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# Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research

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### ISSN

The online ISSN of *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* is **2352-5398**.

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# Women's Economic Development and Sustainable Development Agenda Among Coffee Smallholders in Lahat, South Sumatera

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**Abstract**—Women contribute significantly to the Indonesian coffee sector. Coffee is a vital part of the local economy in Indonesia, particularly in several districts in South Sumatera's provinces. This paper focuses mainly to capture data that could illuminate key indicators of women's empowerment in the development agenda and the relations with coffee productivity. Indonesia, which has the potential of coffee as a sector of strengthening the national economy, can not only rely on traditional farmers without focusing the women empowerment. The share of labor in coffee production provided by women was estimated at 70%. The problem as general comes with the point to make sure that women coffee smallholders can decide and influence the decision, self-perceptions, personal freedom, access to and control over resources, support from social networks, and access to and decisions about services. This research utilizes the concept of women in development: the development of dual roles and sustainable development to provide the perspective on how women are key stakeholders in improving coffee production. This approach is, therefore, essentials to comprehending the discourse of maintaining women empowerment and coffee productivity in Indonesia.

**Keywords**—women empowerment, farmers, coffee, women development, and sustainable development.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment is a relatively recent notion that has become widely employed in development discourse. Women's empowerment is a concept that has been developed at The Eight-Point Agenda UNDP: Practical, positive outcomes for girls and women in crisis, UNDP concerned in point three (3) which declared that expanded women's citizenship,

participation, and leadership to deliver women's advancement as decision-makers [1]. Women must have the ability and confidence to sway decisions that affect their lives. because Women are frequently denied access to business transactions and are excluded from discussions on land titles. Those situations happened in women as coffee smallholders in the west part of Indonesia. In Lahat, South Sumatera cased discussed here, the role of women in the coffee plantation is significant although are frequently estranged from the decision and cash generated by the selling of that coffee. Whereas the point that written in SDGs of points one and five that having goals "to end the poverty" and "achieve gender equality and empower all women." Improving the quality of coffee production and giving more access to the market for coffee smallholders contributes to improving their life and eradicating poverty among them. Moreover, Increasing women's empowerment in the coffee industry helps to close the gender gap and achieve gender equality [2]. Women's empowerment promotes broad-based development through improving livelihoods and rural incomes, with broader benefits in terms of household welfare, ranging from improved nutritional status to dependents' educational attainment. Even though coffee has traditionally been thought of as a man's crop since it is grown on property owned by males, we must believe that the empowerment of women is a critical development policy goal [3].

Discussing coffee in Indonesia, I think, we all agree that coffee plays an important role in the economy of a tropical country like Indonesia by providing for an estimated 1.3 million rural coffee holders. Coffee has an essential role in the trade sector, which coffee is an

agricultural product that is globally traded, and coffee is the most important commodity after crude oil. Since 1984, the target market of Indonesia's coffee in the international coffee market on the top one for Robusta coffee, which is Robusta is the best type of coffee that Indonesia sells to the international market [4]. Regarding Mrs. Salama as the ambassador of Indonesia coffee declared that the position of Indonesia Coffee in international today is in the fourth after Brazil, Vietnam, and Colombia. Even though the taste of Indonesian coffee is the best and the selling value is very high, but we still cannot process the value chain of coffee production to the maximum. This is compounded by the globalization age, where coffee competitive pricing is becoming more intense as the trading system liberalizes. Every nation opens its market and makes diversification of coffee, such as roasted coffee, instant coffee, coffee mix, decaffeinated coffee, soluble coffee, coffee beer, and ice coffee. This is significant because it leads to a great commodity with high international market competitiveness. Indonesia has high potential to develop coffee diversification, like what we have today in the coffee industry, like Lampung Coffee, Java Coffee, Kintamani Coffee, Toraja Coffee, etc [5].

Indonesia has a total coffee land rise, approximately 1.3 million hectares, and produces 800.000 tons each year. South Sumatera is the province with the largest coffee plantation, which is 252.000 hectares with a coffee production contribution of more than a quarter (25-26%) to the national production, reaching 200.000 tons/ year. The type of coffee produced from South Sumatera generally is Robusta (85%), Arabika (10-15%), and Liberika (around 5%). Therefore, In some Indonesian highland provinces, coffee is the lifeblood of the local economy, the Western Highlands where our research was conducted. Unfortunately, smallholder coffee is generally selling coffee at a lower price than average. This problem is still faced by the farmers because small-scale coffee is often thought to be of poor quality, and so most coffee exported is used in blends. Even, the real quality of coffee plantation in Lahat can reach the good quality when the farmers treat the coffee plantation better and in the right way.

