

Community Participation of Community-Based Development in Malinau Regency North Kalimantan Province

Helmi Pandawa, Mansyur Achmad, Ismail Nurdin, Ika Sartika

Institut Pemerintahan Dalam Negeri, Indonesia

Email: DIP.07.425@ipdn.ac.id, mansyurachmad@ipdn.ac.id, ismailnurdin@ipdn.ac.id, ika_sartika@ipdn.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze *community participation*, supporting and inhibiting factors, and activities within the context of *community-based development* in Malinau Regency. Additionally, the study aims to identify and propose a more effective model of community participation in *community-based development* in Malinau Regency, North Kalimantan Province. The research is grounded in the participation theory proposed by Cohen and Uphoff (1977). A qualitative research method with a descriptive approach was employed. Data collection techniques included interviews, observation, and documentation. The findings indicate that community participation in *community-based development* activities in Malinau Regency is generally robust. Regarding inhibiting factors, the social aspect highlights the need to enhance residents' capacity and awareness. In terms of culture, the study underscores the importance of maintaining values of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) and customary inclusiveness. Economically, issues such as poverty and the need for improved funding mechanisms persist. Politically, there is a call for consistent government commitment and the strengthening of two-way *aspiration flow* between stakeholders. Geographically, the conditions of the *3T* (*terdepan, terluar, tertinggal*—frontier, outermost, and underdeveloped regions) continue to exert significant influence. The model of community participation in *community-based development* in Malinau Regency has proven effective due to its comprehensive and contextual approach. The three principal components—driving factors, participatory processes, and integrated outcomes/impacts—collectively establish a dynamic and people-centered development mechanism.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's development strategy is rooted in the aim to enhance the welfare of its people, foster education, and participate in global peace activities, as highlighted in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution. Over time, the role of the community in development has expanded, shifting from a government-centered model to a more collaborative approach. This participatory method, often referred to as the *bottom-up* approach, has gained prominence in the era of technological advancement and evolving societal perspectives. It emphasizes the involvement of various actors—government,

private sector, and civil society—in governance. As discussed by Irwanto (2011), this model promotes a balanced governance process where all actors contribute to the administration of state affairs, contrasting with the traditional *top-down* approach.

The concept of *governance* involves a partnership among the government, private sector, and civil society, with each actor playing a distinct role. The World Bank defines governance as the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs, highlighting the collaborative nature of contemporary governance. According to Sumarto (2009), *good governance* is essential for development and is built on several key principles: the capacity of the government to make policies, democratization, participatory development, respect for human rights, and law enforcement. These principles underpin the development process in Indonesia, where community involvement is seen as a critical factor in achieving effective governance (Arikunto, 2010a, 2010b; Indrawijaya Ibrahi, 2011; Kaplan M., 2010, 2011b).

In line with these governance principles, Indonesia has enshrined community participation in its legal framework. Law Number 23 of 2014 emphasizes the importance of participatory approaches in regional development planning. The law outlines the need for both *top-down* and *bottom-up* approaches to be harmonized in planning and development deliberations, which involve multiple stakeholders from the village to the national level. This legal framework underscores the idea that the government must engage with the community, recognizing the importance of involving citizens in decisions that affect their lives (Burke, 2017; Cooke, 2012; Creswell, 2014a; Kaplan M., 2011a; Komara, 2011; Mardianto, 2013).

Despite the legal framework supporting community involvement, challenges persist in ensuring effective participation. In Malinau Regency, for example, there has been a rapid increase in population due to the area's development as a partner city of the capital of North Kalimantan. The lack of equitable development in remote areas remains a significant issue, with the region facing infrastructure deficits and insufficient human resource development. These challenges highlight the need for more effective policies and strategies that can ensure the active participation of marginalized communities in regional development processes .

Over the past few years, Malinau Regency has shown positive economic growth, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, mining, and the processing industry. The district's GDP has increased significantly from 2020 to 2022, with a marked recovery post-COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is a need to ensure that this growth is evenly distributed, especially in rural and remote areas. The government must prioritize addressing disparities in regional development to ensure that all communities benefit from economic growth, particularly by improving infrastructure and human capital (Creswell, 2014b; Dening, 2016; Hamdi, 2014; P, 2020; Purwanto, 2019; Ritzer Douglas J., 2010).

The study of community participation in *community-based development (CBD)* has been widely explored, especially in Indonesia, with several prominent studies highlighting its effectiveness. For instance, Sumarto (2009) emphasized the role of community participation in development planning, noting that active engagement from local communities not only improves the relevance of development programs but also ensures greater ownership and sustainability of initiatives. Similarly, research by Saari et al. (2020) explored how community involvement in policy-making contributes to more responsive and adaptive governance. While both studies underscore the importance of *CBD* in fostering local empowerment and ownership, they focus primarily on policy frameworks at a national level without deeply analyzing specific local contexts such as Malinau Regency (Holzhacker & Woltjer, 2016).

