

INCLUSIVE NARRATIVES ON SOCIAL MEDIA: REPRESENTATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS IN GREENPEACE INDONESIA'S INSTAGRAM CAMPAIGNS

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Abstract: This study examines the practice of inclusive representation of vulnerable groups in environmental digital campaigns carried out by Greenpeace Indonesia through its Instagram account @greenpeaceid. Using a descriptive qualitative approach and content analysis of 66 posts from March 2024 to April 2025, the study explores how indigenous peoples, women, children, farmers, and fishers are represented in the visual and textual narratives of the campaign. The analysis focuses on six dimensions: types of vulnerable groups, forms of participation, use of inclusive language and visuals, narrative framing, linkage to e-green policies, and the positioning of groups as subjects or objects in the narrative. The results show that the campaign consistently positions indigenous peoples and women as active subjects in the environmental struggle through narratives of empowerment, community resistance, and cross-identity solidarity. Empathetic language strategies and authentic visuals strengthen emotional engagement and broaden the reach of the message. The campaign demonstrates the application of inclusive communication principles, narrative justice, and participatory representation, contributing to the amplification of vulnerable groups' voices in the discourse of ecological justice. These findings underscore the importance of social justice-based communication in environmental digital activism.

Keywords: inclusive representation, vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples, environmental communication, Greenpeace, Instagram, narrative justice

1. Introduction

In recent years, environmental campaigns have increasingly shifted into the digital sphere, in line with the growing use of social media. Visual platforms such as Instagram play a strategic role in public advocacy, enabling organizations and activists to communicate environmental issues through a combination of text, photographs, and videos that capture the attention of a broad audience. Research indicates that social media campaigns can effectively influence public perceptions and behaviors regarding environmental issues, thereby strengthening movements toward sustainability. For advocacy organizations like Greenpeace, Instagram has become an essential channel for mobilizing support and disseminating environmental messages at scale. As of May 2025, the official Greenpeace Indonesia account, @greenpeaceid, had approximately 774,000 followers, making it one of the primary outlets for delivering advocacy messages to the Indonesian public particularly among younger generations active on digital platforms. Through carefully curated visual posts, Greenpeace Indonesia addresses critical issues such as deforestation, the climate crisis, industrial pollution, and unequal access to natural resources, while also highlighting the roles and challenges faced by vulnerable groups such as indigenous peoples, women, children, and coastal communities.

Yet, behind these efforts to build collective awareness and ecological solidarity lies a crucial question: to what extent do such campaigns genuinely represent vulnerable groups in an inclusive manner? In the context of a climate crisis with deep social dimensions, representation is not merely about who is featured, but also how they are portrayed, within whose narrative framework, and for what purpose. Vulnerable groups should not simply appear as passive victims in campaign materials; rather, they should be positioned as active subjects with voice, agency, and legitimacy in the ecological struggle. Inclusive representation

not only reinforces symbolic justice but also serves as a transformative communication strategy bridging the lived experiences of affected communities with the agenda for structural change.

Existing scholarship has examined inclusive representation across various social contexts, including religious services (Wright, 2001), child welfare bureaucracies (Lawrence et al., 2019), governance (Idike et al., 2019), cultural institutions (Panayot, 2023), and library metadata management (Luke et al., 2022). While these studies make valuable contributions to the understanding of inclusivity, few have specifically addressed how the representation of vulnerable groups is constructed in environmental digital campaigns, particularly on visual-based platforms such as Instagram. Meanwhile, research on digital environmental communication has tended to focus on message framing strategies, campaign effectiveness, or audience engagement patterns, often without deeply interrogating the narrative, visual, and participatory dynamics of representing marginalized communities. This reveals a notable gap in the literature at the intersection of inclusive communication, social justice representation, and environmental advocacy in digital spaces.

Against this backdrop, the present study examines the representation of vulnerable groups in Greenpeace Indonesia's Instagram campaigns. It seeks to answer the following research questions: Which vulnerable groups are represented? How is their participation portrayed in the campaign narratives? To what extent do the language and visual strategies employed align with the principles of inclusive communication? Are these groups positioned as active subjects or merely as objects? And, importantly, do these representational practices reflect the principles of ecological justice and the awareness of intersectionality that should underpin social campaigns?

