Impact, UNFPA, MOWECP, NCVAW, COVID-19 Pandemic

## ABSTRAK

Nama : Mattea Marjorie Tane  
NPM : 6091901077  
Judul : Pengaruh UNFPA terhadap Tindak-Lanjut Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Pemerintah Indonesia Selama Masa Pandemi COVID-19

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Kekerasan Berbasis Gender (KBG) merupakan isu nasional di Indonesia yang memburuk pada masa Pandemi COVID-19. Tantangan baru timbul terhadap tindak-lanjut KBG dari Pemerintah Indonesia pada masa ini, seperti dengan pemberlakuan pembatasan kegiatan masyarakat yang menyulitkan akses terhadap layanan bantuan KBG. Organisasi antarpemerintah seperti UNFPA dapat mempengaruhi pembentukan tanggapan pemerintah yang lebih menyeluruh. Maka penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mencari tahu **“Bagaimana Pengaruh Dana Penduduk Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa (UNFPA) terhadap tindak lanjut Kekerasan Berbasis Gender yang dilaksanakan Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak (KPPPA) dan Komisi Nasional Anti-Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan (Komnas Perempuan) di Indonesia pada masa pandemi COVID-19 (2020-2023)?”** Penjelasan pengaruh dari UNFPA akan menggunakan pendekatan Mingst dan Schechter tentang *impact* dari organisasi antarpemerintah. Penelitian tentang KBG ini dilatarbelakangi pandemi COVID-19 sebagai isu multi-sektoral di Indonesia, dan dampaknya pada tanggapan pemerintah sehingga membutuhkan bantuan dari UNFPA. Eksplorasi pada posisi UNFPA di Indonesia mengenai KBG melalui program dengan KPPPA dan Komnas Perempuan menunjukkan bahwa bantuan UNFPA terhadap pelaksanaan dan koordinasi program KBG membentuk hubungan konsultatif yang baik. Ditemukan juga bahwa pengaruh UNFPA terhadap program tindak-lanjut Pemerintah Indonesia pada masa pandemic COVID-19, bersifat konsultatif berdasarkan peran organisasi sebagai penasihat. Akan tetapi, keleluasaan UNFPA untuk menyebar pengaruhnya kepada Pemerintah Indonesia dibatasi oleh keadaan sistemik, perannya di rezim internasional, serta dengan karakteristik organisasinya.

**Kata Kunci:** Kekerasan Berbasis Gender (KBG), Pengaruh, UNFPA, KPPPA, Komnas Perempuan, Pandemi COVID-19

## PREFACE

This undergraduate thesis, “**The UNFPA’s Influence on Indonesian Governmental Response Regarding Gender-Based Violence Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic**” was written as a fulfilment of requirements in obtaining a Bachelor’s Degree from the Department of International Relations at Parahyangan Catholic University.

Global issues related to gender equality in international relations is near and dear to my heart, especially growing up with strong, positive female figures in my life—they are true realizations of Chaka Khan-style, “I’m every woman, it’s all in me.” But I was very aware that not every person is able to experience their gender identities positively, as I did; for others, it may have instead exposed them to harm and violence. Exploring these injustices throughout university helped me position them academically, and it was only natural to take this topic up when starting my thesis.

Speaking honestly, this thesis was difficult to write in a balanced way. I had to compartmentalize so that the subject matter remained academic, while empathizing with survivors—real people, not just GBV cases or statistics. Data was also sparse at times. Despite that, I hope this finished product can give further insight on experiences with gender-based violence in the COVID-19 Pandemic, and how governments and international organizations should be able to care for survivors in a real way.

With this, I leave a passage from the poem “Praise Song for the Day” by Elizabeth Alexander. The real world is scary and unfair, but it is the human hope for something better that keeps us moving forward.

