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## **Effectiveness of Community Participation in the Development Planning of the Merah Putih Cooperative in the Sukalaksana Neighborhood**

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### **Abstract**

*The Merah Putih Cooperative Program was introduced to strengthen local economic development through community-based cooperative institutions. This study examines the effectiveness of community participation in the development planning of the Merah Putih Cooperative in Sukalaksana Neighborhood, Curug District, Serang City. An empirical qualitative approach with a single instrumental case study design was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, document analysis, and literature review, and analyzed using Bintoro Tjokroamidjojo's development planning framework covering plan formulation, program formulation, implementation, supervision, and evaluation. The findings indicate that the planning process incorporated local economic potential, development objectives, and collaborative business strategies, although community participation remained limited during the initial planning stage due to the top-down nature of the program. Program implementation was constrained by limited capital, inadequate cooperative literacy, incomplete operational facilities, and uneven institutional support. Supervision was conducted through internal and external mechanisms, while the evaluation highlighted organizational readiness and community engagement as the primary determinants of future effectiveness. The study concludes that strengthening participatory governance, institutional capacity, and public involvement is essential for improving the long-term sustainability of the Merah Putih Cooperative.*

**Keywords:** *Community Participation, Development Planning, Merah Putih Cooperative, Participatory Governance, Planning Effectiveness.*



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Massive development initiatives implemented across many developing countries have increasingly demonstrated that development success can no longer be measured solely by economic growth, but also by the extent to which the principles of good governance are realized through meaningful public participation in policymaking and development planning processes (Lay, 2022). Community participation has become a fundamental element of participatory governance because local communities possess firsthand knowledge of their needs, priorities, and development challenges, making their involvement essential for producing responsive and sustainable policies (Aswandi et al., 2024). Development planning that actively incorporates public aspirations is more likely to generate policies that are socially legitimate, accountable, and capable of addressing local problems effectively (Afifah et al., 2024). In this context, governments are expected to establish collaborative relationships with citizens by ensuring that planning and decision-making processes are conducted transparently, inclusively, and democratically. Such an approach ultimately determines whether development programs genuinely reflect community interests rather than merely fulfilling administrative requirements.

Despite the growing recognition of participatory development, empirical evidence indicates that community participation in development planning frequently remains procedural rather than substantive (Basri et al., 2022). Public consultation forums are often dominated by government officials, community elites, and local leaders, leaving ordinary citizens with limited opportunities to express their aspirations or influence policy decisions. This imbalance weakens the deliberative function of participatory planning because community involvement is frequently reduced to formal attendance

instead of meaningful engagement in determining development priorities. As a consequence, development programs are susceptible to mismatches between public needs and government interventions, reducing both policy effectiveness and public trust (Amelia, 2025). These conditions suggest that the effectiveness of participation should be assessed not merely by the number of participants involved but also by the extent to which community perspectives shape planning outcomes.

The urgency of strengthening community participation has become increasingly evident as sustainable economic development occupies a central position within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8, which emphasizes inclusive and sustainable economic growth alongside productive employment opportunities (Sutrisno & Hukom, 2023). Strengthening local economies through cooperative institutions has consequently emerged as one of the most strategic approaches for promoting community empowerment and expanding economic opportunities at the grassroots level. In response to this agenda, the Indonesian government introduced the Merah Putih Village Cooperative Program through Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2025 as a nationwide initiative to reinforce rural and urban community economies (Maryam, 2025). The program is expected to encourage economic self-reliance by establishing professionally managed and community-oriented cooperatives capable of supporting local development (Rahmawati et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the implementation process has raised important questions regarding whether local communities have genuinely participated in planning the establishment and management of these cooperatives.

Existing studies consistently indicate that the establishment of the Merah Putih Village Cooperative has largely been driven by administrative targets rather than by efforts to strengthen community capacity and local ownership (Badjuka et al., 2026). Research has also highlighted that the implementation of the program faces significant challenges related to human resource management, stakeholder communication, and community engagement, all of which may affect the long-term sustainability of cooperative institutions (Muhaemin, 2025). Similar findings reveal that cooperative formation frequently prioritizes compliance with governmental directives instead of encouraging voluntary participation and collective decision-making among community members (Putri, 2025). Meanwhile, community perceptions regarding the economic benefits generated by the cooperative are strongly associated with the degree of public involvement throughout the planning process, indicating that participation constitutes a critical determinant of program success (Hartono et al., 2025). These findings collectively demonstrate that regulatory support alone is insufficient to ensure the effectiveness of the Merah Putih Village Cooperative without meaningful community participation during its planning stage.

