

# Journal of Government & Civil Society

Journal of Government  
and Civil Society

Volume 8

No. 2

Pages 161 - 343

October 2024

ISSN 2579-4396



## Daftar Isi (Table of Content)

# Journal of Government & Civil Society

- 161 - 182  
Digitalization: Innovation in Public Services (Case Study Implementation of the Complaints Service Unit in Surakarta (ULAS) and Klaten Regency Industry and Manpower Office)  
**Heka Jalu Seta<sup>1</sup>, Didik Gunawan Suharto<sup>1</sup>, Kristina Setyowati<sup>1</sup>**  
*(<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia)*
- 183 - 203  
Participatory Budgeting in Surakarta, Indonesia: Pro-Poor Approach  
**Akbarudin Arif<sup>1</sup>, Agus Kristiyanto<sup>1</sup>, Cahyo Seftyono<sup>2</sup>, Sapja Anantanyu<sup>1</sup>, Haryani Saptaningtyas<sup>1</sup>, Bonn Juego<sup>3</sup>, Tulus Widayat<sup>1</sup>**  
*(<sup>1</sup> Graduate School, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia)  
(<sup>2</sup> Political Science Program, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia)  
(<sup>3</sup> International Development Studies, University of Jyväskylä, Finland)*
- 204 - 227  
Improving Quality of Land Data Towards Modern Land Administration in The Administrative City of West Jakarta  
**Baskara Suprojo<sup>1</sup>, M. Nazir Salim<sup>2</sup>, Arditya Wicaksono<sup>3</sup>, Septina Marryanti<sup>4</sup>, Yudha Purbawa<sup>5</sup>, Reza Amarta Prayoga<sup>6</sup>, Purnama Alamsyah<sup>7</sup>, Fatwa Nurul Hakim<sup>8</sup>, Gustaf Wijaya<sup>9</sup>, Eko Wahyono<sup>10</sup>**  
*(<sup>1</sup> Regional Office of The National Land Agency East Kalimantan Province)  
(<sup>2</sup> National Land Institute (STPN))  
(<sup>3,6,7,8,9,10</sup> Research Center for Social Welfare, Village, and Connectivity, National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN))  
(<sup>4</sup> Research Center for Population, National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN))  
(<sup>5</sup> Research Center for Behavioral and Circular Economics, National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN))*
- 228 - 245  
Collaborative Governance in Local Governments: Yogyakarta Special Regional Fund  
**Imansyah<sup>1</sup>, Lisa Sophia Yuliantini<sup>2</sup>, Titin Purwaningsih<sup>3</sup>**  
*(<sup>1,2,3</sup> Department of Government Affairs and Administration, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, 55183, Indonesia)*
- 246 - 263  
Community Empowerment Strategy In Developing Agrotourism Village In Kuningan Regency, West Java  
**Rd. Ahmad Buchari<sup>1,2</sup>, Sulaiman Zuhdi<sup>3</sup>, Azlan Abas<sup>4</sup>, Kadaruddin Aiyub<sup>4</sup>, Entang Adhy Muhtar<sup>1</sup>, Ahmad Zaini Miftah<sup>1,2</sup>, Riki Satia Muharam<sup>1</sup>, Darto<sup>1</sup>**

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*(<sup>3</sup> Departemen of Public Administrastion, Universitas Lancang Kuning, Pekanbaru, Indonesia)*  
*(<sup>4</sup> Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, University Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia)*

Comparison of Website Maturity in e-Government Implementation at the City Level in Indonesia

264 – 288

**Reksi Anggara<sup>1</sup>, Eko Priyo Purnomo<sup>1</sup>, Tiara Khairunnisa<sup>1</sup>**

*(<sup>1</sup> Department of Government Affairs and Administration, Jusuf Kalla School of Government, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia)*

Reform and Reformulation of Public Policy in Indonesia: What is Required?