*I know there’s something better down the road.*

*We need to find a place where we are safe.*

*We walk into that which we cannot yet see.*

Bandung,  
Mattea Marjorie Tane

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CATAHU	<i>Catatan Tahunan Komnas Perempuan</i>
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
ESP	Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FPL	<i>Forum Pengada Layanan</i>
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GBViE	Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies Programming
GBVIMS	Gender-Based Violence Information Management Systems
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IGO	Intergovernmental Organization
KPKP-ST	<i>Kelompok Perjuangan Kesetaraan Perempuan Sulawesi Tengah</i>
KUPI	<i>Kongres Ulama Perempuan Indonesia</i>
LBH APIK	<i>Layanan Bantuan Hukum Asosiasi Perempuan Indonesia untuk Keadilan</i>
LNOB	Leave No One Behind programme
LPSK	<i>Lembaga Perlindungan Saksi dan Korban</i>
MNDP-NDPA	Ministry of National Development Planning-National Development Planning Agency
MOH	Ministry of Health
MORA	Ministry of Religious Affairs
MOWECP	Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection
NCCP	National Commission on Child Protection
NCD	National Commission on Disabilities
NCHR	National Commission on Human Rights
NCVAW	National Commission on Violence Against Women
NPFPA	National Population and Family Planning Agency
OGBV	Online Gender-Based Violence
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights
P2TP2A	<i>Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak</i>
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSEAH	Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harrassment
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UTPD PPA	<i>Unit Pelaksana Teknis Daerah Perlindungan Perempuan dan Anak</i>
SIMFONI-PPA	<i>Sistem Informasi Online Perlindungan Perempuan dan Anak</i>
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SPHPN	<i>Survei Pengalaman Hidup Perempuan Nasional</i>
SRH	Sexual-Reproductive Health
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
VAW	Violence Against Women
WCC	Womens’ Crisis Center
WFS	Women-Friendly Spaces
WHO	World Health Organization
YSIK	<i>Yayasan Sosial Indonesia untuk Kemanusiaan</i>



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

In recent times, gender equality, the empowerment of all genders including women and girls, and the upholding of human rights against violence has become a mainstay of international agendas. The topic of gender equality is being continually discussed throughout many international organizations and forums, where their solutions eventually trickle down and are implemented in different countries, per various social contexts to address very different problems. With this, the United Nations (UN) has covered it as the fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs): Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.<sup>1</sup> Thus, this further highlights its importance in this modern-day setting where everything changes rapidly. Consequently, the achievement of gender equality highlights an area of concern: the eradication of gender-based violence worldwide.

Gender-based violence (GBV) pertains to violence inflicted upon people on the basis of their gender, be it physical, sexual, or mental harm.<sup>2</sup> This definition was decided through the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment,” United Nations Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2021), <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>.

<sup>2</sup> “Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (A/RES/48/104),” United Nations (1993), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N94/095/05/PDF/N9409505.pdf?OpenElement>.

(A/RES/48/104), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1993.<sup>3</sup> GBV includes several types of violence under its umbrella, which in turn has its own further categories: domestic violence; femicide; sexual violence; human trafficking; female genital mutilation; child marriage; and online or digital violence.<sup>4</sup> While its discussion is mainly spotlighted on its affliction of women—officially designated as violence against women (VAW)—gender-based violence also affects people whose identities do not lie within the gender binary that is generally accepted in most societies.<sup>5</sup> This makes experiences related to GBV highly variative, complex, and multi-faceted. A World Health Organization (WHO) report showed that throughout the 2010s, at least one in every three women has experienced physical or sexual violence—amounting to around 736 million women globally.<sup>6</sup>

However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, quarantines, physical distancing, and other orders limiting human movement have exposed more people to GBV in all social

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<sup>3</sup> Nancy. F. Russo and Angela Pirlott, “Gender-Based Violence: Concepts, Methods, and Findings,” *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1087, no. 1 (November 1, 2006): 178–205, <https://doi.org/10.1196/annals.1385.024>.

<sup>4</sup> UN Women, “Frequently Asked Questions: Types of Violence against Women and Girls,” UN Women (UN Women), <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/faqs/types-of-violence>.

<sup>5</sup> “UN Expert Calls for a Holistic, Non-Binary Approach to Violence,” The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, June 20, 2022), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/06/un-expert-calls-holistic-non-binary-approach-violence>.

<sup>6</sup> “Violence against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018: Global, Regional and National Prevalence Estimates for Intimate Partner Violence against Women and Global and Regional Prevalence Estimates for Non-Partner Sexual Violence against Women,” *World Health Organization* (Geneva: World Health Organization, March 9AD), <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240022256>.

settings—online, at home, at the workplace, amongst others.<sup>7</sup> These rules and directives have also severely restricted access to the health and social services that provide vital support for survivors, which in turn prevent effective responses to survivors of violence.<sup>8</sup> Globally, countries ranging from France, Singapore, Cyprus, Argentina, and the United States of America have all logged increased GBV reports nationally after the COVID-19 pandemic globalized.<sup>9</sup>

In particular, the problem of gender-based violence in Indonesia has always been rampant, even before the COVID-19 Pandemic. For one, reports on violence against women alone in 2019 was logged at 431,471 cases, which amounts to a 6% increase from the previous year.<sup>10</sup> But as with the rest of the world, the pandemic brought strict quarantine and physical distancing directives from the Indonesian Government throughout portions of the country to mitigate the spread of the virus. With that, the shift to heavier use of digital technologies during the pandemic has prompted higher barriers of access to the help required by survivors, as well as other resources in

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<sup>7</sup> Shalini Mittal and Tushar Singh, “Gender-Based Violence during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Mini-Review,” *Frontiers in Global Women’s Health* 1, no. 4 (September 8, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fgwh.2020.00004>.