Although previous studies have provided valuable insights into the implementation, governance, and economic potential of the Merah Putih Village Cooperative, limited attention has been devoted to evaluating the effectiveness of community participation specifically during the development planning process (Saputri & Hardiyana, 2025). Most existing research concentrates on institutional performance after cooperatives have been established rather than examining whether planning processes adequately accommodate local aspirations and community needs from the outset (Juanda et al., 2026). This gap remains significant because participatory planning constitutes the foundation upon which sustainable and community-driven cooperative governance is built. Similar circumstances can be observed in Sukalaksana Village, Curug District, Serang City, where cooperative establishment was conducted through limited deliberation forums attended primarily by selected community representatives, while broader public socialization remained insufficient. Such conditions indicate a discrepancy between the normative principles of participatory development and the realities of policy implementation, thereby highlighting the necessity for further empirical investigation.

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of community participation in the development planning of the Merah Putih Cooperative in Sukalaksana Village. The research focuses on examining the extent to which community members are meaningfully involved throughout the planning process while identifying the factors that facilitate and constrain effective participation. By investigating participation from the perspective of development planning, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how participatory practices influence the quality of community-based economic development initiatives. The findings are expected to contribute to the advancement of participatory development theory while offering practical recommendations for strengthening inclusive, democratic, and sustainable cooperative governance at the local level.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study employed an empirical qualitative research design using a single instrumental case study approach to examine the effectiveness of community participation in the development planning of the Merah Putih Cooperative in Sukalaksana Neighborhood. A case study was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context while capturing the complexity of social interactions and institutional processes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study focused on stakeholders directly involved in the cooperative planning process, including the Head of Sukalaksana Neighborhood, the management of the Merah Putih Cooperative, representatives from the Department of Cooperatives and SMEs, community leaders, and local residents. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that each informant possessed substantial knowledge and practical experience related to the planning process. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations of planning activities and community meetings, document analysis of government regulations, meeting minutes, and official reports, as well as an extensive review of relevant literature to strengthen contextual understanding and facilitate data triangulation.

The primary research instrument was the researcher, supported by interview guidelines, observation protocols, and document review checklists designed according to the research objectives. To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, credibility was established through source triangulation, method triangulation, prolonged engagement in the research setting, and member checking by confirming interview interpretations with selected participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Data were analyzed using the qualitative analysis procedures proposed by Creswell, including data organization, repeated reading of transcripts, coding, categorization, theme development, interpretation, and narrative presentation. The analytical process emphasized identifying patterns related to community participation, planning mechanisms, enabling factors, and barriers affecting the development planning of the Merah Putih Cooperative. Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the study by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring voluntary participation, protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents, and using all collected information exclusively for academic research purposes.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Planning Stage of the Merah Putih Cooperative**

The planning stage of the Merah Putih Cooperative in Sukalaksana Neighborhood reflects an interaction between government-driven policy direction and locally generated development aspirations. Interview data revealed that the establishment of the cooperative originated from a national policy initiative, while local stakeholders were responsible for translating the policy into operational planning according to neighborhood characteristics. This arrangement created opportunities for local adaptation, although community participation remained uneven during the initial planning process. Development planning theory emphasizes that effective planning should begin with a comprehensive understanding of local conditions before strategic decisions are formulated (Tjokroamidjojo, 1977). Field observations indicated that local administrators and cooperative managers had attempted to identify existing economic resources before determining future development priorities.

The initial planning process began with a review of local socioeconomic conditions and productive resources available in Sukalaksana Neighborhood. Interviews with cooperative supervisors indicated that rambutan production was identified as one of the neighborhood's most promising economic assets because it possesses opportunities for value-added processing rather than being marketed exclusively as fresh fruit. Cooperative planners proposed expanding the utilization of rambutan into processed products, including preserved fruit and seed-based health products, to diversify community income sources. This finding demonstrates that planning activities were supported by an assessment of local comparative advantages instead of relying exclusively on administrative directives. Similar findings have been reported in studies emphasizing that community-based development planning becomes more responsive when local economic potential is systematically incorporated into the planning agenda (Afifah et al., 2024).