289 – 311

**Ni Wayan Widhiasthini<sup>1</sup>, Made Srinitha Millinia Utami<sup>2</sup>, Nyoman Sri Subawa<sup>3</sup>**

*(<sup>1</sup> Department of Publik Administration, Universitas Pendidikan Nasional Bali, Indonesia)*  
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*(<sup>3</sup> Department of Publik Administration, Universitas Pendidikan Nasional Bali, Indonesia)*

Agile Governance in Optimizing Digital Literacy for MSMEs Actors in the Special Region of Yogyakarta

312 – 325

**Muhammad Eko Atmojo<sup>1</sup>, Awang Darumurti<sup>1</sup>, Helen Dian Fridayani<sup>1</sup>, Sanny Nofrima<sup>2</sup>, Herdin Saputra<sup>3</sup>**

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*(<sup>3</sup> Ural Institute of Humanities, Ural Federal University, Russia Federation)*

Collaborative Governance in Prevention and Control of Sexual Abuse in Local Level

326 – 343

**Hendra Gunawan<sup>1</sup>, Wiwi Widiastuti<sup>1</sup>, Riska Sarofah<sup>1</sup>, Vidia Lestari<sup>2</sup>**

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## Community Empowerment Strategy In Developing Agrotourism Village In Kuningan Regency, West Java

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### ABSTRACT

*The enhancement of local resources through agrotourism presents significant opportunities for economic growth, social benefits, and environmental sustainability in rural communities. This study explores strategic approaches to community empowerment in the development of agrotourism villages within Kuningan Regency, West Java, an area rich in agricultural potential. A qualitative case study method was adopted, gathering data through observations, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGD). The findings underscore that agrotourism village development requires an integrated approach, focusing on robust governance, active community participation, innovation, and cross-sector collaboration to efficiently manage and promote tourism destinations. The study highlights the critical role of government policy and budgetary support in establishing programs that leverage local agricultural strengths, empowering communities to participate actively in sustainable tourism. By employing a comprehensive, long-term development model, agrotourism can be effectively harnessed to yield both economic and social value for local communities, while also prioritizing environmental conservation. This research provides valuable insights into how structured community empowerment and strategic collaboration can unlock the full potential of agrotourism as a sustainable development pathway for rural regions.*

**Keywords:** Strategy, community empowerment, participation, governance, agrotourism

### ABSTRAK

Peningkatan sumber daya lokal melalui agrowisata menghadirkan peluang signifikan untuk pertumbuhan ekonomi, manfaat sosial, dan keberlanjutan lingkungan di komunitas pedesaan. Studi ini mengeksplorasi pendekatan strategis dalam pemberdayaan masyarakat untuk pengembangan desa agrowisata di Kabupaten Kuningan, Jawa Barat, yang kaya akan potensi pertanian. Metode studi kasus kualitatif diterapkan, dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan diskusi kelompok terarah (FGD). Hasil penelitian menekankan bahwa pengembangan desa agrowisata membutuhkan pendekatan terintegrasi yang berfokus pada tata kelola yang kuat, partisipasi aktif masyarakat, inovasi, serta kolaborasi lintas sektor untuk mengelola dan mempromosikan destinasi wisata secara efisien. Studi ini menyoroti peran penting dukungan kebijakan dan anggaran pemerintah dalam membentuk program-program yang memanfaatkan kekuatan pertanian lokal, memberdayakan masyarakat untuk berpartisipasi aktif dalam pariwisata berkelanjutan. Dengan menerapkan model pengembangan yang menyeluruh dan jangka panjang, potensi agrowisata dapat dimanfaatkan secara efektif untuk memberikan nilai ekonomi dan sosial bagi masyarakat lokal, sambil tetap memprioritaskan pelestarian lingkungan. Penelitian ini memberi wawasan berharga tentang bagaimana pemberdayaan

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Citation : Buchari, Rd. A., Zuhdi, S., Abas, A., Aiyub, K., Muhtar, E. A., Miftah, A. Z., ... Darto. (2024). Community Empowerment Strategy In Developing Agrotourism Village In Kuningan Regency, West Java. *Journal of Government and Civil Society*, 8(2), 246-263. <https://doi.org/10.31000/jgcs.v8i2.11550>

masyarakat yang terstruktur dan kolaborasi strategis dapat membuka potensi penuh agrowisata sebagai jalur pembangunan berkelanjutan bagi wilayah pedesaan.

**Kata Kunci:** Strategi, pemberdayaan masyarakat, partisipasi, pemerintahan, agrowisata

## INTRODUCTION

The government promotes the development of rural areas through agribusiness and agrotourism programs to improve living needs, create jobs, and foster rural development both economically and socially (Bwana et al., 2015). Agrotourism acts as a catalyst for economic growth and increases community income (Das & Rainey, 2010). Therefore, it is considered an effective solution to the social and economic problems of rural community.