<sup>8</sup> Judy Dlamini, “Gender-Based Violence, Twin Pandemic to COVID-19,” *Critical Sociology* 47, no. 4-5 (November 30, 2020): 089692052097546, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920520975465>.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 585.

<sup>10</sup> “Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan Meningkatkan: Kebijakan Penghapusan Kekerasan Seksual Menciptakan Ruang Aman Bagi Perempuan Dan Anak Perempuan,” *Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan* (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan, March 6, 2020), <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/catatan-tahunan-detail/catahu-2020-kekerasan-terhadap-perempuan-meningkat-kebijakan-penghapusan-kekerasan-seksual-menciptakan-ruang-aman-bagi-perempuan-dan-anak-perempuan-catatan-kekerasan-terhadap-perempuan-tahun-2019>.

preventing and mitigating GBV.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the situation concerning GBV has worsened. The Indonesian National Commission on Violence Against Women (*KOMNAS Perempuan*) reported a total of 338,496 cases of violence against women in 2021—which is about a 50% increase from 2020—with countless more still left unreported.<sup>12</sup> However, it is important to understand that there is still a very large gap in the data relating to GBV, aside from violence against women—this leaves statistics regarding gender-based violence against men, non-binary people, amongst others, severely underreported. Furthermore, various factors dictate the reasons why people report their violence cases to the proper authorities, such as the shift to digital technology during the pandemic and stigmatization around the issue.<sup>13</sup> With this in mind, there is also still much the Indonesian Government is yet to do regarding the issue of GBV, especially as the world continues to deal with the aftermath and exacerbation of problems caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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<sup>11</sup> “Catatan Tahunan 2021 — Perempuan Dalam Himpitan Pandemi: Lonjakan Kekerasan Seksual, Kekerasan Siber, Perkawinan Anak Dan Keterbatasan Penanganan Di Tengah COVID19,” *Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan* (Jakarta, Indonesia: Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan, March 5, 2021), <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/uploadedFiles/1466.1614933645.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> “Catatan Tahunan 2022 — Bayang-Bayang Stagnansi: Daya Pencegahan Dan Penanganan Berbanding Peningkatan Jumlah, Ragam Dan Kompleksitas Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Terhadap Perempuan,” *Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan* (Jakarta, Indonesia: Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan, March 8, 2022), <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/catatan-tahunan-detail/catahu-2022-bayang-bayang-stagnansi-daya-pencegahan-dan-penanganan-berbanding-peningkatan-jumlah-ragam-dan-kompleksitas-kekerasan-berbasis-gender-terhadap-perempuan>.

<sup>13</sup> “Catatan Tahunan 2021 — Perempuan Dalam Himpitan Pandemi: Lonjakan Kekerasan Seksual, Kekerasan Siber, Perkawinan Anak Dan Keterbatasan Penanganan Di Tengah COVID19,” *Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan* (Jakarta, Indonesia: Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan, March 5, 2021), <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/uploadedFiles/1466.1614933645.pdf>.

To mitigate this issue of gender-based violence as it becomes a more pronounced issue globally, the role and influence of international organizations becomes more important to fill in the gaps of what governments cannot cover. For this, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is considered one of the forefront organizations in responding to the problem of gender-based violence worldwide. First operating in 1969, the UNFPA acts as the United Nations' designated arm related to population as well as sexual and reproductive health, operating worldwide under the UN System.<sup>14</sup> Alongside other international organizations, the UNFPA plays an important role in ensuring the prevention of GBV and how the appropriate actors can provide relief to survivors. In particular, the UNFPA has been active in Indonesia since 1972, acting by providing technical training and assistance to the relevant health and social workers, as well as providing evidence-based advocacy.<sup>15</sup> Looking at the big picture, it could be said that the UNFPA should have a certain influence on how the Indonesian Government acts in response to GBV, particularly as the COVID-19 Pandemic exacerbates inequalities in access to the relevant support facilities. With this, this research is interested in finding out how the UNFPA, through their programs and functions, has influenced the Indonesian Government's response toward mitigating gender-based violence throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, if at all.

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<sup>14</sup> UNFPA, "About Us," UNFPA (UNFPA, 2018), <https://www.unfpa.org/about-us>.

<sup>15</sup> UNFPA Indonesia, "About Us," UNFPA Indonesia, July 7, 2017, <https://indonesia.unfpa.org/en/node/25335/>.

