

## **CHAPTER III**

### **SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER EQUALITY IN AUSTRALIA**

In this chapter, the author will explain about the development of social construction gender equality norm in Australia. Besides that, the author also will explain Australia foreign policy toward gender equality. Actually, Gender equality norm that exist in Australia is the result of political struggle supported by civil society and the development of international organization which concern on gender issue.

#### **A. Women Movement and its International Organization.**

The development of gender equality norms are deeply rooted in Australia. The development of these norms is influenced by two aspects. First, the development of women movement in Australia, and the second, influences by international organizations which concern to the gender issues. The development of women's movements in Australia began in 1890, it was marked by a petition signed by 11,600 people, and it includes man and women. The petition aims to demand the right to vote for women to be addressed Members of the House of Assembly of South Australia. The background of the formation of this petition for women suffrage is emerge by traditional role of women develops in Australia women primarily as mothers, wives and it also widely thought that only men should participate in politics and that women and children should not (Parliament of South Australia). Then, with all the thoughts on the role of women in Australia, this is the cause of the formation of resistance for women in Australia to get the right to vote in the parliament. As long as this petition emerged, there were many struggles carried out by women in Australia starting from, held debates, public meetings, published leaflets and organized letter-writing campaigns. They argued that a government that represented the people should also include the views and voices of women, as laws affect both women

and men. Finally in 1895, South Australia became the first state to recognize women's right to vote, and the right to be elected to parliament (Australia Human Rights Commission). Then, in 1902 women in Australia are starting to be recognized in the political world where they can choose federal election. At this time, women also can eligible to stand for the parliament. According to the Commonwealth Franchise Act, this policy arises because non-indigenous women have won the right to vote in federal elections. It is proved in 1908 when Australian women finally had the right to vote in elections in Victoria.

In 1919, it marked that Susan Grace Benny became the first women's assembly member in the local government in Australia and in 1920; Mary Rogers was also elected to the assembly in Victoria. This women's movement continued which women in Australia can have their votes in federal elections. Then, in 1943

The existence of women role in Australia parliament develops more widely where women in Australia can become members di Upper House and Lower House. It related that Dorothy Tangney was became the first woman to be elected to the Senate and in 1962, through the Commonwealth Electoral Act has made a regulation which allows non-indigenous women to obtain be fought until 1972 when the Victorian Aboriginal and Islander Women's Council voiced and lobbied the Australian government about its concerns (Gender Equality Milistones, 2017).

In the same year or in 1972, women's development in Australia began to develop with a broader range of directions which did not only think about involvement in politics but also began to form nonparty political or known as Women Electoral Lobby (WEL) that has purpose to improve the position of women in Australia, It movement concern on women's rights to get protection from violence and discrimination against women, and want to share equal opportunity for women and men. Besides that, in the 1973 women movement also shows again that Australia was

choose a female adviser to deliver women's issues such as domestic violence in government. Then, In 1974 Women's Affairs Section was formed and in the following year 1975, the program of funding for women began to be implemented in public service (Gender Budget Analysis, 2006).

Continuation of women's movement in Australia showed again in January 1975, where the first world conference held in Mexico City. Actually, this conference coincides with International Women's Year and the United Nations Decade for Women. Australia also contributed to attending this conference where Elizabeth Reid became a representative to attend this conference. In this conference produced several decisions and targets for overcome women's issues such as, Enhancing gender equality and reducing gender discrimination, increasing women's participation in the development, increasing women's contribution to strengthening world peace (Gender Equality Milistones, 2017).

The struggle of the women's movement in politics continues to get the same rights as men. This is related to the results of involvement in International women year in June 1975, Australia has managed to become a host in the first conference on women and politics, where the Conference took place in Canberra. In this conference discussed various rights for women in politics and federal government. Besides that, this conference also discussed funding to address the issue of women's involvement in politics. As explained in one of the objectives of the UN decade is to reduce gender discrimination. Australia began to implement one of these destinations in Australia which in 1975, South Australia make the first law on sex discrimination that known as the Discrimination Act. This law focuses to elimination discrimination of women in the education and employment. Through this conference has made significant impact that in 1975, Dame Margaret Guilfoyle become the first women that involve in the Federal Cabinet for the Minister of Education and Social Security (Gender Equality Milistones, 2017).