Agrotourism comprises a variety of tourism activities that leverage agricultural potential as tourist attraction. This includes the natural panoramas of agricultural areas, the uniqueness and diversity of production activities, agricultural technology, and the culture of agricultural community (Palit et al., 2017). Typically, rural tourism serves as a secondary activity, while agriculture remains the main source of income and employment for farmers (Dar'uau et al., 2010). Agrotourism has been successful in promoting rural development and environmental protection, as it often develops in more sustainable ways, positively impacting biodiversity, landscapes, and natural resources (Mastronardi et al., 2015).

One of the principles of sustainable agrotourism development is community participation in planning. Local community, specifically indigenous people living in tourist areas, plays a crucial role in tourism by providing most of the attractions and determining the quality of tourism product (Damanik & Weber, 2006). This community participation is crucial for maintaining the integrity of nature and addressing the demands and urgency of sustainable tourism development.

The development of agrotourism-based village is crucial, specifically for areas with significant agrotourism potential, such as Kuningan Regency, West Java Province. The vision of Kuningan MAJU (Prosperous, Agamis, Pinunjul) aims to strengthen village development by 2023. This vision is reflected in the regional development priorities outlined in Regional Regulation Number 7 of 2019 concerning RPJMD 2018-2023. The regulation focuses on the development of Pinunjul, prioritizing 100 out of 361 villages to optimize and improve their economic welfare in 5 years.

One of the missions of Kuningan Regency government is to foster the development of rural areas based on agriculture, tourism, culture, and local potential to promote growth and ensure equitable distribution of economy. Furthermore, Kuningan Regency was declared a Conservation Regency in 2006, committing to conservation principles in all development activities. This method aims to balance economic growth, ecological sustainability, and sustainable social and cultural development, including village-based development.



The development of agrotourism-based village potential positively impacts farmers, community, and village government by increasing income, creating employment opportunities, and promoting local culture and products. However, the reliance on natural resources means that this development is highly dependent on natural conditions. Challenges such as lack of understanding among village community and managers, limited budgets, and insufficient government support for superior programs need to be addressed. To optimize the potential of agrotourism, a robust community empowerment strategy is essential. Therefore, this current study aimed to explain community empowerment strategies in developing agrotourism village in Kuningan Regency.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study used a qualitative method with case study (Yin, 2018), to understand the investigated phenomenon through in-depth analysis of the collected data. Based on the focus on understanding community empowerment strategies, qualitative method facilitated the investigation of complexity, dynamics, and local context involving communities and government. Furthermore, the perceptions, needs, and experiences of community included in agrotourism development in Kuningan were examined through in-depth interviews, participant observation, focus group discussion (FGD), and document analysis.

Case study was conducted by focusing on one or several representative cases for in-depth analysis. This method facilitated the examination of phenomenon holistically, considering various aspects and exploring hidden meanings in the case context. By focusing on a specific agrotourism village, the challenges faced and the impact on local development could be explored, thereby facilitating the development of community empowerment strategies.

The analysis process comprised several steps, namely collection, reduction, and presentation of data, as well as conclusion drawing. During analysis, the patterns, themes, and relationships between data were identified, while the results were interpreted in the context of the studied phenomenon (Huberman & Miles, 1992) in (Sugiyono, 2022). The qualitative method facilitated an in-depth analysis of data, including the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of community included in developing agrotourism village. Therefore, this study provided valuable insights into community empowerment strategies for developing agrotourism village in Kuningan Regency.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Development of Agrotourism Potential**

Development of agrotourism potential in Kuningan Regency entails leveraging natural resources, agricultural activities, fisheries, animal husbandry, and tourism to improve the economy and welfare of local community. To promote village-based regional development, the Kuningan Regency Government issued Regent Regulation Number 1

of 2019 concerning Pinunjul Village. This regulation outlines a regional development strategy that prioritizes the superiority (pinunjul) of local characteristics and serves as the legal basis for synergistic planning and implementation of village-based development. The aim is to establish Pinunjul villages by identifying and capitalizing on local advantages in economic, social, and cultural activities, transforming them into key strengths of the local economy.

Agrotourism in Pasawahan Village, for instance, offers an authentic and relaxing natural tourism experience. Tourists can enjoy extraordinary natural beauty of green rice fields and stunning views of Mount Ceremai. The calm rural atmosphere, free of air pollution and city noise, provides a refreshing experience for tourists. Tourists can also learn about agriculture by interacting with local farmers and purchasing plant seeds as souvenirs. Tourist infrastructure, including resting huts and gates as photo spots, fosters village's appeal as a natural tourism destination.