## 1.2 Problem Identification

### 1.2.1 Problem Description

Given their long-standing history in the country, the UNFPA is thought to have a certain influence on the GBV response in Indonesia, usually through supporting the Indonesian Government or other local non-government actors in their preventative functions or provision of relief to survivors. In particular, the UNFPA works with several major implementing partners within the Indonesian Government, particularly the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (MOWECP), and the National Commission on Violence Against Women (NCVAW).<sup>16</sup> With these partners, the UNFPA makes strides in conducting dialogue with people in all over Indonesia on gender-based violence, developing and monitoring strategies to eliminate it, and strengthening available health and support facilities for survivors of gender-based violence.<sup>17</sup> Their consistent relations with various parts of the Indonesian Government through their programs and activities suggest that there is a correlation between the UNFPA's activities and how Indonesia handles its GBV cases.

With this, it is important to acknowledge the problems still faced by the Indonesian Government in order to respond to GBV as the reports received yearly also increase. This also poses as extra challenges and considerations that the UNFPA must bear in mind as they partake in mitigating the issue in Indonesia. Specifically, Indonesia lacks

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<sup>16</sup> UNFPA Indonesia, "UNFPA Indonesia Annual Report 2021," *UNFPA Indonesia* (Jakarta, Indonesia: UNFPA Indonesia, August 2022), <https://indonesia.unfpa.org/en/publications/unfpa-indonesia-annual-report-2021>.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-23.

an all-encompassing response in different sectors to protect females and other genders from violence, and must ensure wider access to important health services alongside providing quality education as a preventative measure against GBV.<sup>18</sup> Alongside this, the Indonesian Government also faces many gaps in their available data regarding gender-based violence, considering how many go unreported annually (especially for men and non-binary people), and fluctuations in the factors that affect why survivors report.<sup>19</sup> With this, the Indonesian view on gender-based violence as the subject is still significantly marred by stigmatization, stemming from tightly held socio-cultural values regarding gender roles that tend to be patriarchal and androcentric, alongside other systemic issues.<sup>20</sup> For this, the Indonesian Government relies on and seeks support from non-governmental organizations—both national and international—including the UNFPA to support what they cannot cover just yet.

While the UNFPA has made many efforts to aid Indonesia’s GBV responses, it is not yet clear how far they impact the tangible actions and programs carried out nationally regarding the issue. A hypothesis can be put forth after seeing the recent conditions: it could be assumed that the UNFPA’s influence within the Indonesian

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<sup>18</sup> Anjali Sen and Jamshed M. Kazi, “Will We Ever End Violence against Women?,” *The Jakarta Post* (PT Bina Media Tenggara, October 7, 2020), <https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2020/10/07/will-we-ever-end-violence-against-women.html>.

<sup>19</sup> “Bayang-Bayang Stagnansi: Daya Pencegahan Dan Penanganan Berbanding Peningkatan Jumlah, Ragam Dan Kompleksitas Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Terhadap Perempuan,” *Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan* (Jakarta, Indonesia: Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan, March 8, 2022), <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/catatan-tahunan-detail/catahu-2022-bayang-bayang-stagnansi-daya-pencegahan-dan-penanganan-berbanding-peningkatan-jumlah-ragam-dan-kompleksitas-kekerasan-berbasis-gender-terhadap-perempuan>.

<sup>20</sup> Ricarda Gerlach, “The Fight to Outlaw Sexual Violence in Indonesia,” *Inside Indonesia* (Indonesian Resources and Information Program (IRIP), November 25, 2020), <https://www.insideindonesia.org/the-fight-to-outlaw-sexual-violence-in-indonesia>.

Government and their programs depend on the different Ministries and Commissions that they work with. This includes how their functions (be it empowerment and wellbeing) for the Indonesian populace shapes their various goals, programs, and stances on gender-based violence. With consideration of the UNFPA—including their activities, role as an intergovernmental organization in the UN System, relationship with the Indonesian Government, and the scope of problems related to GBV in the country—the influence the organization holds over Indonesia’s gender-based violence response comes into question. From this perspective, with the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its attached social problems, it remains to be further observed and explained how the UNFPA’s functions and programs within Indonesia have influenced the country’s response towards rampant GBV numbers throughout 2020-2022.

### **1.2.2 Research Scope**

This research focuses on the UNFPA and how they have affected tangible actions and solutions done by the Indonesian Government—through their related ministries—to combat the rising numbers of gender-based violence throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. Specifically, this research observes the UNFPA’s focus areas in the following forms of gender-based violence, namely due to prominent increases in data and reports throughout the pandemic: domestic violence; sexual violence; and online gender-based violence. The GBV categories of female genital mutilation and femicide will be excluded due to a lack of available data, while child marriage and human trafficking constitute complex topics that deserve their own research. The functions of