Planning activities also incorporated forecasting to anticipate future operational and market conditions affecting cooperative sustainability. Informants explained that business expansion strategies were designed not only to market locally produced goods but also to provide manufactured products that match consumer demand and strengthen the cooperative's financial performance. Employment

opportunities were projected according to estimated business growth and financial capacity rather than predetermined recruitment targets. Such considerations indicate that forecasting served as an instrument for balancing economic ambitions with organizational sustainability, a principle frequently highlighted in development planning literature (Tjokroamidjojo & Mustopadidjaja, 1980). The planning process consequently reflected a gradual transition from identifying present conditions toward anticipating future organizational requirements.

**Table 1. Empirical Findings on the Planning Stage of the Merah Putih Cooperative**

<b>Planning Component</b>	<b>Empirical Findings</b>	<b>Analytical Interpretation</b>
Situation Review	Identification of rambutan and local MSME potential	Planning considered neighborhood economic characteristics
Forecasting	Projection of cooperative outlets, employment, and product diversification	Long-term sustainability became part of planning considerations
Development Objectives	Economic empowerment, MSME marketing, and employment creation	Objectives were clearly defined despite centralized policy initiation
Policy Direction	Cooperative establishment initiated through central government policy	Planning combined top-down direction with local adaptation
Decision-Making	Community participation increased after institutional establishment	Early-stage participation remained relatively limited

The evidence summarized in Table 1 illustrates that planning activities incorporated several components proposed by Tjokroamidjojo while demonstrating different degrees of participatory engagement across planning stages. Situation reviews and forecasting were relatively well developed because local stakeholders actively identified economic opportunities before implementation. Community participation became less evident during the formulation of strategic objectives because institutional establishment had already been determined through central government policy. This pattern suggests that planning effectiveness cannot be evaluated solely through procedural completion but should also consider the extent to which citizens influence strategic decisions. Similar concerns have been identified in participatory planning studies arguing that meaningful participation depends on the quality of deliberation rather than formal attendance in planning forums (Basri et al., 2022).

Development objectives formulated by cooperative managers focused primarily on strengthening local economic resilience, supporting the commercialization of micro, small, and medium enterprises, and generating employment opportunities for neighborhood residents. Interviews indicated that these objectives were broadly accepted by local stakeholders because they addressed existing economic needs and aligned with community expectations regarding income generation. Community representatives nevertheless acknowledged that they were not extensively involved during the earliest stages of objective formulation because the cooperative program had already been introduced through national policy. Such circumstances illustrate the continuing influence of centralized development planning, where local participation frequently becomes more substantial after institutional structures have been established (Amelia, 2025). The findings indicate that clearly articulated objectives alone do not necessarily guarantee participatory planning if opportunities for early public engagement remain constrained.

Policy formulation within the planning stage revealed a complementary relationship between governmental intervention and organizational autonomy. The central government provided the legal framework and institutional stimulus for establishing the cooperative, whereas decisions concerning business development, product selection, and organizational expansion were expected to be determined collectively by cooperative members after formal establishment. Informants consistently emphasized that future strategic decisions would rely on democratic organizational mechanisms rather than continuous governmental intervention. Such institutional arrangements correspond with cooperative governance principles emphasizing member participation in organizational decision-making while maintaining policy support from public institutions (Maryam, 2025). This balance between

governmental facilitation and organizational autonomy represents an important prerequisite for sustainable cooperative development.

Decision-making practices observed during fieldwork further demonstrate that community participation remained stronger during implementation planning than during institutional establishment. Interviews revealed that residents would have greater opportunities to contribute ideas through cooperative membership, annual meetings, and business planning once operational activities begin. Existing planning forums therefore functioned primarily as channels for policy dissemination and institutional preparation rather than participatory decision-making arenas. Comparable implementation experiences have been documented in several regions where Merah Putih Cooperatives were established through accelerated administrative procedures before broader community engagement could be fully developed (Putri, 2025). The gradual expansion of participatory mechanisms may improve planning quality, although this depends on consistent institutional commitment to democratic governance.

The second dimension of planning concerns the formulation of operational programs required to translate strategic objectives into practical activities. Interview findings demonstrated that financial prudence constituted the principal consideration in determining operational priorities, particularly regarding employee recruitment and expenditure management. Cooperative managers consistently argued that employment expansion should correspond with actual financial capacity rather than predetermined numerical targets. This perspective reflects an awareness that excessive operational commitments during the initial stage could undermine organizational sustainability before sufficient revenue has been generated. Similar strategic considerations have been highlighted in studies examining the planning of Merah Putih Cooperatives, which identify realistic financial management as an essential factor supporting long-term institutional resilience (Badjuka et al., 2026).