The findings of this study are expected to make both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, the research extends the field of environmental communication by integrating perspectives on inclusive representation and digital narrative. Practically, the results may offer actionable insights for advocacy organizations in designing campaigns that are more inclusive, equitable, and reflective of the diversity of identities among affected groups. In an era of escalating global ecological crisis, environmental campaigns must not only voice pressing issues but also ensure that the voices of those most impacted are given space. Only through inclusive narratives can social and environmental justice advance in tandem toward transformative change.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Media Representation and the Construction of Social Meaning (Hall, 1997)

Stuart Hall (1997) argues that representation is not a neutral reflection of reality, but an active process of constructing and circulating social meaning through language, symbols, and visuals. In media including social media identity is not simply displayed; it is constructed, negotiated, and at times, denied. Representation plays a key role in shaping how the public understands certain social groups, particularly vulnerable communities. In the context of digital environmental campaigns, representation becomes a political site of meaning that determines who is positioned as an agent of change, who is portrayed as a victim, and who is entirely absent. Hall's theory enables critical inquiry into the power dynamics embedded in visual and textual narratives examining whether marginalized groups are portrayed with agency or reduced to passive symbols of empathy.

2.2 Inclusive Communication and Narrative Accessibility (Stofer et al., 2023)

Stofer et al. (2023) propose the principle of inclusive communication as a strategic approach to ensure that public messages can reach, represent, and engage audiences from diverse social, cultural, and ability-based backgrounds. Inclusivity, in this framework, is not only about who is depicted in a narrative, but also how messages are designed whether the language is accessible, whether visuals reflect bodily and experiential diversity, and whether the platforms used are accessible to often-excluded groups, such as persons with disabilities. In digital environmental campaigns, inclusive communication demands accessibility-conscious design, including the use of alternative text for images, video subtitles, sign language, and the avoidance of visual stereotypes. Campaigns that claim to be inclusive should not only portray affected communities but also ensure they are able to understand, engage with, and respond to the communication in meaningful ways

2.3 Ecological Justice and the Recognition of Identity (Schlosberg, 2004)

David Schlosberg (2004) conceptualizes ecological justice as a multidimensional framework comprising three core elements: the equitable distribution of environmental risks and benefits, the recognition of affected identities and rights, and the meaningful participation of communities in decision-making. In the context of ecological crises, vulnerable groups such as Indigenous peoples, small-scale farmers, and coastal communities often suffer the most severe impacts despite contributing the least to environmental degradation. Ecological justice emphasizes that environmental campaigns must move beyond technical solutions to recognize the agency and legitimacy of affected communities. In digital narratives, ecological justice can be assessed by examining who is represented, how they are portrayed, and whether their struggles are contextualized within broader policy frameworks. The absence of groups such as persons with disabilities in environmental discourse indicates a failure of recognition within the structure of public representation

2.4 Intersectionality and Layers of Social Vulnerability (Crenshaw, 1991; Collins & Bilge, 2020)

The concept of intersectionality, introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) and further developed by Collins and Bilge (2020), offers a critical framework for understanding social vulnerability as multi-layered. Individuals can experience compounded marginalization due to the intersection of identities such as gender, race, class, age, and disability. This approach rejects simplistic categorizations and instead highlights the need to examine the complexity within communities themselves. In digital environmental campaigns, intersectionality calls for sensitivity to the diverse experiences within marginalized groups such as Indigenous women, children with disabilities, or elderly fisherfolk whose realities cannot be reduced to single labels like “women” or “coastal communities.” Campaigns that fail to reflect these intersecting identities risk producing reductive narratives and perpetuating the very invisibility they seek to challenge

2.5 Narrative Justice and the Right to Tell Stories (Couldry, 2010)

Nick Couldry (2010) introduces the concept of narrative justice, asserting that social justice also involves the right to tell one’s own story. In a world marked by representational inequalities, many marginalized groups lack voice the ability to frame their own realities in public discourse. Narrative justice demands that storytelling rights not be monopolized by elites, but extended to communities that have been historically silenced, ignored, or misrepresented. In the context of social media campaigns, narrative justice is reflected in who is quoted, who appears in visuals, and who is named in captions.