the UNFPA will remain the focal-point of the study, particularly in providing valuable technical and teaching assistance to the relevant health and social officials that treats survivors of gender-based violence, and while also facilitating evidence-based advocacy through conducting dialogues, research, and the strategies to prevent it.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, this research is interested in how the programs affected the actions and steps taken by the Indonesian Government as a response to rising gender-based violence cases. For this, Indonesia has a long history of gender-based violence that remains pervasive, particularly towards women. The country's extensive population, bound together by stigmatization of gender and its related violence, makes for a broad and daunting challenge to be tackled by the Indonesian Government and its related actors.<sup>22</sup> Specifically this study will observe two institutions within the Indonesian Government, namely the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (MWECP) and the National Commission on Violence Against Women (NCVAW). This is because these two institutions are amongst the UNFPA's most important governmental partners, especially within their scope of work regarding domestic violence, sexual violence, and online gender-based violence. Furthermore, this research will couple this geographic setting with the timeframe of 2020 to 2023—which

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<sup>21</sup> UNFPA, "About Us," UNFPA (UNFPA, 2018), <https://www.unfpa.org/about-us>.

<sup>22</sup> Devi Asmarani, "Ending Rape Culture in Indonesia," *Magdalene.co*, May 27, 2016, <https://magdalene.co/story/ending-rape-culture-in-indonesia>.

constitutes the most devastating portions of the COVID-19 Pandemic where Indonesia has faced much hardship and has added further dimension to their GBV responses.<sup>23</sup>

Overall, the research will focus primarily on the works of the UNFPA and how they affect the actions taken by the Indonesian Government on gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, while providing context on the problem within Indonesia as a whole.

### **1.2.3 Problem Formulation**

Despite the UNFPA's long-standing activity in Indonesia and their function in improving health services for GBV survivors and evidence-based advocacy, it remains unclear exactly how they have influenced the actions carried out by the Indonesian Government in nation-wide responses. This is because while the UNFPA's activities for gender-based violence is numerous, their correspondence with the Indonesian Government does not immediately indicate whether the promotion of good GBV practices were implemented as a result. Considering the increasing number of gender-based violence cases in Indonesia and the urgency for prevention and mitigation, how the relevant government actors have responded to this problem with the aid of the UNFPA as an intergovernmental organization during the COVID-19 Pandemic needs explanation. From this, the following research question will be asked: **How has the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) influenced the Ministry of Women's**

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<sup>23</sup> "Komnas Perempuan, "Fourth Universal Periodic Review of Indonesia 14th Session November 2022," *Komnas Perempuan* (Jakarta: Komnas Perempuan, 2022), <https://komnasperempuan.go.id/laporan-internasional-detail/fourth-universal-periodic-review-of-indonesia-14th-session-november-2022>.

**Empowerment and Child Protection (MOWECP) and the National Commission on Violence Against Women's (NCVAW) response regarding gender-based violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020-2023)?**

**1.3 Purpose and Utility of the Research**

**1.3.1 Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of this research is to explain how the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) influences the Indonesian Government's response to gender-based violence, especially during the COVID-19 Pandemic throughout February of 2020 until April of 2023. More specifically, this research aims to examine how the UNFPA—as a long-standing international figure related to GBV—thereby affects and informs actions taken by the Indonesian Government regarding the problem, as their impact is still unclear within the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic. This is also to explore the UNFPA's wide range of activities and functions within Indonesia that makes them an important intergovernmental actor under the United Nations system, particularly in helping the prevention and mitigation of gender-based violence. Furthermore, this research aims to contextualize the actions of the Indonesian Government throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic with regards to gender-based violence, namely examining Indonesia's various gender-based violence programs and strategies to prevent and mitigate the problem, well as their execution.

### 1.3.2 Utility of the Research

The research will be useful for further understanding on the influence on international organizations and bodies, especially the UNFPA as part of the United Nations, on responding to problems within a domestic sphere. It is hoped that the research will shed light on the dynamic of the working relationship between various parts of the Indonesian Government and the UNFPA as they tackle the country's problems such as gender-based violence. From here, examining this dynamic will also illuminate how an organization, namely the UNFPA, can affect a country's tangible actions to effectively handle a widespread, yet stigmatized and underreported problem. Lastly, it is hoped that this research will also prompt further research on gender-based violence, particularly in Indonesia, where the subject is perpetuated by rigid gender expectations, and thereby start to dismantle the stigma surrounding it.

### 1.4 Literature Review

At a bird's eye view, literature on gender-based violence is wide and encapsulates the many facets of study. Most pronounced, gender-based violence is heavily dependent on the culture of the setting where it is studied. This is argued in the journal "Gender-Based Violence: Concepts, Methods, and Findings", which highlights new concepts and methodologies to researching about gender-based violence.<sup>24</sup> The article finds that gender, power, sexuality, mass media, health, and cultural contexts affect the

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<sup>24</sup> Nancy F. Russo and Angela Pirlott, "Gender-Based Violence: Concepts, Methods, and Findings," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1087, no. 1 (November 1, 2006): 178–205, <https://doi.org/10.1196/annals.1385.024>.

happening of GBV cases, and that violent images against women—facilitated by globalization and the digital shift—perpetuate this culture of gender-based violence. The article provides perspectives on what should be observed in examining problems of gender-based violence within a certain context in a country.