Another significant finding concerns the cooperative's proposed relationship with existing micro-enterprises operating within Sukalaksana Neighborhood. Rather than positioning itself as a direct competitor to traditional retailers, the cooperative intends to function as a wholesale supplier capable of strengthening local distribution networks through collaborative partnerships. Informants explained that neighborhood shops and micro-enterprises would become cooperative members while simultaneously benefiting from improved access to goods and more efficient supply chains. Such a partnership-oriented approach corresponds with collaborative economic development strategies that encourage institutional cooperation instead of market displacement among local economic actors (Rahmawati et al., 2025). Similar perspectives have also been reported in community empowerment initiatives emphasizing that socialization and collaborative institutional development increase public acceptance of newly established cooperatives (Allolayuk, 2025).

The overall planning stage demonstrates that the effectiveness of community participation remains transitional rather than fully institutionalized. Planning activities successfully incorporated assessments of local economic potential, financial feasibility, and collaborative business strategies, indicating that several planning components recommended by Tjokroamidjojo have been operationalized within the case study. Community influence over strategic planning decisions nevertheless remained relatively limited during the earliest phase because institutional establishment originated from a nationally initiated policy framework. Previous studies similarly argue that the long-term success of the Merah Putih Cooperative depends not only on administrative completion but also on the gradual strengthening of participatory governance, organizational capacity, and community ownership throughout subsequent planning cycles (Saputri & Hardiyan, 2025).

### **Plan Implementation**

The implementation stage of the Merah Putih Cooperative in Sukalaksana Neighborhood remains in an early phase characterized by institutional preparation rather than fully operational activities. Interviews with cooperative managers revealed that the organization has not yet accumulated sufficient member savings or working capital to support routine business operations. The absence of a permanent cooperative outlet has further limited the transition from planning into implementation, requiring the management to prioritize organizational consolidation before expanding business activities. These findings indicate that implementation effectiveness is influenced not only by planning quality but also by the availability of financial and physical resources required to transform development plans into measurable outcomes. Similar implementation challenges have been identified in newly established

Merah Putih Cooperatives, where limited institutional readiness delayed the realization of planned economic programs (Muhaemin, 2025).

**Table 2. Major Challenges in the Implementation Stage**

<b>Implementation Aspect</b>	<b>Empirical Findings</b>	<b>Potential Implications</b>
Financial Capital	Limited member savings and operational funds	Delayed business operation and investment
Community Literacy	Limited understanding of cooperative principles	Low participation and membership growth
Business Competitiveness	Need to compete with modern retail and e-commerce	Pressure to maintain affordable prices
Government Support	Strong central policy support but limited local operational readiness	Uneven implementation across administrative levels

The findings presented in Table 2 indicate that implementation barriers extend beyond financial limitations and encompass institutional as well as social dimensions. Financial constraints restrict the cooperative's capacity to establish business units, whereas limited public understanding reduces the willingness of residents to participate as active members. Informants consistently explained that educational activities concerning cooperative values are necessary before expecting sustained participation from local producers and consumers. The interaction between financial readiness and community engagement illustrates that successful implementation depends on strengthening both organizational capacity and social capital simultaneously. Comparable observations have been reported in community empowerment initiatives where cooperative sustainability was strongly associated with continuous public education and institutional assistance (Allolayuk, 2025).

Another important finding concerns the cooperative's strategy for integrating local economic actors into its operational model. Rather than competing directly with neighborhood retailers, the cooperative intends to function as a distribution partner supplying products to small shops and local micro-enterprises. Interview participants argued that this collaborative approach would enable existing businesses to maintain customer relationships while benefiting from more efficient procurement systems through cooperative membership. This strategy reflects an effort to build an inclusive local economic ecosystem instead of replacing existing market actors with a centralized cooperative structure. Collaborative economic models have been recognized as an effective mechanism for strengthening rural and neighborhood economic resilience because they encourage resource sharing and mutual institutional support (Rahmawati et al., 2025).

Implementation effectiveness is also influenced by the cooperative's ability to establish competitive pricing while maintaining financial sustainability. Informants emphasized that the cooperative must offer products at prices comparable to or lower than those available through modern retail chains and digital marketplaces if it intends to attract local consumers. Achieving this objective depends largely on shortening distribution chains and increasing purchasing efficiency through collective procurement mechanisms. Such expectations remain challenging during the early implementation period because transaction volumes have not yet reached levels capable of generating substantial economies of scale. Previous studies similarly suggest that the competitiveness of the Merah Putih Cooperative depends on operational efficiency, effective supply-chain management, and adaptive organizational strategies during the initial implementation phase (Junaidi et al., 2025).