However, during our further discussion with Mrs. Salama, we decided to conduct a stand-alone study of coffee smallholders to better understand the nature of women's economic empowerment in Lahat coffee smallholders. Recognizing the relationship with the male partner is the women's problem to access control the over income, the dynamics of managing the land-coffee bean product and arguing to decide. In this case, men play a dominant role, with coffee being considered a man's business, even though the introduction of coffee increased women's workloads because they were expected to devote time to their husbands' coffee gardens in addition to their existing labor responsibilities [6]. The relation between men's crop and women's crop in Lahat, South Sumatera cannot

separate with the value that adhered to firmly, that called "*tunggu tuba*." It means women are positioned as a person who always stays at home. She does not have access to make a deal in selling a property (include coffee), they only have a right to take care of it. The position of women is placed in a supporting role, not as a main role in the coffee industry process on the farm. Therefore, this research will try to formulate a way to empower the women coffee smallholders to gain what should they get. In this context, empowerment refers to a change process that provides people more freedom of choice and action [7].

When it comes to economic empowerment, it's common to link women's poverty to their income and to pay too little attention to how inequality in their relationships affects how they spend that income [8]. We do believe what Vandhana Shiva said that the impact of the reduction in the participation of women in agriculture and economic activities (in terms of a coffee plantation in Lahat, South Sumatera) has also added to their reduced status in society, devaluation perpetuates poverty. This paper tries to elaborate on the sight of development of women for empowering economic and SDG from the study of international relations.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The research paper used qualitative interview methods and interpreted the data with the theory and concept was used in this research. The selection of research locations was carried out purposively, namely the selection of locations with certain considerations. The research location was chosen in the Lahat district, namely those which produce the characteristic typical coffee agricultural products in the South Sumatra Provinces.

In this study, the sources of information used during the research process were obtained from the actors/informants. The technique used in selecting informant sampling is the purposive sampling technique, namely data collection techniques with certain considerations.

The parties used as research informants are as follows:

- The Ambassador of Indonesia Coffee who lived in South Sumatera, Mrs. Salama.
- Coffee farmers who live and own coffee land in Lahat District.
- Coffee Industry Entrepreneurs and coffee collectors in Lahat District.

Data processing is carried out during and after data collection, both data in the field (primary data) and secondary data. The data that has been collected is then tabulated simply. After being tabulated, the data were analyzed according to the appropriate data analysis method. Data analysis carried out data entry, data transfer, data editing, data processing, and data

interpretation as all aspects of the data management process.

- Descriptive data analysis was employed to tackle the first difficulty, which involved figuring out how to explain and describe in detail the development of women's coffee producers using the data and information gathered by researchers.
- Descriptive data analysis is utilized to answer the second problem, which entails sorting out the factors that influence the development of women's coffee growers, such as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- The SWOT analysis approach is used to tackle the third problem, which is the construction of an alternative strategy for empowering women's coffee farmers. The strategy is developed by combining internal and external strategic aspects and paying attention to internal and external negative variables.

### III. CONCEPT AND THE ANALYSIS

#### A. *Women Development: The Development Of Dual Roles*

The theory employed in this paper is essentially a struggle to stop the most erotic oppression, as stated in the text *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center*, "Its objective is not to favor a specific set of women, or a specific ethnicity or social class of women." It does not give women a higher status than men, but it does discuss male-female equality [9]." Feminism raises important problems concerning the social role of women in trading and production. It is assumed that gender roles are predetermined and that a woman is taught to fit into them. The portrayal of women as weak, subservient, and her perception of herself as helpless is reinforced by her feelings of being directionless, seductive, and emotional in social connections and economic productions, according to this idea.

The advancement of women's economic development is characterized by an increasingly complex structure of occupational specialization. Almost all products and services are generated and used by family members in communities at their earliest stages of development, but as economies develop, more and more people specialize in specific tasks, and the economic autarky of the family group is superseded by the exchange of goods and services. Even in the most rudimentary stages of family autarky, there is some division of labor within the family, with age and sex being the primary reasons for division. Both in more developed and less developed places. The traditional division of labor within the farm family is frequently seen as 'natural,' in the sense that it was imposed by the gender divide itself.