Academic literature on the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the increased and evolving risks of gender-based violence is starting to become more numerous and extensive. The article “Problem framing of increased gender-based violence by national governments of Argentina and Spain during COVID-19: an interpretive policy analysis” evaluates GBV mitigation efforts in Argentina and Spain respectively.<sup>25</sup> The article finds that GBV itself is not clearly defined in their policies due to a “de-gendered” discourse, thus affecting on its unempathetic handling.<sup>26</sup>

This study is also supplemented by a growing number of journal articles within Indonesia that observed the effect of social media and technology that gave rise to online gender-based violence. The journal article “Media Sosial dan Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Online Selama Pandemi COVID-19” finds that social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram, amongst others, have become breeding grounds for violence and sexual harassment in Indonesian online spaces—particularly

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<sup>25</sup> Anouck Joëlle Cremers and Mary Hadley, “Problem Framing of Increased Gender-Based Violence by National Governments of Argentina and Spain during COVID-19: An Interpretive Policy Analysis,” *Journal of Gender-Based Violence* 6, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1332/239868021x16450964571869>.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, 378.

for women—eliminating safety for them on the internet.<sup>27</sup> The article highlights the double-edged sword quality of technology: able to harm and facilitate gender-based violence, and yet retains potential on being a helpful medium of recovery for survivors while being a space for advocacy.<sup>28</sup>

Furthermore, the journal article “Konstruksi Pengaturan Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Online Di Indonesia” reviews the available legislation in Indonesia against online gender-based violence (OGBV)—and gender-based violence as a whole—and examines the vacuum of law that exists surrounding the problem.<sup>29</sup> It is found that Indonesia is currently lacking a proper legal definition for OGBV, and thus must implement: swift handling of the reported case; provision of education to law enforcement while also widening their cyber scope; and offering assistance to survivors.<sup>30</sup>

In reviewing the previous three journal articles, the first article has a limited scope of study as it discusses GBV handling in only Spain and Argentina, while the second and third articles are specific towards online gender-based violence in Indonesia. However, the three journals provide insight and understanding on governmental perspectives in responding to gender-based violence at the national level.

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<sup>27</sup> Nur Hayati, “MEDIA SOSIAL DAN KEKERASAN BERBASIS GENDER ONLINE SELAMA PANDEMI COVID-19,” *HUMAYA: Jurnal Hukum, Humaniora, Masyarakat, Dan Budaya* 1, no. 1 (July 30, 2021): 43–52, <https://doi.org/10.33830/humaya.v1i1.1858.2021>.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 50.

<sup>29</sup> Fadillah Adkiras, Fatma Reza Zubarita, and Zihan Tasha Maharani Fauzi, “Konstruksi Pengaturan Kekerasan Berbasis Gender Online Di Indonesia,” *Jurnal Lex Renaissance* 6, no. 4 (October 1, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.20885/jlr.vol6.iss4.art10>.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 387.

Outside of studies regarding gender-based violence, the research also accounts for literature discussing international organisations under the United Nations (UN) System and their ability to influence a country's GBV policies. The book "Agenda Setting, the UN, and NGOs: Gender Violence and Reproductive Rights" reviews how international organizations framed the issue of GBV and reproductive rights before the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women, and used mobilizing international structures to their advantage.<sup>31</sup> The book will be useful to evaluate the role of the UN and other advocacy NGOs in international gender-based violence agenda-setting, and reference how they may be applied at a more domestic level.

As it currently stands, it must be noted that there are gaps in the literature regarding the topic of gender-based violence, particularly in Indonesia. Firstly, there is a clear absence of scholarly articles and documents on the role of the UNFPA in Indonesia: information is difficult to find outside of official reports written by the UNFPA themselves, related UN organizations, and from government bodies such as the National Commission on Violence Against Women. Furthermore, literature regarding gender-based violence in general, and how men and non-binary people are also potential survivors are very few. In contrast, journal articles regarding online gender-based violence and domestic violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic are more common, but not as readily available.

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<sup>31</sup> Jutta M. Joachim, *Agenda Setting, the UN, and NGOs: Gender Violence and Reproductive Rights*, JSTOR (Georgetown University Press, 2007), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt2tt5f5>.