Second Women conference also held in July 1980, at Copenhagen. There are 145 nations represented it include Australia. Australia role in this conference is as the delegate that reviews the action plan and progress toward specific action such as areas of education, health care and employment. Women's movement in Australia still running in the same path with the United Nations, it is related that Australia signs the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1983. Since Australia signing this convention it also influence Australia policy that was create legislation designed to give effect that also including in the Sex Discrimination (Gender Equality Milistones, 2017). Continued to 1984, Australia government was implemented equity analysis in budgeting at the federal government level. The Office of the Status of Women (renamed from the Office of Women's Affairs in 1982), spearheaded the implementation of the Women's Budget strategy. By implementing gender equity, Australia also was become Australia was the first country that produce an equal opportunity budget analysis and the experience has been formative in this country's modern budgeting approach. Since of that, it also influence more than 40 countries, including Philippines, Mexico and Korea have used some form of gender-responsive budgets as a tool in CEDAW compliance (Gender Bugdet Analysis, 2006). Then, in 1985 the third women conference in Nairobi. During this years also become the end of the United Nations decade for women, it is related that in this conference try to review the several challenges and success of the past decade and also try to develop a set of forward a strategy to advance women.

Women movement role in the politics still continued until February 1986, where the Joan Child becomes Australia's first female Speaker of the House of Representatives. In the same years, Janine Haines becomes the first female federal parliamentary leader of an Australian political party or Democrat Party. Then in 1989, Rosemary Follet was elected as the first woman to become chief

minister of the Australian Capital Territory. Carmen Lawrence also became the first woman to be chosen as premier in Western Australia on February 12, 1990. Continued in February in 1990 Joan Kirner's premier to become the first premier in Victoria. Regarding with the development women movement in politics, gender equality norm in Australia also influence by the fourth women conference that 189 nations it include Australia was signing Beijing declaration. Through this declaration has a purpose to calls on all of nation state addressing gender inequality in their countries and it also include preparation of the report system to progress in five years (Gender Equality Milistones, 2017).

The position women in international level also become progressive that in 2000, Australia also support women in goals of Millennium development Goals or MDGs, it also include goals to achieving gender equality. Besides that, united nation was conducting the formation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 about Women, Peace, and Security. Besides that, women movement in Australia also always increase years by years that Clare martin became the first female premier in the northern territory and Marion Scrymgour also become the female premier that she was the became the first indigenous woman that had involve in Portfolio for Family, Community Services, Environment and Heritage for the Northern Territory on December 17, 2003.

The level of female leaders in Australia continued to be equal with male politicians where on September 5, 2008, Quentin Bryce became the first female Governor-General in the Australian government. The history of the women's movement in Australian politics was also marked by Sarah Hanson-Young who became the youngest woman to sit in the Federal Parliament and became the youngest Senator at the age of 25 on July 1, 2008. New South New South Wales also had the first elected female premier on the December 4, 2009, namely Kristina Keneally. The highest level of female politician position, achieved by Julia Gillard, as we know, she

was the first Australian Prime Minister on June 24, 2010 (Gender Equality Milistones, 2017).