However, while members of one community may believe that their particular division of labor between the sexes is the "natural" one because it hasn't changed in generations, other communities may have completely different ways of dividing the burden of work among the sexes, and they, too, may believe that their ways are just as "natural" [10]. In many fundamental ways, the standing of women in those two cultures differs. Therefore, a discussion of examining women's roles in agriculture production in various parts of impoverished nations is a good place to start when looking at the role of women in economic development. In this discussion, we take Lahat, South Sumatra the special region with coffee agriculture to examine the characteristics of women's role in economic development.

Furthermore, the importance of Boserup's contribution to our understanding of women's role in development cannot be overstated. Her sharp observations, use of empirical evidence, and desire for greater equality continue to encourage women around the world to be more equal. Boserup's research looked at policy options used by developing country governments, arguing that with a focus on the implications of economic growth, feminist economics can help and macroeconomics gender equality and women's well-being policy innovations. Some of the main ideas that contribute to this research is an examination of the gender division of labor on the farm or the land, as well as how gender relations within and beyond these settings play a key role in deciding whether economic development affects women and men differently. Boserup extends the extent to which women's participation in the land and their reproductive work have contributed to economic progress, as well as the clear ties between output in the market economy and women's reproductive labor in the home [10].

#### B. *Sustainable Development Theory*

The notion of sustainable development was introduced at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It consists of 39 chapters divided into four parts: social and economic dimensions, conservation, and management of natural resources for development, the role of the main groups, and means of implementation. Sustainable development is the development that is oriented towards fulfilling human integrity through the wise, efficient use of natural resources and considering the sustainable use of both for present and future generations. This notion incorporates two key ideas: (a) the concept of needs, particularly the basic human needs for survival; the concept of resources, where the needs of the poor are prioritized; and (b) the notion of limitations. The principles and directions of the concept of sustainable development have eight points, including guiding, sharing of responsibilities, scientific and technological innovation, global responsibility, etc.

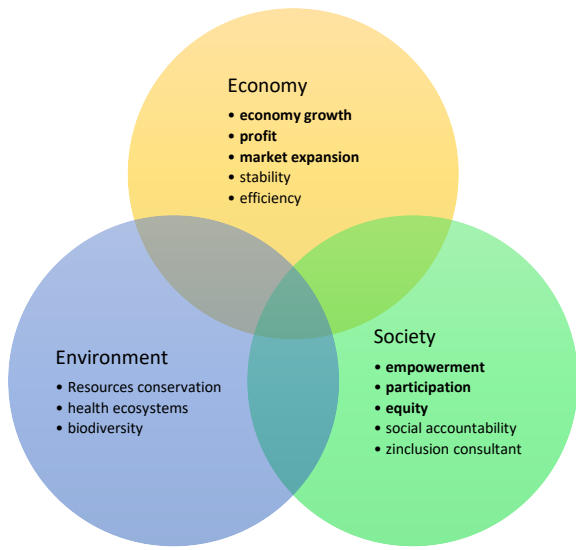


Fig. 1. Three Pillars of Sustainable Development

The characteristic of sustainable development uses long-term emphasis according to meet three spheres of sustainability. The characteristic in question is to guarantee equality and justice, that is, a development strategy that provides equal opportunities for women and equitable distribution of the economy for welfare. A balance is poured for the sake of social progress, realized by delegating some obligations and sources of welfare to the poor, particularly women, in addition to the nature of multinational firms that want to make enormous profits.

The collaboration SD thought between participation, empowerment, equity, and economic growth also profit is enough to explain the importance to empower more women. When there is an inequity gap, women's empowerment narrows the focus so that they can reach their full potential as decision-makers in society. Gender empowerment refers to men and women's ability to engage equally in society at all levels, including the home, community, and economy. Women's empowerment and gender equality go hand in hand to create a more balanced society, which has a positive impact on the economy. Furthermore, Equity is a notion that justice and fairness are two topics that are discussed, and it points out that both women and men posse equal opportunities while considering their requirements.