Agrotourism initiatives in Kuningan Regency are managed independently by local community with minimal oversight. Challenges, such as lack of knowledge, insufficient community empowerment, and inadequate financial and policy support from the government hinder the effective implementation of sustainable agrotourism development programs. Without proper governance, the risk of environmental damage or degradation can increase, threatening the sustainability of natural resources which are the basis of tourism potential.

Based on interviews, regulations require the formation of groups or cooperatives to manage tourist attractions. This regulation is a positive step toward establishing an organized and orderly management structure. However, challenges arise when the majority do not understand or acknowledge these rules. For instance, the revitalization of the Well 7 site requires a budget that cannot be allocated from the village financial budget since it is not considered a village asset. Instead, funding should be proposed at Regency and Provincial levels first.

Intensive communication and outreach from the government are essential to address this challenge. It is also crucial to explain the applicable rules, the benefits and importance of forming groups or cooperatives, and the bureaucratic processes required for managing tourist attractions. Based on these results, the government and relevant stakeholders were expected to actively engage in communication with community. This engagement should promote community members to manage agrotourism. Effective communication can foster community transformation and active engagement (Adedokun et al., 2017).

Regular mentoring and training are necessary to improve the capacity of human resources in managing and exploiting tourism potential. Therefore, this method aims to ensure that the development of agrotourism in Pasawahan Village progresses effectively and provides great benefits for the local community. Studies showed one of the main

challenges to preserving cultural sites was the weakness of existing local institutions (Barrett et al., 2001; Becker et al., 2003; Weingberg et al., 2002), which were the rules of the game in community.

Efforts to improve human resource capacity, secure adequate financial support, and strengthen the role of village government are essential for more effective agrotourism management. These measures are important to ensure that natural potential is utilized sustainably, providing maximum economic and social benefits for local communities while maintaining environmental sustainability.

Cibuntu Village is located at the foot of Mount Ciremai, unlike Pasawahan. The natural beauty, resources, and agricultural products offer tourists an impressive and comfortable experience. The friendliness and open communication of the local community also foster the village's appeal, making it more advanced and independent. In addition to natural wealth, Cibuntu Village has a variety of tourist attractions, namely 17 ecotourism products available, such as agrotourism, nature tourism, and historical tourism.

**Table 4.1. Cibuntu Village Eco-Agrotourism Products**

No	Eco-Agro Tourism Products in Cibuntu Village
1	Agrowisata tanaman pangan
2	Agrowisata menangkap ikan
3	Agrowisata kampung kambing
4	Agrowisata kerajinan gerabah
5	Membuat cinderamata dari bambu
6	Kuliner dan pembuatan kuliner
7	Fan game tradisional
8	Ekowisata sejarah (15 situs sejarah)
9	Ekowisata alam mata air Kahuripan
10	Ekowisata alam curug Gong Seng
11	Berburu sinyal
12	Pawai Obor
13	Pawai budaya dan kesenian
14	Bermain Angklung
15	Dialog budaya
16	Atraksi penyambutan
17	Home stay

Source: Processed by the author, 2024



Ecotourism and Agrotourism in Cibuntu Village are managed directly by community under the auspices of Village Government and Kuningan Regency Tourism and Culture Service (DISPARBUD). To ensure a more structured management of eco-agrotourism, community, Village Government, and DISPARBUD formed an institution called Tourism Driving Community (KOMPEPAR). This institution was established to regulate and organize ecotourism activities more effectively. KOMPEPAR includes members from all levels of community, with several individuals appointed as core administrators. Cibuntu Village ecotourism was inaugurated in 2012. Before the establishment, there were several discoveries of sites and statues from the Neolithic and Megalithic eras, but community had not developed these into tourist attractions due to various limitations.

Ecotourism and agrotourism in Cibuntu Village are still in the planning stages of becoming Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes). The village government plays a role as the main supporter, specifically in providing facilities and infrastructure. It also supports the success of ecotourism through marketing, welcoming tourists, receiving guests, and facilitating interactions between tourists and community, as well as between community and government agencies. Furthermore, the government acts as a companion and protector for all activities related to ecotourism and agrotourism.