When narratives are built from the voices of affected communities rather than from organizational interpretations the campaign becomes a vehicle of empowerment. Conversely, when community voices appear merely as background or not at all, the result is not inclusion, but a new form of symbolic inequality.

3. Method

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach with qualitative content analysis to examine how vulnerable groups are represented in Greenpeace Indonesia's digital environmental campaign through the Instagram platform. This approach was selected as it allows for an in-depth exploration of the meaning-making processes constructed through visual and textual narratives, as well as the representational strategies employed in communicating environmental justice. Social media, particularly Instagram, is the primary focus of this research due to its inherently visual and narrative-driven format, and its increasingly central role in civil society communication strategies over the past decade.

The object of this research is the official Instagram account of Greenpeace Indonesia (@greenpeaceid), which is actively used as a digital advocacy channel for ecological and social justice issues. The researcher examined all posts published between March 2024 and April 2025 a period that reflects the intensification of digital environmental activism in the post-pandemic context and the growing public engagement leading up to a politically significant year in Indonesia. Out of the total corpus, 66 posts were selected using purposive sampling. Selection criteria included posts that explicitly or implicitly depicted vulnerable groups such as Indigenous communities, women, children, small-scale farmers, fishers, and the elderly. Particular attention was paid to identifying the presence or absence of people with disabilities, to evaluate whether they were represented and how.

Data were collected by documenting relevant posts through screenshots, transcription of captions, and recording metadata such as posting date, engagement metrics (likes, comments), and media format (image or video). The dataset was then systematically coded based on six analytical dimensions: (1) types of vulnerable groups represented, (2) forms of community participation (e.g., protest, litigation, education, cultural preservation), (3) use of inclusive language and visuals, (4) narrative framing strategies, (5) connections to environmental or climate-related policy, and (6) the position of vulnerable groups within the narrative—whether they were portrayed as active subjects or passive objects.

The analytical process followed a thematic content analysis approach, involving repeated close readings to identify patterns and recurring representational strategies. This method draws on the conceptual framework of Schreier (2012), which emphasizes detailed, context-sensitive interpretation of media content. Each thematic finding was then interpreted through an integrated theoretical lens, combining Hall's (1997) theory of media representation, Stofor et al.'s (2023) principles of inclusive communication, Schlosberg's (2004) ecological justice framework, and the intersectionality perspective developed by Crenshaw (1991) and Collins & Bilge (2020). These theoretical tools enabled the researcher not only to map who was represented in the Greenpeace campaign, but also to reflect on who was excluded—and to examine the broader social meanings and political implications of these representational choices in the context of inclusive environmental advocacy.

4. Finding and Discussion

Greenpeace Indonesia's digital campaign on Instagram represents a prominent form of environmental communication that emphasizes visual, narrative, and affective power in

addressing ecological and social justice issues. Based on an analysis of 66 Instagram posts published between March 2024 and April 2025, the study identified consistent patterns of representation concerning several vulnerable groups. This analysis was structured around six key dimensions developed by the researcher: identification of vulnerable groups, forms of participation, use of inclusive language and visuals, narrative framing, policy relevance, and the positionality of groups within the campaign narratives. The findings suggest that although Greenpeace's campaign demonstrates a tendency toward inclusive representation for certain communities, significant gaps remain in terms of identity diversity and intersectionality.

Quantitatively, Indigenous peoples were the most frequently represented group. Of the 66 posts analyzed, 44 featured Indigenous communities, with the majority (42 posts) positioning them as active subjects. They are depicted as forest guardians, legal challengers of environmentally destructive corporations, and stewards of local cultural traditions. These trends are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1 . Summary of Vulnerable Group Representation in Greenpeace Indonesia's Instagram Campaign (March 2024–April 2025)

Category of Vulnerable Group	Total Appearances	As Subject	As Object
Children and Elderly	10	1	9
Indigenous Peoples	44	42	2
Women	8	8	0
Local Farmers/Fishers	4	4	0
Total	66	55	11

Source: Author's coding, 2025

This representation reinforces the narrative of Indigenous peoples as ecological agents who possess local knowledge and moral legitimacy in environmental advocacy. These findings align with the concept of environmental justice, which positions Indigenous communities as central actors in the resistance against the exploitation of natural resources (Schlosberg, 2007).