Field evidence further revealed differences in institutional commitment between central and local government actors during implementation. Respondents acknowledged that the central government has actively promoted the acceleration of the Merah Putih Cooperative program through regulatory support and policy coordination, whereas local implementation continues to depend on administrative readiness and resource availability. This institutional imbalance contributes to a situation in which policy objectives are formally established but operational execution progresses more gradually at the neighborhood level. From the perspective of development administration, implementation becomes

more effective when policy direction is accompanied by decentralized institutional capacity and collaborative governance involving local stakeholders (Tjokroamidjojo, 2000). These findings indicate that community participation during implementation remains closely connected to institutional preparedness, organizational learning, and the gradual strengthening of cooperative governance rather than policy intervention alone.

### **Supervision of Plan Implementation**

The supervision stage demonstrates that the development of the Merah Putih Cooperative in Sukalaksana Neighborhood is monitored through a multi-level governance structure involving central, regional, and cooperative institutions. Interview findings indicate that supervisory responsibilities are distributed among the Ministry of Cooperatives, regional government agencies, and the internal supervisory board of the cooperative. This arrangement reflects an institutional effort to ensure that the implementation process remains aligned with regulatory provisions while supporting organizational accountability. Development planning theory views supervision as an integral component of the planning cycle because it provides continuous feedback for correcting implementation deviations before they undermine development objectives (Tjokroamidjojo, 1977). Field observations suggest that supervisory mechanisms have been formally established, although their practical effectiveness continues to depend on the operational readiness of the cooperative.

At the regional level, supervision is coordinated by the Department of Cooperatives and SMEs together with local government institutions responsible for monitoring organizational performance and regulatory compliance. Informants explained that supervisory activities include monitoring membership administration, organizational governance, financial management, and the implementation of annual work programs. The existence of external supervision complements the internal control system established within the cooperative, creating a dual mechanism intended to strengthen institutional accountability. Such institutional arrangements correspond with governance principles emphasizing that effective public organizations require balanced internal and external oversight to maintain transparency and organizational legitimacy (Lay, 2022). The combination of administrative supervision and cooperative self-governance provides an important foundation for sustaining public confidence in newly established institutions.

Interview evidence also highlights the importance of maintaining cooperative autonomy within the supervisory process. Cooperative managers emphasized that although operational personnel may receive support from government programs, managerial authority should remain under the control of democratically elected cooperative boards in accordance with cooperative legislation. This distinction was repeatedly emphasized because decision-making authority is considered inseparable from the principle of member ownership and democratic governance. The findings demonstrate that supervision should function as an accountability mechanism rather than an instrument for direct governmental intervention in organizational management. This interpretation is consistent with legal analyses emphasizing that the Merah Putih Cooperative must preserve its institutional independence despite receiving policy support from the government (Maryam, 2025).

Another important finding concerns the limited role of community-based supervision during the current implementation phase. Interviews revealed that residents have not yet actively monitored cooperative performance because business operations remain at an early stage and several planned business units have not become fully operational. Community participation in supervision therefore remains largely prospective, with greater involvement expected after cooperative services become routinely accessible to members. This situation indicates that participatory oversight develops gradually alongside organizational maturity rather than emerging immediately after institutional establishment. Previous studies similarly note that effective community participation in development governance requires both institutional openness and sufficient opportunities for citizens to observe organizational performance directly (Aswandi et al., 2024).

The supervisory process also functions as an instrument for organizational learning by providing regular feedback regarding administrative performance, financial accountability, and program implementation. Informants acknowledged that periodic evaluations conducted by supervisory bodies are intended to identify operational weaknesses before they develop into more significant institutional problems. Such feedback enables cooperative managers to adjust managerial practices while maintaining consistency with development objectives established during the planning stage. From the

perspective of development administration, supervision is closely associated with adaptive governance because monitoring results become an important source of information for organizational improvement and policy refinement (Tjokroamidjojo & Mustopadidjaja, 1980). Continuous feedback therefore contributes not only to compliance but also to institutional capacity development.