Interviews showed that all services were streamlined through a single channel in Cibuntu. Tourists are directed to Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) in case of unfamiliarity with Cibuntu tourism. This village is one of the best in ASEAN, with one of the homestays, Mrs. Yoyo's Homestay ranking 5th in ASEAN. The homestay is managed by POKDARWIS, POKDARWIS, which ensures fair distribution of benefits within community. Collaboration between BUMDes, BPD, and Village Heads is effective, focusing on Fertilizer, Agriculture, Agricultural Business Units, and MSMEs, employing up to 30 people. Research in developing countries shows that business knowledge drives development, specifically among rural women entrepreneurs, as observed in Bangladesh (Afrin, 2010).

The experience in Cibuntu exemplifies how effective collaboration between various parties, a focus on local economic development, and community empowerment can positively impact village growth and progress. This shows the importance of synergy between the public, private, and community sectors in managing and developing village potential holistically and sustainably. However, due to inadequate promotion and marketing, the full potential for tourism and economic development in Cibuntu may not be realized. Despite efforts to improve tourism services and develop the local economy through collaboration, the lack of promotion and marketing remains a challenge to reaching a wider target market.

## Community Empowerment Strategy

Community empowerment is a method of developing opportunities, desires, and abilities of community to access resources. This consequently improves the capacity to determine the future through participation to realize the quality of life for community, both individually and collectively. Individual or community change is essential for social change and empowerment (Speer & Hughey, 1995; Florin & Wandersman, 1990).

A prerequisite for developing empowerment is the need for greater openness in groups or communities (Pranarka, 1996). The concept of empowerment entails supporting communities below the poverty line (Maani, 2011). Therefore, community empowerment model for developing agrotourism village should focus on human resource aspect, including fostering communal knowledge, which subsequently increases the value of tourism offerings and attractions (Suardana et al., 2020). This is particularly significant in the Indonesian context, where BUMDes is crucial for national development (Siskawati et al., 2022).

Humans need to be the subject of development, as community plays a significant role in developing agrotourism village through community empowerment strategies supported by the empowerment framework in ACTORS theory (Macaulay & Cook, 1997). The first element is authority. Granting authority to community in the context of agrotourism village development helps in addressing the challenges and maximizing development potential. The concept of authority not only includes decision-making aspects but also entrusts community with the responsibility to manage and develop tourism destination.

The existence of regulations that require the formation of groups or cooperatives to manage tourist attractions exemplifies the empowerment of community. These groups serve as driving force and legitimation factor (Crooke, 2010). With this legal basis, community has greater control over the management of tourist attractions, typically fostering effectiveness and transparency in agrotourism management in Kuningan Regency. However, due to limited awareness of these regulations among the local residents, assistance and training are necessary to understand the process and governance of tourist attraction management.

Empowering community to directly engage in management enables the active role of preserving the local environment, including forests, agricultural land, and biodiversity. Furthermore, community can efficiently manage ecotourism businesses and optimize economic benefits from tourism through improved access to markets, skills training, and product development.

Granting authority to community in the management and development of agrotourism village facilitates more responsive decision-making tailored to local needs. It also strengthens social networks and collaboration among residents, while promoting local cultural values in tourism development. This consequently fosters community pride and

identity, laying a strong foundation for sustainable village development and empowering community in economic and social fields. The empowerment not only increases the potential for sustainable tourism development but also strengthens local capacity to address challenges and leverage new opportunities.

Second, confidence and competence. The development of community-based agrotourism destination has not provided maximum benefits, specifically to the farming community. Engaging farmers as entrepreneurs can be challenging in developing sustainable agrotourism. This condition is influenced by the limited capacity of community in the regional agrotourism sector (Budiasa & Ambarawati, 2014), where the average level of formal education is relatively low (Swastika et al., 2017). Furthermore, there is a lack of participation in various non-formal educational activities such as counseling and training activities (Dumasari, 2014), with the number of rural residents active in the agricultural sector being dominated by the older generation (Colton & Bissix, 2005).

Community empowerment is not only limited to delegating responsibility and authority but also building community self-confidence and abilities necessary for effective village development. In the context of agrotourism village development in Pasawahan, assistance and training for local human resources is part of community empowerment strategy. Several farmers struggle in agrotourism businesses due to a lack of understanding of entrepreneurial concepts and strategies (Susilowati, 2016; McGehee & Kim, 2004).