#### IV. DISCUSSION COURSE

##### A. Gender in Lahat, South Sumatera

Gender can be interpreted when it comes to values and behavior, there is a clear distinction between men and women, which is the result of the process of the social construction of the community. Gender is a cultural notion that aims to distinguish men and women in terms of roles, cognition, conduct, and emotional qualities that develop in society, according to the Women Studies Encyclopedia [11]. In looking at the

gender of the Lahat community, especially in the Sukamerindu sub-district, they think that gender is when there is an equal role played by women in all sectors without any restrictions both in terms of culture and social construction, they also expect the same equality as men-men get.

For years from the Dutch colonial era, the Lahat people were fixated on customs. For them, the custom is a part of themselves that cannot be separated. Inequality is very visible from the colonial era when women were not allowed to have a higher education than men. According to them at that time, women were only weak people, did not need higher education because they would only end up being housewives and in the kitchen. Besemah is a Lahat custom, the Meraje tradition positions men as heads both in making decisions and working. While women only have the task of waiting for the house, taking care of the kitchen, and receiving guests, this tradition is called waiting or "tubang". However, in reality, women still have a dual role. Based on the results of an interview with one of the Minaini coffee farmers (63 years old) "gender in the Besemah custom is still adhered to today, the role of women taking care of the house and children, it's just that because of an economic condition, women will also help their husbands in coffee gardening, as a form of responsibility as well as helping the family's economy but for decision-making problems, it is still with the husband's permission. Then, according to Rinda Yuliani (22 years old), a farmer's child, this was clarified:

*"The gender problem in the land is visible, especially in agricultural matters, where women's roles are still dominated by men, such as my mother's role in the coffee farming process, but the priority between housework and farming will continue to favor housework due to the Besemah custom, which requires women to prioritize household matters over-farming."*

On the other hand, women also have privileges, this is contained in the tradition of waiting. In this tradition, the family inheritance is given to the first daughter as a tribute to the mother figure whose position and function are understood as the same as nature; mother earth.

From the Meraje custom to the *Tunggu Tubang* tradition which places restrictions on women such as only taking care of the house, in the kitchen, and receiving guests, there are also provisions where they are not allowed to sell coffee. In contrast to the role of men who dominate in coffee farming. Men take a significant part in household decision-making in the Besemah tradition, except money affairs, which are still governed by women. Men play a big role in the coffee farming process in this custom, from selecting seeds to harvesting, they are also in charge of maintaining the security of coffee yields when the harvest arrives. The ritual is known as "*Temalam di dangau*" (staying overnight in a hut) and it was created to protect crops from theft, which is common during harvest season. As

for the role of women at harvest time, they will only help the husband to pick the coffee harvest and dry it, while the sales of coffee will be carried out by men. According to this explanation, men and women have different roles, particularly when it comes to decision-making, which is dominated by men as leaders.

Based on data, in 2018 it reached 95.08 points, decreased by 0.2 points in 2019 with a gender development index of 094.82 points [12]. This is since in interviews through several sources, the Gender Gap problem is slowly changing. Women began to be given roles and portions, allowed to go to high school with a reason to change the standard of living and family status. However, the thing to note is that there are still inhibiting factors for female coffee farmers to increase the productivity of coffee products, namely the lack of empowerment. According to them, assistance, provision of facilities, education, or education, as well as the opportunity to be able to make their own decisions, will greatly assist them in increasing their role as female coffee farmers, considering that coffee production in Suka Merindu sub-district is still less productive than other areas in South Sumatra. They believe that when women's role is increased, they will also have a big influence on the increase and advancement of the Lahat coffee commodity.

**B. The Gender Gap in Coffee Value Chains in Lahat**

In four major areas, such as labor distribution, income, ownership, and leadership – decision making, the gender disparity in coffee value chains may be seen. We believe that, in terms of labor allocation, female coffee producers in rural communities, particularly in the District of Lahat, endure what is known as the "double burden". Since they are responsible for both home and farm work, they put in far more hours every day than their male counterparts [13]. Childcare, dinner preparation, laundry, and cleaning are all common domestic responsibilities for women [14]. While men worked up to 10 hours per day, including total hours spent on coffee production, women worked up to 15 hours per day as well as hours spent on coffee production and domestic tasks. Furthermore, in Lahat, female coffee farmers often have restricted involvement in the value chain. Coffee production starts with a long season of fieldwork, then harvest, cherry processing, drying, transportation, and selling. Women are disproportionately represented in the early stages of the value chain, such as field labor, harvesting, and processing. Women continue to have important roles in the home, in society, and as mothers. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to transport and promote the product.