Women are also portrayed as active participants, although they appear in a smaller number of posts only eight. Nevertheless, all of these posts position women as subjects rather than objects. They are depicted as community leaders, educators of children, and participants in collective action. The narrative constructed around women emphasizes that they are not merely victims of the climate crisis, but also possess the capacity to lead transformative change. This representation illustrates gender-sensitive communication practices that align with the intersectionality approach (Crenshaw, 1991), which underscores the importance of viewing women not as a singular identity category, but as individuals with complex social roles.

In contrast, children and the elderly are more frequently positioned as narrative objects, particularly in posts that highlight the impacts of air pollution, deforestation, and food insecurity. Out of the ten posts featuring these groups, nine portray them as those suffering from environmental damage. While this approach is functional in generating public empathy, overly protective portrayals risk obscuring their potential agency. This reflects Nancy Fraser's (2008) critique regarding the importance of *parity of participation* in public narratives social groups should not only be presented as symbols of suffering but also as empowered actors.

Community participation in the campaign is illustrated across a wide spectrum. Greenpeace does not only highlight protest and demonstrations, but also depicts legal advocacy, policy engagement, cultural preservation, and environmental education. Indigenous communities and farmers are shown participating in mass mobilizations to oppose the National Capital City (IKN) project and palm oil expansion, while other local communities are portrayed filing lawsuits or attending international forums such as the COP climate summit. The campaign also features traditional practices like *Sasi* in Papua and educational initiatives such as children planting mangrove trees. This diversity of participation indicates that Greenpeace seeks to portray vulnerable groups not merely as victims but as deliberative actors with reflective capacity and collective agency. This is consistent with the theory of eco-

citizenship (Dobson, 2003), which argues that environmental struggle is not the sole responsibility of political elites or the state, but a shared civic duty that transcends social positions.



Figure 1 : Protest action by local residents and Indigenous communities rejecting forced relocation due to the Nusantara Capital City (IKN) project, as shown in a Greenpeace Indonesia Instagram post (March 2024). The protest signs reflect the active participation of vulnerable communities in defending their environmental and land rights.

From a visual and narrative communication perspective, Greenpeace's campaign demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusive language and community-based storytelling. Captions are written in a personal and empathetic narrative style, often incorporating direct quotes from affected communities. The language frequently includes local terms or dialects, which reinforces a sense of authenticity and respects the perspectives of the communities involved. For instance, in a post about the forests of Papua, a quote from a Knasaimos community member is included: "*Hutan ini kitong jaga untuk jamin hidup*" ("We protect this forest to ensure life"). The use of the word "*kitong*," meaning "we" in Papuan dialect, is a concrete example of linguistic inclusivity that brings the community's voice directly into the narrative, allowing the audience to better understand their worldview.

The visuals feature real faces of community members in the context of their daily activities, collective actions, and local environments, rather than symbolic or illustrative imagery. This narrative approach reflects the practice of *narrative justice* (Couldry, 2010), where communities are given space to be the storytellers, not merely the subjects of someone else's story. Greenpeace also utilizes highlighted text overlays on visuals—such as the phrase "*When will the law side with Indigenous peoples?*" which reinforces the campaign's position as one of advocacy and solidarity.

Figure 1: A married couple from the Knasaimos Indigenous community in West Papua, featured in a Greenpeace Indonesia Instagram post (May 2024), illustrating how customary forests serve as a source of livelihood and are protected by the local community.



Nevertheless, limitations become apparent when this representation is examined through a broader intersectional lens. Across all the analyzed posts, not a single one features people with disabilities, visually, narratively, or symbolically. There are no signs of wheelchairs, sign language, hearing aids, or any other indicators of accessibility. Even in narratives that highlight vulnerability, there is no explicit mention of the challenges faced by disabled individuals in the context of environmental crises. This absence reflects what Schlosberg and Collins (2014) refer to as *structural invisibility*, the erasure of certain groups from public narratives due to dominant assumptions about who is deemed worthy of representation. The complete exclusion of persons with disabilities in this campaign illustrates that inclusivity within Greenpeace's narrative remains partial and has yet to encompass the full spectrum of social vulnerability.