An in-depth examination of farmers' daily activities reflects entrepreneurial endeavors, whether it is procuring seeds, planting, weeding, or selling agricultural products. However, many farmers fail to realize this perspective. Agricultural development not only induces social changes in values, norms, and behavior for welfare of farmers and community (Colton & Bissix, 2005) but also mitigates the stigma of farmers being identified as impoverished (Rogerson, 2012).

The confidence to actively participate in agrotourism development can be improved by increasing community competence in understanding policies, tourism management, and related bureaucratic processes. Increased competency also equips community with the necessary skills to effectively and sustainably manage tourist attractions. Intensive communication and outreach efforts by the village government to local community serve the same objective. Through clear communication and a deep understanding of applicable regulations, community can gain confidence and recognize the crucial role in agrotourism development. Therefore, residents are motivated to engage and participate actively. Sustained engagement leads to deeper competence and control, advancing the process of personal empowerment (Kieffer, 1984).

The implementation of the one-stop service concept in Cibuntu also reflects the provision of confidence and competence to community. By offering easy access and clear information to the public regarding tourism management, individuals feel more confident and capable

of participating in tourism activities. Community confidence and competence in developing agrotourism village play a crucial role. This foundation is crucial for sustainable and competitive management and development. With sufficient self-confidence and ability, community can become the main driving force in the growth and progress of the village.

Third, trust. Efforts to increase the capacity of local human resources and provide a better understanding of rules and governance for managing tourist attractions are concrete steps in providing trust to community. By providing training and assistance, community has the potential to effectively manage tourist attractions, creating a sense of trust in the government and motivating active participation in village development.

Trust in society is reflected in various policies and management practices for ecotourism and agrotourism. For instance, empowering community to establish KOMPEPAR as an institution that regulates and organizes ecotourism shows the government belief in community ability to manage tourism potential effectively.

Community organizing process can increase social capital for individuals by improving and strengthening relationships between people, building trust, and acknowledging shared interests (Chaskin, 2001). For an individual to benefit from social capital, three conditions should be met: (1) The opportunity to carry out social transactions (social network connection); (2) Social network members should be motivated to act in the actor's interests; and (3) The capacity to perform effectively (Davidsson & Honig, 2003).

Granting trust to community is a key element in community empowerment strategy in developing agrotourism village. When community feels trusted and appreciated by the government, there is more motivation to actively participate in village development and maintain the sustainability of tourism management. This creates a strong foundation for holistic and sustainable growth and progress of the village.

Fourth, opportunities. Community empowerment should be able to create conditions where people have the opportunity to develop and take an active role in village development. A significant challenge hindering rural community from actively participating and benefiting from tourism development is limited human resources. Compared to urban dwellers, rural populations often have fewer educational opportunities, resulting in limited knowledge, skills, and resources for participation in tourism development and management (Razzaq et al., 2013). Efforts to increase the capacity of local human resources and provide a better understanding of the rules and governance for managing tourist attractions represent opportunities for community.

Community can improve skills and knowledge in managing tourist attractions through training and mentoring. Furthermore, training and education can positively influence the attitudes of local community, thereby fostering the development of tourism destination (Bhatta & Ohe, 2019). This shows the need for a radical transformation in tourism

education to ensure the sustainability of tourism industry (Hsu, 2018). Studies on innovative teaching programs in entrepreneurship and skills development in Portugal (Daniel et al., 2017) and dairy farm management skills in Japan (Ohe, 2017) reinforce the positive role of education in tourism development. Similarly, training and skills development campaigns, community awareness programs, employment opportunities, and community engagement have contributed significantly to the development of responsible tourism in Kerala, India (Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017) and in Jamaica based on community identity (Sinclair & Gursoy, 2017).

Providing opportunities to community is reflected in various policies and management practices for ecotourism and agrotourism. For instance, through the formation of KOMPEPAR, community is empowered to organize and manage ecotourism activities. By becoming KOMPEPAR members, community can participate in decision-making regarding tourism development in the village.

Opportunities for community are a key element in the empowerment strategy in developing agrotourism village. The participation of community in decision-making and implementation can foster a sense of ownership and motivation to contribute positively to the development of the village. This creates a strong foundation for holistic and sustainable village growth and progress.

Fifth, responsibilities. Community empowerment strategies in developing agrotourism villages through responsibility to community are essential. Empowerment transcends providing opportunities, as it includes assigning responsibilities, by leveraging the role and skills of community in village management and development.