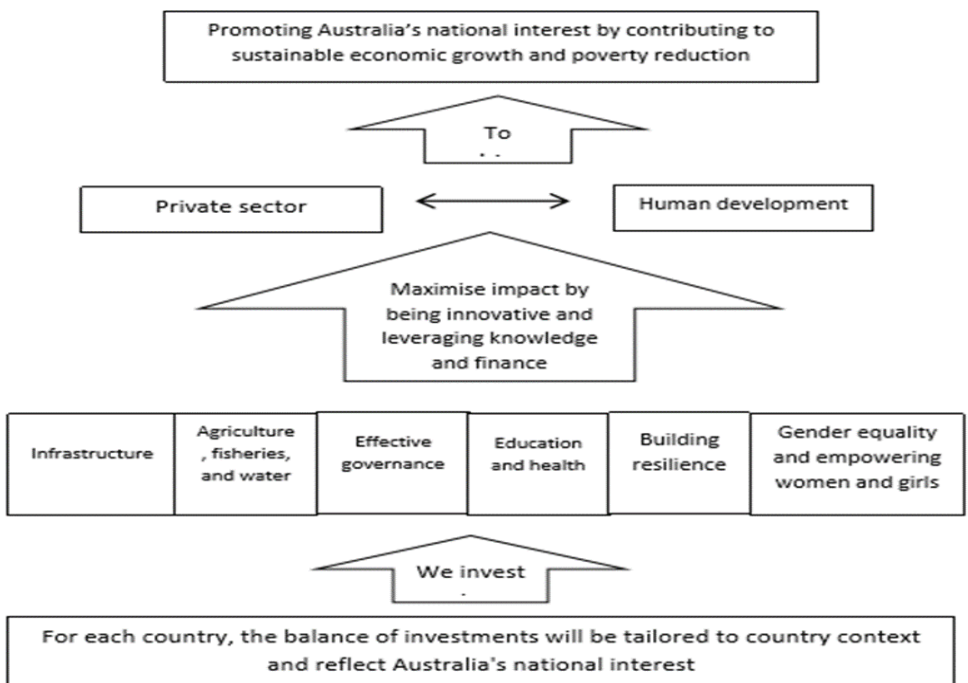
In September 2011, Australia established an ambassador for women and girls that will promote gender equality in the international arena and will help women in the world will get a stronger voice. Related to this, Penny Williams become the first Australia ambassador for women and girls. On March 8, 2012, UN Security Council also launched the National Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security for six years at International Women's Day. In 2013, Julie Bishop was elected to become the first female of Minister of Foreign Affairs that was has a big contribution of Australia foreign policy toward gender equality such as made gender as part of one priority in government , making strategy of gender equality and women empowerment. Then in the same years on 2013, Natasha Stott Despoja becomes the second Australian Ambassador for Women and Girls. She was also become the former of Australian Democrats and founding chair of the Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children (Gender Equality Milistones, 2017). In addition, since 2015-2030 Australia also involved in part of the country to committing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These include the goals to advance gender equality. With all the explanations of the Milestones for Australian women it can be said that women's movement are the first steps of the development of gender equality norms. Besides women movement, it also influences by international organization like United Nations that also plays an essential role to influence Australia decision in supporting gender equality and women empowerment in international arena.

## **B. Australia Concern to Support Gender Equality in International Arena**

Australia believes Gender equality is the critical right to the powerful driver for the growth development stability

which through promoting gender equality and empowering women is one of the best ways to achieve economic growth and prosperity in the region. Therefore, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Julie Bishop Input gender equality as the part of development that must become the one of the priority in aid programming. It also become the commitment of Australian government to support gender equality in international arena which in 2014, Australia was reshaping their aid program that consists of several investment priorities which one of them is a concern on gender equality and women empowerment. Here the New Strategic Frameworks for Aid Program:

**Diagram 3. 1 New Strategic Frameworks for Aid Program**



Based on the diagram 1.1 above, explains that one of the new investment priorities in the diagram is gender equality and empowering women and girls, the Australia government uses the new strategy which maximizes impact by being innovative and leveraging knowledge and finance. Then, if this is a new strategy will be implemented successfully, the Australian aid program can achieve its national interest which is Australia can contribute to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction.