This research seeks to bridge that gap by focusing on Malinau Regency, North Kalimantan, specifically addressing the challenges and opportunities faced by the community in the implementation of *CBD* at a local level. While Sumarto (2009) and Saari et al. (2020) provide a broader view of *CBD*, this study emphasizes the real-world application of *CBD* in Malinau, considering local factors such as infrastructure challenges and regional cultural dynamics that influence community participation. This localized perspective is crucial for understanding how *CBD* can be more effectively tailored to specific areas and stakeholders.

The objective of this research is to analyze community participation in *CBD* activities in Malinau Regency, identify the supporting and inhibiting factors, and propose a model for more effective participation. Theoretical benefits include contributing to the body of knowledge on community participation and offering a localized case study that will serve as a reference for future research in government science and public administration. Practically, the study provides actionable insights and recommendations to local governments, particularly in Malinau Regency, on how to improve community engagement in the planning, execution, and evaluation of development projects. This research also aims to propose a model of community participation that can be adapted to other regions in Indonesia, ensuring that development is not only *top-down* but also inclusive and sustainable.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach to examine community participation in *Community-Based Development (CBD)* in Malinau Regency. The qualitative method was chosen to allow for in-depth exploration and understanding of the dynamics, experiences, and meanings attributed by participants regarding their involvement in *CBD* activities.

Data collection was conducted through interviews, observation, and documentation. The research process involved obtaining both written and oral permissions to ensure that the study respected the norms and values of the informants and the broader community (Herdiansyah, 2010).

The research also pays particular attention to communication patterns, including the use of electronic media such as email, social media, and the internet, to understand how residents of Malinau Regency engage in active participation and which communication strategies are most effective in the context of *CBD*.

A descriptive approach was applied to explain and interpret the facts found in the field. The research design is flexible and adaptive, allowing the study to respond to emerging phenomena as they appear during the research process. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing community participation, as well as efforts to address these challenges.

To enhance the validity of the findings, a combination method using the Concurrent Triangulation design was adopted. This strategy integrates both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis simultaneously, enabling a more robust examination of the research questions related to community participation, supporting and inhibiting factors, strategies to overcome barriers, and the development of a participation model in the context of *CBD* in Malinau Regency.

The overall research design aims to answer key questions regarding the forms and effectiveness of community participation, the factors that support or hinder such participation, efforts to address inhibiting factors, and the identification of innovative participation models within *CBD* initiatives in Malinau Regency.

RESULTS

Community Participation in Community-Based Development Activities in Malinau Regency

Community-Based Development is a development approach that places the community as the main actor, starting from planning, implementation, to development supervision. The goal is to empower communities, strengthen local independence, and increase the sustainability of development outcomes.

1) Participation in Decision Making

Participation in decision-making is the active involvement of the community as the main stakeholder in the process of formulation, prioritization, and selection of alternative development policies or programs. In a community-based approach, this participation is not just passive consultation, but real collaboration that holds control over decisions that concern their collective lives.

2) Participation in Implementation

Participation in implementation is the active involvement of the community in the implementation of development programs or activities that have been planned and formulated together. At this stage, the community does not only provide ideas or input, but is actually involved in action, starting from the implementation of work, resource management, to monitoring activities.

Community participation in the implementation of community-based development can include: Direct involvement in the implementation of physical activities such as village infrastructure development, road repairs, or the creation of public facilities. Contribution of energy, thoughts, and time through mutual cooperation or community service with residents. Management and utilization of local resources such as building materials, land, or equipment owned by the community. Involvement in supervision and evaluation during the implementation of activities so that they run according to the plan and the principle of transparency.

In order for participation to run optimally, several principles are needed:

- a. Voluntary: Community involvement is voluntary and not forced.
- b. Togetherness: The activity is carried out in a mutual cooperation, prioritizing cooperation between residents.
- c. Transparency: The entire process of implementing activities can be accessed and supervised together.
- d. Accountability: Every action and use of resources can be held accountable to the community.

The benefits of participation in development implementation are:

- a. Increase the effectiveness and efficiency of program implementation because the community understands local conditions best.
- b. Fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for the results of development.
- c. Increase sustainability, because programs run together are easier to maintain after completion.
- d. Reduce costs and speed up settlement due to mutual cooperation and the contribution of local resources.

3) Participation in Benefit

Participation in benefit is a form of community participation in enjoying the results or benefits of community-based development activities. At this stage, the community is not only involved in planning, formulation, and implementation, but also becomes a direct beneficiary of the results of the development that has been carried out together.

Participation in receiving benefits can be manifested in several forms, including:

- a. The use of public facilities that have been built together, such as roads, bridges, clean water facilities, schools, or Posyandu.
- b. Access to social services and programs resulting from development, such as economic assistance, skills training, scholarships, or health services.

- c. Increased income and community welfare due to economic development programs, such as BUMDes, joint business groups, or community cooperatives.
- d. Improving the quality of life through a healthier, safer, and more comfortable environment.

The benefits of participation in receiving benefits can be realized in several forms, including:

- a. Increasing the sense of justice and togetherness because all community members enjoy the results of development equally.
- b. Encouraging the sustainability of the program because the benefits felt directly will increase community support and involvement in the next program.
- c. Improving the quality of life of the community in real terms, both from economic, social, and environmental aspects.
- d. Strengthening public legitimacy and trust in the community-based development process.

4) Participation in Evaluation

Participation in evaluation is the active involvement of the community in the process of assessment, monitoring, and reflection on the implementation and results of community-based development activities. Evaluation is carried out to measure the extent to which the program or activity implemented has achieved the goal, identify obstacles or obstacles, and find solutions for improvement in the future.

Community participation in the evaluation can be realized through:

- a. Deliberation and evaluation discussion forum: Residents gather to discuss the results of the implementation of activities, identify what has been good and what needs to be improved.
- b. Submission of suggestions, criticisms, and experiences: The public provides feedback directly or through specific media (e.g. suggestion boxes, questionnaires, or surveys).
- c. Involvement in field monitoring: The community participates in monitoring and recording developments or problems in the field during and after the activity.
- d. Participation in the preparation of evaluation reports: Residents are involved in summarizing the results of the evaluation and compiling recommendations for improvement.
- e. Determination of indicators of shared success: The community helps determine what criteria or indicators are considered to reflect the success of the program.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for Community Participation in Community-Based Development in Malinau Regency

a. Supporting Factors

Community participation is a key element in the success of community-based development. The involvement of residents from the planning stage to the implementation of development projects is believed to ensure that the program meets the real needs of the community and is sustainable. The Malinau Regency Government itself emphasized that community participation is the main pillar of village development; By involving citizens in decision-making, development outcomes become more targeted and encourage sustainable progress.

Malinau Regency is located in North Kalimantan Province, Indonesia, with an area of about 38,973 km². This area is the largest district in the province (covering more than 55% of the area of North Kalimantan) but is relatively sparsely populated; The mid-2024 estimate is only around 87,582 people, making it one of the least populated areas (around 2.2 people per km²). Socio-culturally, Malinau is known by the motto "Bumi Intimung" and is a multiethnic area, mainly inhabited by various Dayak sub-tribes. It is recorded that there are eleven original Dayak tribes inhabiting Malinau, including Lun Bawang/Lundayeh, Dayak Kenyah, Dayak Kayan, Dayak Punan, Tahol, Tingalan,

Abai, Tagol/Murut, Iban, and others. In addition to the Dayak tribe, there are also immigrant populations such as the Javanese, Makassar, Batak, and Tidung tribes, although the percentage is small. This tribal diversity is reflected in the local cultural life. For example, every year the Irau Malinau Cultural Festival is held involving at least 11 Dayak ethnicities, displaying traditional customs and arts in commemoration of the district's anniversary. The Irau (people's party) became a place for mass participation of residents across communities, strengthening social ties and pride in Malinau's local wisdom. In terms of religion, the majority of Malinau people embrace Protestant Christianity in line with the dominance of the Dayak ethnicity, but inter-religious harmony is well maintained.

The above geographical and social characteristics affect the development patterns and community participation in Malinau. The scattered rural areas and the thick Dayak culture make the community-based development approach and local wisdom very relevant. The tradition of deliberation, mutual cooperation, and traditional leadership still strongly colors the system of daily life. The local government is aware of this and seeks to accommodate local uniqueness in its development policy.

b. Inhibiting Factors

Malinau Regency in North Kalimantan Province is known for implementing the concept of community-based development, where the community is actively involved starting from planning, implementation, to supervision of development at the local level. This participatory approach is reflected in flagship programs such as the Building Village Movement (GERDEMA) and the Clean RT, which encourages development planning deliberations from the Rukun Tetangga (RT) level. Thanks to this initiative, Malinau has been able to record various development progress over the past decade. For example, Malinau's Human Development Index (HDI) in 2018 reached 71.74 (exceeding the national average of 71.39) and the poverty rate managed to drop drastically from >26% in 2010 to around 6% in 10 years. The district, which used to have 3T (disadvantaged, frontier, outermost) status, has increased access to transportation and telecommunications to all villages, reducing regional isolation.

Despite phenomenal achievements, community participation in development is not necessarily optimal on all fronts. In the last five years (2019–2024), Malinau is still faced with various factors that hinder community participation. This report examines these factors in depth from the social, cultural, economic, political, and geographical aspects, with reference to current data and case examples in the field. Information sources include academic publications, local news, local government reports, and relevant non-governmental organization (NGO) reports.

Model of Community Participation in Effective Community-Based Development in Malinau Regency, North Kalimantan Province

Malinau Regency in North Kalimantan Province is known as a pioneer in implementing a community-based development model that emphasizes community participation at large. Since the era of regional autonomy rolled around, the Malinau Regency Government launched the Building Village Movement (GERDEMA) program in 2012 as the main strategy for village development. The Gerdema program aims to make the village community the main actor of development from the people, by the people, and for the people with the local government playing the role of facilitator who provides regulations and budgets. This concept places the widest possible community participation as the core of the policy, in line with Indonesia's democratic development philosophy. Gerdema's successes were felt by the people of Malinau, although improvements continued to be made from year to year.

Entering the second phase of Gerdema, Malinau introduced the RT BERSIH program (which stands for Neat, Orderly, Clean, Healthy, Beautiful, and Harmonious) as a follow-up innovation to encourage participation up to the level of neighborhood harmony (RT). The Clean RT program is a tangible manifestation of the spirit of creative and innovative regional autonomy, where each RT is given the resources and authority to plan and implement development in its own environment. The Malinau Regency Government allocates significant funds – for example, Rp 260 million per RT per year through the APBDes supported by the district APBD to fund priority needs at the RT level. These funds can be used flexibly for various activities, ranging from physical development, improving the quality of human resources, strengthening the people's economy, to improving public services at the local level. This policy demonstrates a strong political commitment to funding grassroots community initiatives.

The community-based community participation model in Malinau Regency is: (1) The driving factors behind the effectiveness of participation (social, cultural, economic, political, and geographical aspects); (2) Participatory processes in planning, implementation, and monitoring of development; and (3) Results or impacts achieved (sustainability, empowerment, trust, inclusivity). In addition, it will be explained how these factors interact with each other in the local context of Malinau. For more details, see the following image:



Figure 1. Community-Based Community Participation Model in Malinau Regency

Source: research results processed, 2025

Based on the image, the community-based community participation model in Malinau Regency is explained:

1) Factors Driving Participation (Social, Cultural, Economic, Political, Geographic)

Social and cultural factors. One of the main drivers of community participation in Malinau is the strong social capital and deep-rooted culture of mutual cooperation. The tradition of community service and mutual cooperation has become part of the daily life of the Malinau community. This local culture encourages the community to voluntarily engage in collective activities for the common good.

The values of kinship and togetherness between residents are a solid social foundation for the implementation of participatory development programs. With the tradition of village deliberations and *belom bahadat* (living in harmony according to customs) in the local indigenous community, the

Malinau people are relatively easy to engage in dialogue and cooperation in the planning and implementation of development projects.

This culture of mutual cooperation is in line with the spirit of the Gerdema program which emphasizes the empowerment of village communities to give a big role to residents and village officials to advance their villages independently. This socio-cultural readiness is an important capital that encourages broad participation, because residents feel that development is a shared responsibility according to the saying "weight is the same carried, light is the same carried."

Economic factors, and the economic conditions of Malinau's rural areas also encouraged the birth of this participatory model. Most of the Malinau area is a rural area with a livelihood for residents in the agriculture, forestry, and small-scale handicraft sectors. Economic challenges such as poverty and limited infrastructure require targeted and equitable development solutions. The community-based development approach is believed to be able to directly improve people's welfare because the community itself determines the priority of their economic needs.

Through Gerdema, the local government disburses funds directly to villages and RTs to be used in programs that support residents' livelihoods, such as the construction of agricultural production facilities, village market improvements, and business skills training.

The policy of allocating large funds directly to community units (villages/RTs) ensures a more equitable distribution of development results so as to reduce the gap between the center and remote areas. The study noted that the additional allocation of funds through Gerdema is not the final goal, but an instrument to encourage village economic progress; The most important thing is how the fund empowers the community and village officials. In other words, the participation of the Malinau people is driven by the hope of real local economic improvement through direct control over development resources.

Political factors, political will, and local government policies are key factors that allow this participatory model to run effectively. Gerdema was born as the vision and commitment of the Regent of Malinau (Dr. Yansen TP, M.Si., for the period 2011-2016 and 2016-2021) to realize people-centered development.

Regulatory support is provided, among others, with the Malinau Regent Regulation No. 33 of 2017 concerning the Clean RT Program which regulates the management and funding of programs at the RT level. The principle of this policy is the decentralization of decisions down to the lowest level: the district government "greatly reduces" intervention and gives full authority to the village/RT government in planning and management of development.

In fact, every proposal resulting from village deliberations must not be changed or deleted by the agency above it, SKPD must adjust its program to the village development plan, not the other way around. This step shows political alignment with the aspirations of the base. In addition, the DPRD (legislature) is also involved in the Musrenbangdes forum so that the function of people's representation runs optimally. The commitment of regional heads can also be seen from the sustainability of funding: the portion of the regional budget allocated directly to villages and RTs is quite large. In 2017, village funds (from the state budget), Gerdema funds, and RT Bersih funds together reached 18.1% of the total expenditure of the Malinau region. This means that almost a fifth of the APBD is directly distributed to the community level to finance development programs by residents. This innovative policy is only possible with strong political support and the government's belief that the people are capable of managing development. "Giving trust and a large portion to the participation of the village community is the key to realizing welfare for the community," the Malinau Regency Government wrote in Gerdema's evaluation. With policy support from above as well as the consistent will of regional leaders, this participatory model has strong political legitimacy.

Geographical factors. The remote and vast geographical aspect of Malinau also encourages the implementation of community-based development. Malinau Regency has remote rural areas, inadequate transportation infrastructure, and some remote indigenous communities (including Dayak tribes in the interior and border communities). This condition makes it difficult if development only relies on a centralized bureaucracy; The active role of the local community is needed to better understand the conditions on the ground. The local government sees remoteness as a potential that can actually be developed with the community.

By putting local people at the forefront, development can be adapted to the geographical characteristics of each village/RT (e.g. construction of small roads between villages, clean water management in hilly areas, etc.). The Gerdema/RT Bersih strategy has proven effective in reaching these remote areas because the funds and decisions are given directly to the local community. For example, the number of RTs involved is very wide (381 RTs in Malinau Regency) so that it covers all corners.

Every local community feels cared for and empowered regardless of its geographical location. Thus, geographical factors interact with political factors – namely the decentralization of authority – to ensure that no Malinau region is left behind. The widespread village area has become a field of practice of the principle of "building from the periphery," according to the mandate of the national Nawacita, where local communities are given capital and trust to build their own areas. The key to success in rural areas such as Malinau is the willingness and ability of the village community to advance their village independently. Gerdema fosters this will and ability with financial support and mentoring, so that geographical challenges can be overcome through local wisdom and the active participation of local residents.

2) Participatory Process: Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring

The community participation model in Malinau is realized through a participatory development process at all stages: planning, implementation, and monitoring-evaluation. This process is designed to be bottom-up, giving as much space as possible to citizens' initiatives, with the principles of transparency and accountability maintained by the regulatory framework. In general, the formal mechanism follows the flow of the multi-level Development Planning Deliberation (Musrenbang), but with innovation at the lowest level (RT) and strengthening the role of the village government.

Participatory planning, the planning stage starts from a small community at the RT level. Each RT in Malinau holds a Pre-Musrenbang or RT deliberation to identify the needs and proposals for development activities in their environment. This RT Musrenbang innovation was born because the conventional village Musrenbang was felt to lack the aspirations of all residents – the participation of residents in the previous village forum was still limited so that the proposals that emerged were of poor quality.

With direct deliberations at the RT level (which on average consists of several dozen heads of families), the involvement of residents has increased dramatically. Residents who may be reluctant or do not have time to attend the more formal village forum, can actively participate in their own RT environment. Each RT compiles a list of priority activities as a result of this deliberation, which is then brought to the village Musrenbang to be synergized into a village development plan. The village government compiles proposals from all RTs and ensures that they are in accordance with the general guidelines of the program (e.g. conformity with the criteria for the use of Gerdema/RT Bersih funds). It is important to note that the district government does not intervene in this participatory planning process.

The community's proposals that emerge from below are fully respected: the local government does not have the authority to change, let alone delete proposals that have been agreed upon by the residents in the deliberation forum. The bureaucratic orientation was changed – it was no longer the village that adjusted to the official program, but it was the service that adjusted to the village development plan. This ensures that the plans contained in the APBDes are really the result of local aspirations. The political commitment to hand over 31 district government affairs to the village (in accordance with Perbup No.135/2013) also expands the authority of the village in planning many areas of development independently.

From the technical side, assistance is provided by the Village Community Empowerment Office and the sub-district to help facilitate deliberation and program alignment. The final result of this planning stage is the Village Government Work Plan (RKPDs) and the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBDes) documents which contain the results of participatory deliberation, financed by a combination of village funds (APBN) and Gerdema/RT Bersih (APBD) funds.

Implementation by the community. After the plan is prepared and the budget is disbursed, the implementation stage of the development program is carried out by directly involving the community. Every project activity at the RT level is generally formed by an executive committee or local self-management team (often led by the RT Chairman or local community leaders) who are responsible for realizing the program. The pattern of self-help is very strong at this stage – residents work together to donate energy, land, local materials, and additional funds if needed. Julius Hermanto Bilung (2018) in a study on the implementation of Clean RT in Long Loreh Village noted that the determination of activity priorities was carried out through RT deliberations, and the Chairman of RT coordinated with the Village Government to find solutions and build understanding in the implementation of the program.

The direct involvement of residents is seen, for example in physical development (residents jointly build small roads, village bridges, wells, etc.) and empowerment programs (training or economic activities carried out by community groups). The local government provides funding and guidelines, but implementation on the ground is entrusted to the community and village officials. With this pattern, the community feels that they have a project to work on, so they try to produce the best quality and efficiency. The involvement of many people also accelerates the implementation and strengthens the social bonds of the community. The Regional Secretary of Malinau, Dr. Adrianus Patton, M.Si., stated that through Gerdema, 109 villages in Malinau are able to manage their own APBDes independently, effectively, efficiently and accountably.

This means that the capacity of village officials and residents to carry out development has increased rapidly – from budget preparation to organizing activities can be carried out at the local level. Sure, not everything goes smoothly; Challenges such as the limited technical capabilities of local committees and citizen participation that are not yet 100% need to be overcome with continuous guidance and socialization. However, in general, the implementation of the Clean RT and Gerdema programs was carried out quite optimally thanks to the enthusiasm of the community and the pattern of mutual cooperation that has been traditional. The advantage of this model is its flexible nature according to the local context: each RT is free to work on the program according to their specific needs, as long as it is still within the corridor of the overall village development goals.

Monitoring and accountability. The next important stage is monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that the program runs as planned and the funds are used properly. The participatory model in Malinau is equipped with a tiered accountability mechanism. At the community level, residents keep an eye on each other informally because they are directly involved – for example, in community service, residents know what is being built and the quality, so there is social control.

Formally, the Village Government conducts routine monitoring of the implementation of programs in their area. Village officials (village heads, apparatus, assisted by Village Assistants) check the physical and administrative progress of each RT activity. The Regency Government also carries out supervision through reports and field inspections by sampling through the relevant agencies. Any use of funds must be accompanied by evidence and recorded in the accountability report. The Head of RT or the implementation team is required to prepare an accountability report (LPJ) for the programs that have been implemented in their environment.

This report is then submitted to the village government and forwarded to the sub-district/district government as proof of accountability. With this two-way system (citizen participation in the evaluation and supervision of the village/district government), the potential for misappropriation of funds can be suppressed. Indeed, there were several obstacles such as the limited understanding of some RT residents of the program principles, but socialization and mentoring continued to be carried out. Overall, the implementation of this program is going well from the aspects of communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure.

Transparency is the main principle: the disbursement process is carried out openly in accordance with the principles of transparency and accountability as stipulated in the program guidelines. The allocation of funds is disbursed in stages (e.g. two stages of disbursement each year) with administrative requirements that must be met by the implementing group, and recorded through an electronic system (e-billing and online tuition) to facilitate financial monitoring. This combination of bureaucratic control and community control is what keeps the program on track without reducing the spirit of participation. As a result, the participation of the Malinau community in the development was not only enthusiastic at the beginning of the planning, but continued in the responsibility of implementing and supervising the development.

3) Outcomes: Sustainability, Empowerment, Trust, and Inclusivity

The implementation of the community-based community participation model in Malinau has resulted in multidimensional impacts. Success indicators are not only measured by the implementation of physical projects, but also by positive social changes such as increasing the sustainability of local initiatives, empowering communities and village officials, growing trust between the people and the government, and the realization of inclusive development.

Sustainability. The development program in Malinau is designed to be sustainable, both in terms of institutions and benefits. Institutionally, it has been integrated into the regional planning and budgeting system every year, making it an official program that continues across leadership periods. The Regent of Malinau emphasized the commitment to continue to maintain these community-based development programs as strategic to improve community welfare.

In fact, Gerdema has been running since 2012 and continues to "Gerdema Volume II" in the following period, showing the continuity of the policy. Even after the change of regional leadership (in 2021, the Regent of Malinau was held by Wempi W. Mawa, S.E.), the spirit of the RT Bersih program continued. The local government emphasized that superior programs that have a direct impact on the community will be a top priority and their implementation will be improved.

This ensures no "missing programs" along the way – early successes are recognized and reinforced continuously. In terms of sustainability benefits, a participatory approach creates a sense of ownership among residents towards development projects. Because the community itself plans and works, they have an interest in maintaining the results. For example, village infrastructure (roads, drainage, public facilities) built with mutual cooperation tends to be more maintained by residents, so that their useful life is longer. Likewise, empowerment programs (such as business groups, training) have the potential to continue independently because there is community commitment.

Sustainability is also reflected in strengthening local capacity: after several years of running, villages in Malinau are now increasingly independent in managing their own finances and projects. This capacity is sustainable capital for future development. In addition, the model is in line with the national policy (Village Law 2014) which guarantees routine funding to villages, so that what is built can continue to be supported by operational and maintenance funds. Thus, sustainability aspects are guaranteed through long-term political commitment, community social attachment to results, and integration of programs with a sustainable village financial system.

Empowerment. The most prominent impact of Malinau's participatory model is the increased empowerment of communities and local officials. Empowerment is interpreted as the ability and independence of the community to identify needs, plan solutions, make decisions, and manage resources in development. The Gerdema program was designed from the beginning to empower village communities and increase the capacity of village government apparatus.

By being given a greater role, village communities learn through real practice how to plan development, manage finances, implement projects, and hold them accountable. As a result, there is a transfer of knowledge and skills from the government to the community. Currently, it can be seen that the village government in Malinau Regency is increasingly capable of organizing government and development affairs autonomously. A total of 109 villages are able to manage APBDes funds (which include Gerdema and RT Bersih funds) effectively, efficiently, and accountably. This signifies an increase in institutional capacity at the village level. Village officials are trained in the process of musrenbang, proposal preparation, financial administration, and report preparation. On the general public's side, residents who are directly involved also feel an increase in knowledge – for example, knowledge about the priority needs of villages, how projects work, to understanding their rights and obligations in development. They are no longer passively waiting for help "from above", but are proactive in taking the initiative. Economic empowerment also occurs: with the RT Bersih program, community groups get capital and support for productive businesses at the local level (agriculture, handicrafts, village cooperatives). A real example, as mentioned in the image above, the Punan Dayak rattan weaving artisans received access to support through the Gerdema concept so that they were able to develop competitive local creative products.

Village products began to appear in a wider market, increasing residents' income and pride in local culture. These impacts show that society has become more empowered economically, socially, and politically. Even from the perspective of the central government, the Gerdema Malinau model is recognized as superior because it does not just distribute funds, but builds local capacity to advance villages in a sustainable manner. This empowerment is long-term: when residents and village officials are trained, they can continue to turn the wheels of village development with or without major external assistance. This is the essence of independence to be achieved.

Trust. Another important element is the growth of trust, both the government's trust in the people and the people's trust in the government. In Malinau, the courage to hand over authority and funds to the village/RT level is proof that the local government fully believes in the people in development (as the slogan of the Regent of Malinau: "It is time for development to fully trust the people").

Trust from top to bottom is built because the government sees the great potential and will of the community if it is facilitated properly. As a result, the people of Malinau proved that this trust was not wasted: most villages were able to carry out the mandate of the Gerdema/RT Bersih fund properly and responsibly. Real successes, such as increasing village welfare and independence, strengthen the people's trust in the government. Residents feel that the local government is really on their side and respects local aspirations. This is in contrast to the past top-down patterns that often

lead to apathy and mistrust. Now, because the aspirations of the residents are accommodated and funded, the community believes that the local government really wants to advance the village. This situation of mutual trust creates a harmonious partnership: the government and the community become partners in development, not a purely hierarchical relationship. An indicator of the growth of trust can be seen from the increase in participation from year to year as residents are increasingly enthusiastic about attending deliberations and development activities because they believe their voices are heard and programs will bring benefits.

In addition, the atmosphere of the community environment becomes more conducive: participatory development helps create a safe, peaceful, and peaceful social environment. This is in line with the statement that through the Gerdema program, the level of life of the Malinau people will be more prosperous and the social environment will be more secure. Social trust between residents is also boosted because they often interact in mutual cooperation, so that the community's social capital is stronger. In other words, this participatory model results in trust-building at two levels: (1) vertical trust between the community and the government, and (2) horizontal trust between community members. These two types of trust are important prerequisites for the sustainability of long-term development in Malinau as they minimize potential conflicts and enhance collaboration.

Inclusivity. Inclusivity means the involvement of all community groups without exception in the process and obtaining the benefits of development in a fair manner. The Malinau model explicitly targets the widest possible participation from the community. Through deliberations in RT units, this model has managed to reach the most local elements of society, including groups that may be marginalized if the forum is only at the village/sub-district level. Every resident at the RT level, whether traditional leaders, religious leaders, women, youth, and ordinary citizens, has the opportunity to attend and voice their needs. With a small scale of deliberation, voices that are usually drowned out can emerge. For example, women's problems (such as the need for posyandu, PAUD, clean water) or vulnerable groups such as the disabled can be more easily accommodated in RT deliberations than in large village meetings. Equitable distribution of funds for each RT also ensures geographical inclusivity: no RT goes unnoticed by development. The "one RT Rp 260 million" policy contains the principle of spatial justice, where all base communities have equal opportunities to build their own neighborhoods.

Local initiatives such as RT Bersih also promote social inclusion: environmental cleanliness programs, for example, involve all residents regardless of background to work together to create healthy and harmonious RTs. At the village level, Gerdema encourages political inclusion by involving the DPRD as a representative of the people in village deliberations, so that aspirations in village forums receive cross-stakeholder support. On a macro level, Malinau's approach reduces inequality between regions because remote villages that were previously neglected now have adequate development resources. As a result, development is more equitable and felt by many parties. Local indigenous peoples also feel recognized; Programs can be synergized with local wisdom (e.g., construction of cultural centers, protection of customary forests, etc., according to the proposals of indigenous communities). Inclusivity is also evident from the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders: the government, communities, and customary institutions/local institutions joining hands. By involving "everyone", development in Malinau becomes a common property that is maintained and enjoyed together.

The three main components above are driving factors, participatory processes, and outcomes do not stand alone, but interact to form a complete community development model in Malinau. Malinau's local context shows how socio-cultural, economic, political, and geographical factors

influence each other in the design of participatory processes, and how the processes and outcomes achieved then reinforce those factors (positive feedback).

First, the interaction of socio-cultural factors with the participatory process: The culture of mutual cooperation and the family spirit of the Malinau people provide a strong foundation for the running of the participatory process. These local values are adapted into formal mechanisms such as RT deliberations and project self-management. As a result, the participatory process runs smoothly because it is in accordance with the way the community works on a daily basis. Conversely, the success of the process (e.g. successful mutual cooperation projects) strengthens the culture itself – people increasingly believe that togetherness and deliberation are effective in solving problems.

Second, the interaction of economic factors and outcomes: Economic needs encourage governments to allocate large funds directly to communities, which are then used through a participatory process to target productive projects. When the results of development are felt, for example, an increase in income from handicrafts or crops because irrigation is improved, it will improve the economic condition of the community. This economic improvement further increases the capacity of citizens to participate (because poverty is reduced, citizens have the time and energy to get involved). In aggregate, the growing village economy contributed to alleviating the lag of the Malinau region. This means that the positive economic impact of development results strengthens economic driving factors by improving welfare so that people are more financially empowered to participate in the next development activities.

Third, the interaction of political factors and trust: Political support (regent's commitment, pro-participation policy) is a prerequisite for the implementation of this model. In turn, the success of the participatory process and tangible results on the ground give legitimacy back to the leadership and the policy. For example, when the program is proven to be able to be a benchmark for the welfare of the Malinau community, then this program receives wide support so that regional leaders are more likely to continue it.

Public trust in the government that grows thanks to participatory programs makes local political stability maintained, people support the government because they feel involved, while the government increasingly believes in the capacity of the community. This creates a circle of trust that continues to strengthen the model: the government gives more space and trust, the public responds with performance and responsibility, and the government is increasingly encouraged to maintain the participatory policy. In the context of Malinau, the consistency of the leadership's commitment to give a large portion to the participation of villagers has proven to be the key to the realization of welfare. This positive interaction can also be seen in cross-actor collaboration: the DPRD is involved, village officials are empowered, and dialogue forums are held regularly, resulting in transparent and accountable local governance.

Fourth, the interaction of geographical factors and inclusivity: The vast and diverse Malinau region demands an inclusive approach so that all regions are accommodated. The policy of one RT one fund ensures that geographical factors (remote locations) do not hinder development attention. Here, political factors (equitable allocation decisions) play a role in answering geographical challenges. Then, when the participatory process in each RT is running, development output is spread throughout the region, and the regional gap decreases. This creates regional cohesion: central and remote areas develop together. People in remote areas who feel the benefits will be more social-politically integrated with other areas, they do not feel left out. As a result, the stability of the border and inland areas is maintained (because residents are satisfied, there is no separatist turmoil or excessive migration). Thus, the inclusivity achieved is the result of the interaction of handling geographical factors through political-participatory instruments.

Overall, Malinau's experience shows that an effective model of community participation is born from the synergy of various contextual factors with the right process design. High socio-cultural capital is utilized through a deliberation mechanism that respects local wisdom. Political support and decentralized policies are enablers that enable participatory innovation. Geographic challenges are answered by bringing decision-making closer to local communities. Then the positive results (improvement of welfare, local capacity, community harmony) again strengthen the legitimacy and enthusiasm to maintain this model in the future. In other words, there is positive feedback where the success of the program increases participation and support, which then becomes a new driving factor for the continuation of the program. This interaction pattern makes the community development model in Malinau resilient and replicable. Its resilience can be seen from the program's ability to survive through various tests (including changes in national policies, leadership changes, and recent pandemic conditions). Meanwhile, Malinau's success has attracted the attention of other regions as an example of participatory development best practices. The interaction of factors in Malinau can be a lesson that a holistic view is needed: encouraging community participation is not enough to simply invite citizens to deliberate, but must be supported by a supportive socio-cultural context, strong political will, program design that accommodates local economic and geographical conditions, and a commitment to follow up on outcomes for the common good (Adisasmita, 2013; Huberman, 2014; Siti Irene, 2011).

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that community participation in *Community-Based Development* in Malinau Regency is generally strong, with increasing inclusivity and transparency in decision-making and a focus on local needs. Community involvement has enhanced program ownership, effectiveness, and sustainability, while active participation in environmental, social, and economic initiatives has promoted social cohesion and equitable benefit distribution. Evaluation processes are also participatory, supported by a spirit of *gotong royong* and collaboration between the government and community. Despite these strengths, challenges remain in building citizen capacity, preserving cultural values, and improving funding mechanisms, alongside the need for stronger government commitment and better infrastructure. The participatory model's effectiveness is rooted in its comprehensive approach, integrating social, economic, political, and geographical factors throughout planning, implementation, and monitoring, which leads to both tangible and sustainable development outcomes. Future research should explore innovative strategies to further overcome participation barriers, particularly in remote areas, and assess the long-term impact of participatory models on community empowerment and resilience.

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