Identifying community with the capacity and willingness to undertake agrotourism initiatives is essential. Efforts to develop community organizations to initiate, develop, and promote agrotourism should be identified. This helps to maintain accountability and prevent unwanted external interference. The diverse and authentic nature of traditional agricultural activities, farmers' interest and willingness to engage in agritourism by taking responsibility and ownership of activities, availability of human resources, the natural appeal of agriculture, and rich rural cultural activities centered on agriculture were identified as key strengths and opportunities for the development of agrotourism (Pambudi et al., 2018).

Increasing the capacity of local human resources and strengthening the role of village government are also integral aspects of providing responsibility to community. By increasing understanding and skills in tourist attraction management, community can actively participate in maintaining environmental sustainability and ensuring effective management of tourist attractions.



Periodic mentoring and training show the responsibility of community. By increasing the capacity of local human resources, community is tasked with active participation in the management and maintenance of tourism destination. Community is also responsible for continually improving knowledge and skills in tourism management to address challenges and better optimize tourism potential.

The delegation of responsibility to community is also reflected in the collaboration among BUMDes, BPD, and Village Heads in Cibuntu Village. Through this collaboration, community is responsible for developing the local economy and managing business units in the village. For instance, activities undertaken by the Fertilizer, Agro Business Unit, Agricultural Business Unit, and MSMEs provide employment opportunities for the locals, entrusting them with the responsibility to improve community welfare through business development and job creation.

Responsibility to community is an integral part of the empowerment strategy in developing agrotourism village. By assigning responsibility, community not only becomes beneficiaries but also active agents of change in the development of the village. This creates a solid foundation for holistic and sustainable growth and progress of the village.

Sixth, Support. The main challenge in developing rural agrotourism lies in the level of community awareness and participation. Challenges such as lack of funding, infrastructure, and government support were significant barriers to the establishment of sustainable agritourism enterprises (Stanovèia et al., 2018). Strengthening the role of village government constitutes a crucial aspect of providing support to community. By providing adequate financial support, training, and mentoring, community receives assistance in improving understanding of tourist attraction governance and bureaucratic processes.

Support for community includes intensive communication and outreach efforts from the government. The initiative aims to ensure that the public understands the applicable rules, benefits, and bureaucratic processes required in managing tourist attractions. This support fosters confidence among community members in participating in village development.

Through collaboration among various parties, such as BUMDes, BPD, and Village Heads, community receives support to organize and expand economic potential, as well as participate in developing business units in the village. This collaborative support creates a conducive environment for holistic village growth and progress. Providing support to community is also reflected in the implementation of the one-stop service concept in Cibuntu Village. Furthermore, community gains assistance in accessing information and services related to tourism and village management more conveniently. This support not only fosters active participation of community in the development of the village but also helps in addressing challenges and optimizing existing potential.

The description above shows that the development of agrotourism requires various community empowerment efforts and support from various related parties. In Pasawahan Village, for instance, the main challenge lies in the lack of public understanding and awareness of the rules and governance needed to manage tourist attractions. Empowerment initiatives are carried out through mentoring and training, as well as communication and outreach efforts. Furthermore, adequate financial support and the role of village government are crucial factors in developing agrotourism.

In Cibuntu Village, agrotourism management is more structured, and facilitated through various institutions and collaboration among community, village government, and related agencies. However, there are still challenges in terms of promotion and marketing, hindering the optimal utilization of tourism potential and local economic development. Community empowerment strategy in developing agrotourism villages includes various elements, such as fostering trust, improving skills, assigning responsibility, and offering financial and structural support.

The support from various parties and the strengthening of local community capacity can foster effective agrotourism development and provide maximum benefits for the growth and welfare of village. These results were supported by (Adedoyin et al., 2022), showing crucial role of government institutions and related parties in forming a supportive institutional landscape. Community empowerment strategies are the key to creating innovation and collaboration with positive impact on agrotourism development.

### **Innovation and Collaboration**

Several problems and challenges persist at the basic level, primarily because community directly participates in agrotourism activities as the main service providers. Despite the crucial role of tourism sector in connecting and guiding tourists toward agricultural-based tourism activities, linkages and marketing gaps still pose major challenges.

In the context of agrotourism village development, innovation and collaboration play an important role in creating a significant impact on village development and progress. Innovation refers to the introduction of new ideas or methods that can increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of village development. On the other hand, collaboration refers to cooperation between various parties, including the government, local communities, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations, to achieve common objectives in village development.