The narrative framing employed by Greenpeace demonstrates overall consistency and strong ideological intent. Five dominant frames recur throughout the campaign: structural critique of the state and corporations, community resistance, empowerment of marginalized groups, public solidarity, and environmental justice. These narratives not only highlight problems but also offer alternative perspectives and calls to action. However, the campaign's framing remains limited to more commonly acknowledged identities such as ethnicity, gender, and class, and does not yet incorporate intersectional complexities involving disability, old age, or non-binary gender identities.

From a policy standpoint, Greenpeace's campaign actively links local struggles to broader national and global policy frameworks. Several posts highlight the urgency of passing the Indigenous Peoples Bill, critique national strategic projects, and reference international commitments such as the COP and the Kunming-Montreal Agreement. This demonstrates that Greenpeace is not merely fostering empathy but is also crafting a politically engaged and strategic advocacy narrative. Still, environmental accessibility and the involvement of disabled persons in climate policy are absent from the campaign's discourse, indicating that these issues have not yet been integrated into Greenpeace's communication agenda.

Finally, an analysis of how vulnerable groups are positioned in the narrative shows that the majority of posts depict them as active subjects—a strategy that enhances the campaign's moral legitimacy. Indigenous peoples, women, farmers, and fishers are portrayed as plaintiffs, protectors, and leaders. This suggests a deliberate awareness on Greenpeace's part of the importance of centering community agency in environmental advocacy. However, groups such as children and the elderly are more often positioned as passive objects, while persons with disabilities are entirely absent—neither as subjects nor as objects. Therefore, the campaign still faces significant challenges in fulfilling the principles of truly inclusive representation.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

This study has analyzed how vulnerable groups are represented in Greenpeace Indonesia's digital environmental campaign on the Instagram platform. Based on an examination of 66 posts published between March 2024 and April 2025, the findings show that the campaign generally demonstrates progressive and affirmative representational practices toward certain vulnerable groups, particularly Indigenous peoples and women. These groups are portrayed as active subjects in ecological struggles through protest, litigation, policy advocacy, and cultural preservation. The narrative strategies employed reflect a commitment to the principles of environmental justice, utilizing empathetic language, authentic visuals, and strong framing that critiques structural inequality.

However, the findings also reveal significant limitations in the campaign's scope of inclusivity. Persons with disabilities are entirely absent from the campaign visually, textually, and symbolically. This absence indicates a form of structural invisibility, reflecting a failure to fully integrate the principles of intersectionality. Within the framework of environmental justice and inclusive communication, the diversity of identities and experiences of vulnerability should be central to the construction of public narratives. The exclusion of disabled individuals suggests that the campaign's claim to inclusivity remains limited and somewhat normative.

Theoretically, these findings underscore the importance of adopting an interdisciplinary approach in environmental communication research one that integrates theories of representation, intersectionality, and inclusive communication. This study highlights that representation is not merely about visibility, but is also closely tied to power distribution, political agency, and social recognition. Practically, the findings offer a point of reflection for advocacy organizations and digital campaigners to design more inclusive, accessible, and transformative communication strategies.

The limitations of this study lie in its scope, which is restricted to a single social media platform (Instagram) managed by Greenpeace Indonesia, and to a one-year timeframe. Furthermore, the analysis focuses solely on published content and does not include data triangulation through interviews with campaign teams or members of the represented communities. As such, the intentionality and editorial processes behind the campaign narratives remain unexplored.

For future research, it is recommended that similar studies expand their data sources to include multiple social media platforms, and combine content analysis with in-depth interviews involving campaign actors and the communities being represented. It is also important to explore how people with disabilities and those with intersecting identities can be meaningfully integrated into digital environmental campaigns. Future studies may also compare representational strategies across advocacy organizations to better understand patterns of exclusion and inclusion in environmental communication practices more comprehensively.

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