Thus, after mapping the above articles and books, this research paper's position within the literature will be to fill the existing gaps regarding the response (including prevention and mitigation) of gender-based violence in Indonesia throughout the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspective of an intergovernmental organization (IGO) towards governments. It will also add to literature on domestic violence, sexual violence, and online gender-based violence.

### **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

In analyzing the work of the UNFPA with regards to preventing gender-based violence, and how they have influenced the Indonesian Government's response to it, this research mainly utilizes the concept of Impact and Influence of Intergovernmental Organizations, which is rooted from Institutional Liberalism. It also uses a Post-Modern Feminist Perspective to supplement the analysis regarding gender-based violence, its complexities, and governmental responses on it.

**Institutional Liberalism** finds states, as the main actors of the international system, will find ways to cooperate that benefits themselves according to their differing interests.<sup>32</sup> This cooperation in world politics is facilitated by the presence of multilateral institutions to ensure the states' freedoms—these relations operate at both international and domestic levels, where cooperation occurs due to shared interests and prospects of reciprocity.<sup>33</sup> Stemming from this, relationship between the UNFPA and

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<sup>32</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "Twenty Years of Institutional Liberalism," *International Relations* 26, no. 2 (June 2012): 125–38, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117812438451>.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, 127.



the Indonesian Government with regards to GBV can be explained through the concept of **influence and impact under Institutional Liberalism** of international organizations—where these organizations can affect the creation of social policies and responses towards a certain issue.<sup>34</sup> From this, international institutions—including intergovernmental organizations such as the UNFPA—operating within a country highlights the policy preferences of the actors within the domestic sphere, thus making them constitutive actors.<sup>35</sup> The rules created internationally or domestically may manifest as an institution or organization, and consequently, these organizations can use their influence to push certain values—in-line with the international community where their functions can aid the countries where they operate.<sup>36</sup>

The article “**Assessing intergovernmental impact: problems and prospects**” asserts that on a general level, organizational impact of an IGO happens when given objective conditions change which would not happen if not for the organization’s intervention.<sup>37</sup> With this, various criteria are most often observed while examining and explaining an intergovernmental organization’s influence and is separated by whether it happens internally or externally, shown in the following table:

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<sup>34</sup> Robert O. Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory* (2018; repr., New York: Routledge, 1989), 158–79.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 161.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 164.

<sup>37</sup> Karen Mingst and Michael G. Schechter, “Assessing Intergovernmental Impact: Problems and Prospects,” *Review of International Studies* 11, no. 3 (July 1, 1985): 199–206, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0260210500114433>.

Internal	External
The organization's capacity for autonomous decision-making;	The achievements of this organization compared to another organization with similar goals and functions;
The ability of current organization leadership to meet expectations set by the original partners;	The extent of how the political relationship between the organization and state actors changed as a result of their activities;
The organization's ability for effective problem-solving;	The extent where state leaders are compelled to alter positions due to the organization;
The degree in which the organization has achieved their set goals.	The extent of awareness between actors that was raised by the organization.

*Figure 1 Table of Criteria Explaining an Intergovernmental Organization's Impact*<sup>38</sup>

Furthermore, the observation of these external criterion is supported by evaluation of three factors, namely: the systemic situation, the international regime, and organizational characteristics. These factors are become important determinants in explaining an IGO's impact, thus affecting the target and parameters of impact (directness, intentionality, and changes over time).<sup>39</sup> This research will focus on external influence and impact which can be seen in how far their work has changed political relationships with state actors and if the positions of these actors changed; and lastly, the extent of awareness between actors that has been raised by the organization.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 200.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 203-205.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 200.

Furthermore, **Postmodern Feminism** in the context of International Relations will be used to fully understand the sum of problems regarding gender-based violence in Indonesia, and analyze the conceptualization of violence. The main perspective of Postmodern Feminism argues that the experiences of women and females are diverse and highly variative—it also affects and is affected by other social factors and systems of oppression, including race, class, economic standing, and sexuality.<sup>41</sup> From this, Postmodern Feminism asserts that violence occurs because of the notion that powerful individuals control people who do not share the same standing through many forms of coercive force—this is a manifestation of patriarchal ideas that permeate within society.<sup>42</sup> As a result, if women hold a lower position in society than men in a certain society, the likelier they are to suffer from violence. It must be also acknowledged that violence does not only comprise of male violence towards women, and this does not negate that women can inflict that same coercive force towards men.<sup>43</sup> Reexamining the complexity of gender-based violence as an international phenomenon during the COVID-19 Pandemic reinforces that men, women, and other genders do not experience globalizing problems in the same way.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Teresa L. Ebert, “The ‘Difference’ of Postmodern Feminism,” *College English* 53, no. 8 (December 1991): 886–904, <https://doi.org/10.2307/377692>.