Basically, Gender issue such as inequality can inhibit the process development such as economic growth, human development, and poverty reduction because it is related to the case in Asia Pacific has lost economic development of US \$ 47 billion due to limited employment opportunities for women, then because of this issue also make women in pacific always get under-represented in Parliament, where the percentage of women's involvement is only five per cent of parliamentarians, compared to the global percentage of women's involvement reaching 21.7 per cent. In addition, women in the south East Asia region are still very vulnerable to domestic violence that one in three women has experienced victims of physical and sexual abuse (Commonwealth of Australia, 2014, p. 25). Therefore, in responding to gender disparities in the Asia Pacific region, Australia will strongly committed to being at the forefront of efforts to empower women and girls and promote gender equality in the Indo-Pacific region which become the geographic focus of the Australian aid program.

Reflecting this new strategy, Australia will actively invest in the three aspects such as: enhancing: women 's voice in decision making, leadership, and peace building women 's economic empowerment and also try to Ending violence against women and girls (Commonwealth of Australia, 2014). Besides that, in international range, an effort in increase gender equality such as prioritizing women and girls empowerment in global and regional bodies which Australian government create partnership with some of international



organization such as UN Women, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Pacific Islands Forum (Commonwealth of Australia, 2014, p. 25)

Australia foreign policy toward gender equality still continues until 2016, it is related that Australia has established a strategy for gender equality and women empowerment. In this strategy, the Australian government tried to explain in detail how the effort to achieve gender equality and women empowerment. The strategy is consisting of three priorities, four commitments, and twin-track approach here is the explanation:

**1. Three priorities as a guide to work on gender equality  
Enhancing women's voice in decision-making,  
leadership, and peace building**

In these priorities, Australia will promote women's decision making in all advocacy and development program. Australia will advocate women to be better represented in the national and international leadership and Australia also will advance gender equality in regional until multilateral dialogues. One of the actions toward this priorities is the establish Australia National Plan on Women, Peace, and Security 2012-2018 which following this action become the practical step or an effort for Australia to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. Related to this, Australia has committed to using as a guide to implementing in national and internationally to:

- a. Integrating the perspective of gender into Australia's policy on peace and security
- b. Crating the contribution of women in peace and security agenda in the human resource management of Defense, Australian Federal Police and deployed personnel.
- c. Promoting equality, support civil society and increase women's participation in the many aspects such as

conflict prevention, resolution, recovery, and peace-building.

- d. promote women, peace, and security internationally
- e. apply evaluation system which used as an approach

## **2. Promoting women's economic empowerment**

In this priorities, Australia focus to promoting economic growth in internationally which in this priorities the main action is given access for women to getting a job through inputs of gender equality in its aid for trade, economic diplomacy, and trade efforts. Australia's effort to create these targets increases the investment to 20 percent for the aid program of 2020 and within strategies below

(Commonwealth of Australia, 2016) :

- a. Empowering women to learn the business and help to improve the legal environment for women entrepreneurs.
- b. focus on women workers to improve incomes, working safety and reduce discrimination
- c. establish social protection for women's empowerment
- d. Improve access for women to get resources and innovations in agricultural productivity incomes.
- e. You are increasing the outcome of education of women and girls through the focus on the quality of education for girls.

## **3. Ending violence against women and girls**

In this priorities, Australia will focus to advocate women from any violence against women and girls which in this priorities, Australia will provide a first justice sector, improve women's access in supporting services which manage the women's victim of violence and prevent violence against women and children. As fellows Australia's effort to support justice for women internationally (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016) :

- a. Support government, Implement law, policies that will address the violence against women and improve access for women to get justice
- b. Strengthening the capacity system of justice in all aspect such as police, courts, informal structure in the responding violence against women
- c. Having cooperation with NGO to help women in access justice and increasing women's knowledge to get their rights and legal system.
- d. improving protection and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights in the humanitarian sector
- e. Increasing the awareness of the safety and empowerment of women.

#### **4. Four commitments on gender equality and women empowerment**

##### **a. Strategy Integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into Australia's foreign policy.**

In this commitment, Australia focuses on advocating gender equality in regionally and globally where Australia will advocate for this issue through women and girls ambassadors and also collaborate with governments in other countries. To achieve this commitment, Australia focuses on various aspects such as (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016) :

- 1) Carry out achievements to promote gender equality in the regional and multilateral framework (UN, economic policy forums and G20).
- 2) Support women's involvement in various institutions such as ministers, organizations and economic empowerment of women.
- 3) We are informing advocacy for women in cases of crimes against women.

- 4) Australia will also prepare generations of women's leaders by forming links in the Indo Pacific region through strengthening education, Australian awards, new Colombo plan scholarships and volunteers.
- 5) Promote gender equality into public diplomacy programs such as international media visits, cultural diplomacy, and foundations.
- 6) Australia also promotes gender equality through involvement in international women day, international days for the elimination of violence against women and international day of the girl child.

**b. Integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into aid for trade investments and economic diplomacy**

In this commitment, Australia tries to creating women contribution in the aspect of trade through empowering women and creating participation in trade sectors such as agriculture and fisheries. Besides that, Australia also provide technical assistance that will be allocated on aid for trade, the technical assistance will be (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016) :

- 1) removing the trade barriers in the regulation equitable benefit and women's economic participation
- 2) Work with the private sector and international networks to empowering women in business, finance, and other resources.
- 3) Creating equality in trade and support women's economic empowerment in the aspect of vendors, employers, purchaser, and entrepreneurs.

In the commitment to economic diplomacy Australia will focus to support global development by integrating strategy to overcome gender inequality in

developing countries and Australia will create global and bilateral cooperation to support women to gain access to finance such as promoting financial women in the G20 regionally and national institutions and supporting the principle of women's empowerment from the National Examination.

**c. Invest in gender equality through Australia's development program.**

In this commitment, Australia will deliver practical assistance to promoting gender equality and women empowerment which in 2015 Australia begins to establish \$50 million. Gender fund that will be allocated to promoting gender equality in the inside and outside DFAT which is Australia believe that by reshaping Australia development program will play an important role that will drive strong result and performance in gender equality. In internal element Australia will create a link between fund and performance meanwhile, in the external element will using the private sector to promote the gender equality in the field of business and growth that will be implemented in the Pacific and Southeast Asia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016).

Australia also will do monitoring assessment to get significant result of the performance on gender equality Australia will use two methods that is: Measure of expenditure To assessing performance on gender equality, Australia will work with the Organization for Economic Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) gender policymaker through this collaboration, DFAT must regulate and analyze investment allocation whether the investment will have a principal objective or significant objective. The intent of Australian investment principals to focus on implementing gender equality such as making programs to eliminate

violence against women Australia's important objective will focus on mainstreaming gender equality effectively across sectors.

Besides that, before Australia established a strategy on gender equality which its expenditure is divided into principal or significant, the process of allocating to gender equality programs depends on several sectors. Previously it will depend on the health and education sector that often promotes gender equality, and trade, agriculture and infrastructure sectors are to promote gender equality. A measure of quality or effectiveness, in this method Australia will make a report that will measure annual quality checks and progress of overall investments, which amount to \$ 3 million. Through this system, it will make Australia easy to calculate the target which will be allocated to gender equality targets especially in development assistance. Regarding the annual report, the target of investment in 2013-2014 has achieved 74 percent and in 2014-2015 was 78 percent (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016).

**d. Commit to promoting gender equality in our corporate and human resource policies and practices**

In the commitment to promote gender equality, Australia realizes the first things to consider is internal practice, which through DFAT's Australia will respond to the Australian Public Service Commission and internal Women in Leadership initiative to be aware of its commitment on gender equality. Australia will collaborate with all staff to maintain culture and practice related to equality between women and men into all backgrounds. Australia will continue to ensure this commitment will continue if this commitment stops Australia will give a warning and make an internal policy that will regulate domestic and family violence. To make this

commitment success, Australia will provide expert and also adequate technical resources to improve the capability of staff. Moreover, Australia will also ensure women's involvement in several aspects such as board, panels, and conference. This was done to achieve internal policies in Australia where Australia had a minimum target between men and women on national boards, where the proportion between men and women was 40% and the remaining 20% chose the proportion of whether male or female. Also, in the process of implementing Australia will investigate the elimination of problems and obstacles that exist in the involvement of women in leadership. In order to achieve this strategy, Australia will analyze development in aspects of gender trends. The aim of involving the strategy of involvement of women in leadership is to maximize the ability between women and men in leadership culture involvement, which in identifying this strategy has four principles, namely strengthening the culture of leadership, accountability, and inclusion, embedding substantive equality and mainstreaming the flexible work and dismantling barriers for careers.

##### **5. Twin-track approach to gender equality**

In this approach, Australia has two strategies that will become a reference to overcome gender quality issues. Australia's first strategy will include gender equality as a top priority in various aspects such as foreign policy, economic diplomacy, and development programs. To run this strategy, Australia starts by promoting gender equality regionally and globally. Besides, that Australia will cooperate with the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Women and the Economy Forum. The second strategy, Australia is to promote gender equality in all sectors or sectors where Australia will develop 80 percent of total investment used to

address issues of gender equality in all implementation sectors.

The policy of Australia on gender equality continues until 2017, Australian was made Foreign Policy White Paper that consist to explain several comprehensive framework, one of the main focus is to support gender equality. Australia has explained that gender equality reflects to the Australia's values that every human being should be treated equally. It is related that with the negative impact of gender inequality issue that can reduce global prosperity, stability, and security. It is because gender inequality can influence a challenge to become worse such as poverty, weak governance, conflict and violent extremism (Foreign Policy White Paper, 2017, p. 90). Therefore, Australia's foreign policy always propose the value of gender equality and women empowerment as a top priority, it including through the advocacy of our Ambassador for Women and Girls. Besides that, Australia concern on gender issue also can be seen in the involvement on Sustainable development goals that Australia has committed to achieving 17 goals of SDGs one of goals is to achieving gender equality. Australia will support improved access to education, sexual and reproductive health services, employment and financial services for women and girls.

In addition, Australia also will working with partner through program of Australia such as, supports the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights to promote efforts to strengthen the Human Rights Council and the broader human rights system and is involved as the member of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNCHR) which is one of the permanent missions in the year 2018-2020 is for advance the rights of women and girls. In 2017, Australia was launched a permanent mission to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly. In this mission, Australia makes gender equality a part of the pillar and priority in



interacting with the international world particularly to advance in gender equality in the world (Departement of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017).Australia also will supports democratic principles, in the rule of law of the human rights and also gender equality that through the common wealth. In addition, Australia provides funds to develop programs; the fund is allocated to development sectors such as education, sexual and reproductive health services, employment and financial services that focus on women and girls. One of the example programs is Pacific Women Shaping Development 2010-2022 which the fund is \$ 320 million to support women in 14 Pacific countries to encourage them to participate safely and fully in social, economic, and political.

### **C. Australia as a Global Leader of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment**

Australia as the global leader of gender equality and women empowerment particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. Global leader means that the emerging class of professionals that have a concern to support gender equality and empowering women in national and international. As the professional leader to support gender equality and empowering women, Australia Government has been very supportive in implementing gender equality in various aspects such as in 1985; Australia became the first country in the world that implements gender budgeting (Gender Budget Analysis, 2006). In the political leadership aspects in 2014, the participation women in Australia consider high which contributes 29% in the parliament from the upper house and the lower house. Besides that, there is also an achievement on gender equality in 2017, Australia was becoming one of the country group ranked first for women's educational attainment, Australia was also known as the leader of the human rights council, on the women, peace, and security and forging the 2030 agenda for sustainable development (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016,p. 15). Therefore, with all

of the experiences and achievements that have been developed in Australia, It also allows Australia to share its strategy approaches to international arenas which the level of commitment to become forefront on these issues is strong. It can be seen in the way of Australia has been consistent to advocate for gender equality and engages on these issues in many ways such as Australia defines gender equality and women empowerment as a core of foreign policy, economic relations, development program and also a corporate operation that will promote in women in leadership work.