According to an interview with the coffee farmers, in the fieldwork and harvesting roles, women made up an average of 80% of the workforce, but just 20% of the workforce in trading and value-added coffee product. Tasks are increasingly male-dominated as coffee

transitions from a raw commodity into a value-added product ready for sales and marketing.

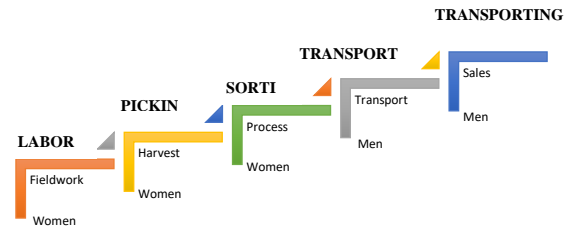


Fig. 2. Gender in the production of the coffee value chain in Lahat, South Sumatra

Since men position as the actor who receives the money from coffee sales, it drives to some Women have a harder time getting it. For some reason, women typically work for lower-income than men, and in many circumstances, work for no pay at all. Women, for some reason, tend to work for lower compensation than men, and in many circumstances, work for no money at all. Men obtain and control a disproportionate amount of cash from coffee proportional to labor completed, whilst "women's role" offers nothing in terms of economic progress [14]. Women lose earning power and control over coffee process output and income as a result of this form of labor distribution into gender-stereotyped jobs. These issues are exacerbated by attitudes toward women in rural coffee villages. The prevailing attitude in Lahat, for example, is that Women should participate in coffee farming as a matter of obligation, but should not profit from it [13]. Regarding our interview process, there are five main functions of women in the coffee production process, especially in Lahat:

- Women have the main role in household
- Women have the role to go to coffee fieldwork
- Women have the role in the process of harvest
- Women have the role of processing the bean after harvesting in the home before they sell it to the buyer
- Women have a social role and function. In social function, women are believed to empower other women or society in general in terms of empowering for better coffee production, both in quantity and quality.

In reality, Lahat women sell beans to supplement their income with a little sum of money, outside of the main beans that sell to the buyer by men. Moreover, the pattern between the man and women create the attitude that women still find it challenging to have a role as decision-makers. Controlling income and the coffee process after harvesting are linked to decision-making authority within a household.

Tradition and value culture inherit make it difficult for women to occupy a key leadership position after harvest like the downstream coffee product. Not only the tradition, the absence of widespread female engagement particularly troubles because the Ministry of Agriculture or government actors are responsible for closing the agriculture gender gap, yet they lack proper female representation. For women's growth in agriculture, bringing about change at the policy level is a constant issue, especially coffee. We believe that a strong coffee business can be built to promote the equality of gender in coffee-growing regions, improving coffee quality and production while also boosting rural economic development.

### *C. The Development of Women Coffee Smallholders*

Recognizing that gender equality is the main concern and the driving factor behind the long-term profitability of the coffee industry. In terms of the pillars of sustainable development, the value of participation, empowerment, and equity is the development strategy that provides opportunities for women and the distribution of the economy for welfare. Since it gives women access to the information that they need to make better coffee, investing in gender equality and technical training at the same time improves the coffee value chain in terms of quality and consistency of supply. In Lahat, today, no women coffee smallholders have access to create the added value of the coffee product. They only stop on the step dry coffee in the sun and process it in the kitchen, before men sell it to "tokek kawé" or we call it middleman. To achieve this, both local and central governments should create a mechanism to develop women's smallholder skills by initiating women's coffee development programs and monitoring programs.

By providing women with resources and information, women's empowerment work can help them be more productive. By escalating women's skills, it has an impact to increase both on their coffee production, thereby improving income. Based on the data collected from the Lahat coffee farmers, their income in a year on the average 15 million until 25 million in rupiah per year. Therefore, estimated a farmer's household only earns 1.25 to 2 million in rupiah per month. This amount is very small when we compare it with the process, time, and energy that is needed to do coffee farming. The main factor that makes the income is very low, because the price of the coffee that sell to the buyer is cheap, around 18,000 to 25,000 per kg. The poor quality of the coffee beans during the picking process accounts for the low selling price. The maximum process of picking coffee beans is picking coffee beans that are already red, but in general Lahat, coffee farmers pick all coffee beans, whether they are green or red. The quality of the coffee beans produced is affected as a result of this. Thus, if women are involved in this process through education and aid from the relevant stakeholders, it can have a direct

impact on the money gained as a result of the improved quality of the coffee beans produced.

Moreover, the type of coffee produced by most of the farmers in Lahat is Robusta. This type of premium coffee is quite liked by many people. Robusta coffee is known for its high caffeine content and harsh flavor. This is a huge potential for the Lahat coffee bean market, South Sumatra. Indirectly, those can directly impact to realize the main agenda in sustainable development points one and five that has a goal about no poverty and gender equality. By that, financially empowering women in rural regions, according to the World Bank, fosters economic growth and aids in poverty alleviation [15]. To make it happen, because it affects entire cultures, work on women's development and gender equality necessitates the involvement of both men and women. We believe it also addresses social roles, which are primarily influenced by culture. As a result, gender empowerment necessitates sensitivity to cultural differences and the ability to engage with a variety of personal identities. Because the task involves deeply rooted human attitudes and cultural standards, successful approaches will almost always be long-term and patient.

The following suggestions reflect four concrete ways in which various actors or stakeholders might improve women's roles in coffee-growing regions. The stakeholders involved are government, farmers, organizations, and NGOs. First, they have to ensure that women coffee farmers in Lahat are included in technical training of coffee process and extension services. In addition, the stakeholders also can complement technical training and extension services, design, or sponsor gender programs. Furthermore, the buyer and market should promote women's inclusion to support the coffee sector's women's development objective. Support projects that promote gender equality in the coffee supply chain by giving, participating, or incorporating gender programming into their supply chain.

Second, promoting community-driven programs that establish balanced families by working at the family level to help men and women is a long-term way to encourage gender equality throughout the supply chain (farmers in Lahat), communication, and working together. Collaborating with farmers' families promotes gender equality at the most basic level of society. For coffee producers, this type of project supports cooperative labor, joint decision-making, and common property ownership. Because it inspires change from the very fabric of communities, this is the path that has the most profound and long-lasting benefits on gender equality. It is frequently best accomplished by involving a gender expert to collaborate with a community leader, who then serves as the trainer.

Third, women and men in Lahat should have equal access to financial resources. Women's economic development (particularly for empowerment) having

access to the land, money, and credit has the potential to enhance quality, production, and reduce poverty. Fourth, in the Lahat district, I work for gender equality in rural life. Advocacy is critical in bringing about social change. Advocacy is the act of publicly expressing one's support for a cause. The gender gap and the objective of women's economic development among women coffee producers will become a common goal when a large number of people understand that gender equality benefits everyone.

#### V. CONCLUSION

In various South Sumatra provinces, coffee becomes one of the most essential cash crops and the local economy's backbone. Women contribute significantly to coffee production, and coffee income has a significant impact on household income. As a result, knowing women's roles in coffee production is critical for improving home economics, boosting coffee quality, and developing other coffee services. All of this has the potential to boost power and influence the women's economy.

Women who work as coffee smallholders, unfortunately, appear to be far from empowered. There has been a change away from the past's stark and dichotomous gender relations to some extent, which were characterized by tight rules and a culture of avoidance that governed how men and women interacted. However, today's gender roles for men and women are quite similar to those of the past, and women are far from equal partners in terms of the labor they perform.

Several academics have weighed in the idea that more money and assets translate into greater influence in other areas of women's lives in the literature on women's economic growth. Women as three main functions in coffee production as the consideration that women's development is urgent to support: (a) women have an important role in the coffee land farm; (b) women have a role in process hand-picking and sowing; (c) women have an important social role in the village. By having a social role, women believe that they can empower other women in general because women's power mobilizes people to have more knowledge about

improving the quality of coffee. The main stakeholders, such government, can adjust the SDG's agenda in the coffee area by educating, empowering, and accompaniment for women's skills. We do believe that when women's value improves, it drives to a better income.

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# CERTIFICATE OF PRESENTATION

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*Andi Terri Sempa*

Attended at the The 2nd Universitas Lampung  
International Conference on Social Sciences (ULICoSS) 2021 at  
Radison Hotel, Lampung

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