<sup>42</sup> bell hooks, *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics* (2000; repr., New York: Routledge, 2000), 61-65.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>44</sup> Hilde Jakobsen, “What’s Gendered about Gender-Based Violence?,” *Gender & Society* 28, no. 4 (April 29, 2014): 537–61, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243214532311> ; J. Ann Tickner and Laura Sjoberg, “Feminism,” in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 205–19 ; Laura J Shepherd, *Gender Matters in Global Politics: A Feminist Introduction to International Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

In this research, the Influence and Impact of an Intergovernmental Organization (rooted in Institutional Liberalism) will be used to analyze the relationship between UNFPA and the various actors within the Indonesian Government that they work with, in response to gender-based violence. This is to observe and explain the UNFPA's influence in Indonesian Government within a domestic context, and how this helps in responding to GBV during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Furthermore, this research's interest in gender-based violence as part of the UNFPA's scope of work utilizes Post-Modern Feminism to understand its complexity in Indonesia. This is considering that the complexity of GBV give context and challenge the UNFPA's influence on Indonesia's policies regarding the globalizing problem of gender-based violence, especially in the face of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

The research being carried out has utilized a qualitative research method, focusing on data collection followed by analysis and writing.<sup>45</sup> This method of research began with data collection from the relevant documents, reports, and interviews, from the UNFPA, the MOWECP, and NCVAW, and other entities; it was followed by an analysis that was henceforth refined into an extensive review of the scope of research. This method supported studying the case of the UNFPA within Indonesia regarding

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<sup>45</sup> John W Creswell and J David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (2014; Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, n.d.), 51-52.

their influence on actions regarding gender-based violence in the COVID-19 Pandemic.

### **1.6.1 Research Method**

As previously mentioned, this research carried out a qualitative research method, a study case that relied mostly on textual data.<sup>46</sup> The qualitative research method—as it is best suited for understanding how entities interact regarding a social problem—helped examine and explain the dynamic of the relationship between the UNFPA, as an international organization functioning within a domestic scope, and Indonesia. Furthermore, it clarified the response of the Indonesian Government with regards to the growing problem of gender-based violence, and how the UNFPA have affected their responses.

### **1.6.2 Data-Collection Technique**

To match the qualitative research method, the research used text-based data to enforce a better understanding of the issue.<sup>47</sup> Literary study was primarily used, relying on reports that are published by the appropriate sources from various parts of the Indonesian Government alongside the UNFPA themselves, amongst other documents. The reports, press releases, position papers, and guidelines, and other documents from the authority of the Indonesian Government and the UNFPA, was regarded as primary sources. Other data will collect from relevant studies in Indonesia and scholarly articles

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

regarding gender-based violence and the COVID-19 Pandemic, were classified as secondary sources.

### **1.7 Structure of the Research**

The following research is divided into five chapters. **Chapter I** has introduced the problem, generally backgrounding gender-based violence in Indonesia and the current conditions of COVID-19 which affected how the country responds to the problem. It identified the problems and set limits to the research scope—the actions of the Indonesian Government in preventing and mitigating gender-based violence throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, and how the UNFPA has affected these actions. It reviewed the currently available literature regarding the topic and explained the purpose and utility of the research, the theoretical framework, and research methodology.

**Chapter II** discussed in depth regarding the problem of gender-based violence in Indonesia. It highlights the current problems that is being faced in its prevention and mitigation within the country's socio-cultural context. It explained dynamics of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Indonesia, and how it has impacted the occurrence of gender-based violence domestically. The chapter also explained the Indonesian Government's available responses to gender-based violence, including the available framework on preventing and mitigating GBV, through the Ministry of Womens' Empowerment and Child Protection and the National Commission on Violence Against Women.

**Chapter III** profiled the UNFPA's programs, projects, collaborations, and other work in Indonesia relating to gender-based violence. The chapter also took a closer look at the work the UNFPA is implementing globally and with actors from the Indonesian Government—namely the MOWECP and NCVAW. The chapter also observed how the UNFPA has shifted their GBV prevention and mitigation programs in line with the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Chapter IV** is devoted to explaining fully the impact and influence of the UNFPA on Indonesia's actions in response to increasing numbers of gender-based violence throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. The research examined all the organization's activities in relation to Indonesia's GBV response throughout the pandemic, and how their relationship has affected its formulation and execution. Based upon this and through the conceptual framework laid out regarding impact and influence, the chapter observed how the UNFPA's activities have affected the response of the Indonesian Government on GBV during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Lastly, **Chapter V** rounded off on the discussion by combining the previous analyses, and is dedicated to answering the research question that was asked in Chapter I. As the research paper's conclusion, this chapter explained the influence and impact that the UNFPA, through its programs and functions, has on the actions being carried out in Indonesia in the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic.