



Musik Keren NTT:

Towards More Inclusive
Development in Nusa
Tenggara Timur

September 2025



In Indonesia's evolving development landscape, social inclusion is no longer optional. It is essential. That's why the Government of Indonesia is committed to fair, participatory development that gives everyone a real voice in shaping their community's future. This commitment is reflected in a range of regulations that require regional governments to involve communities in preparing local development plans. These include Law No. 25/2004 on the National Development Planning System, Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 86/2017, and provisions on the Regional Government Work Plan.

To make sure communities have a say in local development priorities, regional governments are required to hold the Musrenbang, an official forum where citizens from all walks of life can help shape local plans. In practice, however, barriers such as the dominance of formal procedures over more open and organic discussion have often prevented the Musrenbang from fully listening to marginalised voices, including those of women, children, people with disabilities and Indigenous communities.

✧ Initiative from Eastern Indonesia

Responding to this challenge, the Provincial Government of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) launched the Inclusive Development Planning Forum for Vulnerable Groups, known by its acronym MUSIK KEREN (*Musrenbang Inklusif Kelompok Rentan*), in May 2025. Officially inaugurated in Kupang by the Governor of NTT, MUSIK KEREN represents a landmark step in building an inclusive, responsive, and needs-based planning system.

The Governor's endorsement of **MUSIK KEREN** shows the province's strong political commitment to inclusive development planning. The aim is for MUSIK KEREN to become a permanent part of regional planning and budgeting (*Musrenbang*). District and municipal governments are also being encouraged to adopt inclusive Musrenbang practices. This marks an important step towards making inclusion not just a slogan but a fundamental principle of good governance.

More than a short-term activity, MUSIK KEREN is designed as a permanent institutional mechanism. Backed by an NTT Governor regulation, it is now central to preparing regional work and development plans.



A Structured and Open Participatory Process

The groundwork for MUSIK KEREN was laid long before the launch. With support from the NTT Provincial Government and SKALA, government agencies and civil society organisations met with vulnerable groups through online and local meetings across NTT's 22 districts to hear their views and record their needs. Voices so often excluded from formal processes is now amplified.

Government officials soon found themselves reviewing more than 200 proposals generated through the discussions. The submissions captured the unique and diverse needs of vulnerable communities: 45% came from persons with disabilities, 28% from children's forums, 10% from women's groups, with the remainder from older people, Indigenous communities, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

The proposals clustered around five priority issues:



Inclusive education and literacy - expanding access to education, providing scholarships, strengthening services for people with disabilities, and promoting awareness of child protection.



Equitable health and nutrition services - ensuring access to social security and Indonesia's national health insurance program, offering routine check-ups, promoting nutrition and healthy lifestyle education, and engaging disability health workers.



Economic empowerment and social protection - providing vocational training, supporting small business financing, certifying local products, and supplying assistive devices such as hearing aids and wheelchairs.



Infrastructure and public accessibility - building age- and disability-friendly facilities, constructing access roads, and developing community support infrastructure.



Human rights and violence prevention - providing legal aid, raising child protection awareness, preventing gender-based violence, combating human trafficking, implementing legal protection, and promoting public awareness on issues such as domestic violence, HIV, and leprosy.

All proposals were reworked into technical formats suitable for official development work plans.

According to guidelines from the NTT Provincial Government and SKALA, the inclusive Musrenbang followed systematic stages, including focus group discussions (FGDs):

1

Pre-FGD Needs Gathering - documenting the views of vulnerable groups via digital platforms and local meetings, including the Association of the Blind and the Deaf Community of Labuan Bajo.

2

Thematic FGDs - holding focused discussions with each vulnerable group to clarify and prioritise their proposals.



3

Verification and Finalization – validating proposals with technical agencies and the Regional Development Planning Agency to ensure policy alignment.

4

Launch and Dissemination – presenting results at the MUSIK KEREN event, sharing them with the public and media, adding them to the Provincial Musrenbang agenda.

5

Integration into SIPD – formally tagging proposals in the Regional Development Information System to ensure accountability.

These steps ensured that inclusive planning went beyond ceremonial participation and became a structured, results-oriented process



✦ Integration into Planning and Policy

MUSIK KEREN ensures that every validated proposal is incorporated into official regional planning and budgeting documents. Using evidence-based approaches, the priorities of vulnerable groups are recognised not as optional extras but as part of the formal needs assessment in regional development planning. Local government agencies are encouraged to use these inputs as the basis for their programs and performance indicators.

The NTT Provincial Parliament strongly supported this approach, ensuring that MUSIK KEREN's proposals were included in budget deliberations. Collaboration between agencies has also been key to integrating these proposals into the regional planning process. Key partners include the Regional Development, Research, and Innovation Planning Agency (Bapperida), the Social Affairs Office, the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office, and the Health Office.

For community members, MUSIK KEREN has opened new opportunities. Mario Lado, Chair of the Deaf Community in Kupang, expressed his gratitude, saying the launch of the inclusive Musrenbang had given people like him a chance to voice their rights. "I'm happy to be part of it,



and to see friends from the deaf community across the province also participating,” he said. Similarly, Yashinta Adoe from the Women Fisher Forum in Kupang said women fishers had long been excluded from official forums. “Being included in MUSIK KEREN shows that women can have a voice and help shape development decisions,” she added.

For facilitators, the forum marked an important shift. “The views of once-marginalised groups are now being heard and integrated into the planning system. This is a major leap forward,” said Selvi Naebobe of Bapperida, noting that vulnerable groups had long been stigmatised and excluded but that MUSIK KEREN had changed this.

The MUSIK KEREN initiative is supported by SKALA, the Australia-Indonesia Partnership for Governance and Basic Service Delivery. Its support includes policy advocacy, developing technical guidelines, training facilitators, and documenting community aspirations. SKALA also promotes results-based storytelling to ensure that the voices of vulnerable groups carry greater weight in policy spaces.

MUSIK KEREN affirms Indonesia’s national policy directions. It forms part of Indonesia’s 2020–2024 national development plan (RPJMN), which prioritises the mainstreaming of gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI). It also aligns with national efforts to accelerate poverty reduction, the National Human Rights Action Plan, and Indonesia’s global commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the principle of leaving no one behind. In this way, MUSIK KEREN points the way for other provinces to follow in making governance more inclusive and sustainable.

At the national level, this initiative is coordinated by the Directorate of Families, Parenting, Women and Children (KPPA), the Ministry of National Development Planning (Bappenas). Although implemented at the subnational level, the initiative is formally endorsed by the national government.

Towards Human-Centred Development



MUSIK KEREN responds to the urgent need to make development a human-centred process. From children’s forums in Sumba to Indigenous communities in Alor, voices once overlooked are now recognised in official planning documents.

The NTT Provincial Government’s initiative is a concrete demonstration of commitment to vulnerable groups. MUSIK KEREN shows that with political will, cross-sector collaboration, and community participation, fair, participatory, and inclusive development is no longer a distant dream. It is a reality taking root in East Nusa Tenggara.



SKALA
Sinergi dan Kolaborasi untuk Akselerasi Layanan Dasar
Kemitraan Australia - Indonesia

IFC Tower 2, Level 17

Jl. Jendral Sudirman Kav. 22-23 Jakarta 12920

 skala.or.id

 communications@skala.or.id

Whatsapp Channel

