

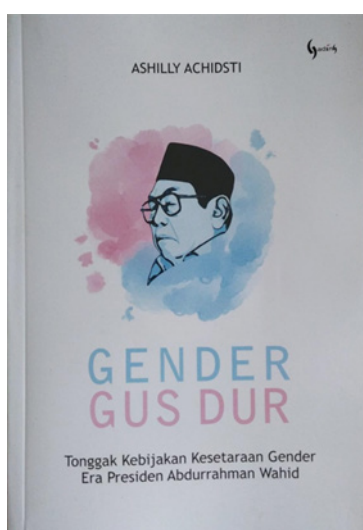
## Book Review

### Policy Innovation in the Short Life of State Leadership

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#### Book Identity

Title	: Gender Gus Dur: Tonggak Kebijakan Kesetaraan Gender Era Presiden Abdurrahman Wahid
Author	: Ashilly Achidsti
Publisher	: Gading Publishing
Edition	: First, 2021
Number of Pages	: 149

K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid (or known as Gus Dur) occupied his leadership as the President of the Republic of Indonesia for 21 months only (i.e., from October 20, 1999 to July 23, 2001). However, in his short leadership period, he left a fairly brilliant history, i.e., the stipulation of Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000 concerning Gender Mainstreaming. This is deemed to be the climax of long and steep struggle for gender equality in Indonesia.

Indonesia has been stuck in the classic model of women's struggle in the implementation of nation building for a long time, i.e., the strategy of "Women and Development". The state is only committed to fight for women to be able to get out of the house, i.e., helping to fulfill the household's

economic needs. Gender inequality, which is still prominent in society, is not the focus of policy. This was carried out in the New Order era. A few years before entering the reform era, gender discourse began to roll, not through public policies, but through actions from civil society. We could say we entered the second strategy of the feminist struggle, i.e., the era of "Gender and Development". It was only after the reforms, and Gus Dur became President, that efforts to get into the third strategy, i.e., gender mainstreaming, began. *First*, the action was taken by changing the name of Ministry of Women, which was initially the Minister of Women's Role to the Minister of Women's Empowerment. The change was made more fundamentally on December 19, 2000, or

seven months before Gus Dur's leadership was overthrown at the Special Session of People's Consultative Assembly, feminists succeeded in convincing Gus Dur about the importance of gender mainstreaming and in Gus Dur's power, Presidential Instruction No. 9/2000 concerning Gender Mainstreaming. It was then successfully signed and has been effectively implemented since then. Therefore, the third strategy of struggle for women's rights, has at least been implemented.

That is where Gus Dur's achievements were. However, Gus Dur's contribution in transforming public policy became the subject of Ashilly Achidsti's study in her postgraduate thesis at the Master Program in Management and Public Policy, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, and then recorded it under the title as written above. This book deserves to be published since it describes an important milestone in the long history of gender justice in Indonesia in detail.

This book has four chapters. The first chapter briefly describes the women-friendly policies developed by President Gus Dur. The second chapter describes Gus Dur's thoughts and attitudes regarding gender equality in the midst of discrimination against women during the New Order era. In the third chapter, an elaboration is carried out by mapping the actors and political communication of gender equality policies during the Gus Dur period. The last chapter discusses three contemporary issues that have emerged in this reform era, which seem to be the anti-climax of struggle for gender equality. The first issue highlights the law on the elimination of domestic violence, which according to the author still has holes that need to be patched. The second one is the very pro-gender Elimination of Sexual Violence Bill, which remains as a bill to date and it failed to be further discussed in the People's Representative Council until the end of 2021. The resistance of the members

of House of Representatives to the Bill seems to be quite dominant. The third issue is the Family Resilience Bill, which the author views as a form of state interference in the private affairs of family and should be protected by the state, meaning that it is very anti gender. The fourth chapter presents a separate writing by the author other than her thesis for her undergraduate study. The author wants to describe that although gender has become mainstream, the state is not yet fully gender sensitive since there is still a gender bias bill (i.e., Family Resilience Bill), and there is also a pro-gender bill (i.e., Elimination of Sexual Violence Bill) which failed to be the agenda in House of Representative.

At the end of this book, there is a very interesting epilogue from a gender expert, Prof. Musdah Mulia, titled "The Difficulty of Enforcing Gender Equality". What he wrote underlines Ashilly's description in her last chapter, that the gender struggle is not over. yet. There are still many stumbling blocks that have not been removed. One of the quite big and disturbing blocks is religion, to be more precise, the non-contextual interpretation of religion. Therefore, he suggested "The Need for Religious Teachings and Beliefs Reconstruction on Gender Relations from Justice and Gender Equality Perspective (Indonesian: *Perlunya Upaya Rekonstruksi Ajaran Agama dan Kepercayaan Mengenai Relasi Gender dengan Perspektif Keadilan dan Kesetaraan Gender*)" (p. 135)