In Pasawahan, innovation is essential to address challenges related to community lack of understanding regarding agrotourism management. Innovation can be carried out through creative training and coaching methods that suit the needs of local community. For instance, using interactive and community-based communication methods to convey information about the rules and benefits of forming groups and cooperatives in managing

tourist attractions. In addition, leveraging information and communication technology for innovative purposes can increase public access to the latest information concerning agrotourism development.

Collaboration can strengthen innovation efforts by engaging various parties with diverse interests and resources. For instance, engaging village governments, training institutions, community organizations, and the private sector in designing and implementing development and training programs can increase community capacity in effectively managing agrotourism. Collaboration also plays a crucial role in ensuring the availability of adequate financial support, necessary infrastructure, and wider market access for agrotourism products from Pasawahan.

In Cibuntu, innovation and collaboration have become an integral part of developing ecotourism and agrotourism. The one-stop method in service and coordination between POKDARWIS, the Village Government, and DISPARBUD is a concrete example of innovation in the regulation and management of tourism in the village. Collaboration among BUMDes, BPD, and Village Heads has also positively impacted local economic development and community empowerment. However, the challenge faced by Cibuntu Village is the lack of adequate promotion and marketing.

Innovation is needed in promotional and marketing strategies, such as the use of social media or collaboration with travel agents, to increase the visibility and attractiveness of Cibuntu as tourism destination. Generally, innovation and collaboration are two key elements that complement each other in the development of agrotourism village. With an integrated and sustainable approach to innovation and collaboration, the development of agrotourism village in Cibuntu can persist toward sustainability, providing maximum benefits for the local community.

The development of agrotourism village in Kuningan Regency faces several challenges that necessitate innovative solutions and effective collaboration. Despite being rich in natural potential, managing agrotourism is still challenging. Therefore, innovation is crucial to increase local human resource capacity and obtain adequate financial support to manage agrotourism effectively. Regular coaching and training are also essential to facilitate public understanding of the rules and governance of tourists attraction management. Collaboration among the Village Government, training institutions, and community organizations is crucial in achieving these objectives.

In summary, innovation and collaboration are crucial in addressing challenges and maximizing the development potential of agrotourism village. Innovation in developing management strategies, human resource training, and tourism promotion can help increase the effectiveness and efficiency of agrotourism management. Meanwhile, collaboration among government, society, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations strengthens these efforts by facilitating the sharing of resources, knowledge, and skills. This

makes collaborative partnership a useful and necessary instrument for problem-solving across various domains (Selin & Beason, 1991).

Integrated, innovative, and collaborative efforts are expected to foster the development of agrotourism village in Kuningan Regency, provide maximum benefits for the local community, and preserve the environment. It can also help build villages that are self-sufficient, sustainable, and attractive to local and foreign tourists. Therefore, adequate attention should be given to agrotourism activities and product development, ensuring optimal utilization of resources as well as the provision of clear products and maximum services.

Appropriate awareness and training as well as agritourism industry guidelines for farmers and relevant parties should be ensured to achieve optimal results. The establishment of strong supply chains and reliable networks among tourism industry, agricultural community, and governments are recommended. Furthermore, it is crucial to develop specific agrotourism standards and guidelines to build quality and sustainable agrotourism activities.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the development of agrotourism village in Kuningan Regency operated independently, although suboptimal governance was a significant challenge in developing tourism potential and the local economy. While steps were taken to establish organized management structure, such as the formation of groups or cooperatives, challenges were still persistent in terms of community understanding and awareness of existing regulations.

The success of developing an agrotourism village did not only depend on an organized management structure, but also on community empowerment, collaboration between various parties, as well as effective promotion and marketing. Therefore, the potential for tourism and local economic development in villages like Pasawahan and Cibuntu could only be maximized through a holistic and sustainable method, benefitting community and safeguarding the environment.

Active participation of various stakeholders, including local governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and academics was essential to create strong synergies and support the development of agrotourism village. It was also necessary to build the capacity and skills of the local community in managing and promoting tourism destination, enabling effective partnerships in local economic development efforts.

Developing agrotourism village required a holistic method, including governance, community empowerment, and collaboration among various parties, as well as effective promotion and marketing. By adopting this method, the potential of agrotourism village

could be optimally utilized to provide significant economic and social benefits for community while preserving the environment. Furthermore, it could provide a strong basis for the formulation of policies and best practices in advancing the agritourism sector and welfare of the local community.

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