The findings indicate that supervision within the Merah Putih Cooperative extends beyond regulatory monitoring toward strengthening accountability, organizational independence, and participatory governance. Formal supervisory structures have already been established across different administrative levels, while community-based oversight is expected to become more substantial as operational activities expand and membership participation increases. The effectiveness of supervision will ultimately depend on the interaction between institutional transparency, democratic organizational management, and active participation from cooperative members. Such conditions are widely recognized as essential elements of good governance because they reinforce public trust while supporting the long-term sustainability of community-based development institutions (Tjokroamidjojo, 2000).

### **Plan Evaluation**

The evaluation stage indicates that the effectiveness of community participation in the development planning of the Merah Putih Cooperative has not yet reached its expected level because the cooperative remains in the institutional development phase. Interview findings revealed that most planned business activities have not been fully implemented, making comprehensive performance assessment difficult at this stage. Respondents consistently acknowledged that community participation is expected to become more visible after the cooperative begins operating regularly and produces tangible economic benefits for its members. From the perspective of development planning, evaluation functions not only as an assessment of outcomes but also as a mechanism for identifying constraints and improving subsequent planning cycles (Tjokroamidjojo, 1977). The findings therefore represent an initial evaluation focusing on institutional readiness rather than long-term organizational performance.

One of the most significant evaluation findings concerns the financial and organizational capacity of the cooperative during its early development. Interviews indicated that limited operational capital, insufficient member contributions, and incomplete business facilities continue to constrain organizational performance. Informants further explained that these structural limitations influence the pace at which community participation can develop because residents generally prefer to observe concrete benefits before becoming active members. This pattern illustrates that public participation is closely associated with institutional credibility and perceived organizational effectiveness rather than administrative establishment alone. Similar implementation experiences have been reported in other Merah Putih Cooperative initiatives where institutional readiness remained the principal determinant of program sustainability (Putri, 2025).

The evaluation also revealed that cooperative education remains an essential prerequisite for strengthening public participation in future planning and implementation processes. Respondents noted that many residents still possess limited knowledge regarding cooperative principles, member responsibilities, and the long-term economic advantages of collective ownership. This condition reduces public willingness to contribute capital or participate actively in organizational activities despite expressing positive attitudes toward the cooperative program. Community empowerment literature suggests that continuous education and institutional socialization play a decisive role in transforming passive public support into active community participation (Allolayuk, 2025). Expanding educational initiatives may therefore increase both membership growth and the quality of participatory governance.

Another important aspect identified through the evaluation concerns the indicators that cooperative managers intend to use when assessing organizational success in the future. Interview participants emphasized that the availability of essential goods for members, stable business operations, and sustainable growth of the cooperative's surplus would become the primary benchmarks of institutional performance. These indicators extend beyond financial achievement because they also reflect the cooperative's capacity to improve community welfare through accessible services and equitable benefit distribution. Such performance orientation is consistent with the broader objective of inclusive local economic development, where institutional success is measured through both economic and social outcomes (Sutrisno & Hukom, 2023). The evaluation framework consequently integrates organizational sustainability with community empowerment objectives.

Annual Member Meetings are expected to become the principal forum for formal evaluation once the cooperative enters full operational status. Informants explained that these meetings will review financial reports, organizational performance, business achievements, and future development priorities while providing members with opportunities to evaluate managerial decisions collectively. This participatory evaluation mechanism reflects the democratic character of cooperative governance by ensuring that organizational accountability is exercised directly by cooperative members. Participatory evaluation has long been regarded as an important element of development administration because it connects organizational learning with collective decision-making and continuous institutional improvement (Tjokroamidjojo & Mustopadidjaja, 1980). The anticipated implementation of regular evaluation forums therefore represents an important milestone in strengthening organizational legitimacy.

The overall evaluation indicates that the effectiveness of community participation in the planning of the Merah Putih Cooperative remains a dynamic process shaped by institutional readiness, organizational capacity, and gradual public engagement. Although the cooperative has established a clear institutional framework and development direction, several operational constraints continue to influence the realization of participatory planning outcomes. Interview findings suggest that stronger community involvement will depend on the cooperative's ability to demonstrate measurable economic benefits, maintain transparent governance, and sustain democratic decision-making practices over time. This pattern supports the argument that development evaluation should be understood as a continuous learning process that informs future planning and governance improvements rather than merely measuring completed activities (Tjokroamidjojo, 1977).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that community participation in the development planning of the Merah Putih Cooperative in Sukalaksana Neighborhood has not yet reached an optimal level, primarily because participation remains concentrated in the post-establishment stage rather than throughout the entire planning cycle. The planning process incorporated several essential components of development planning proposed by Tjokroamidjojo, including the identification of local economic potential, forecasting of future organizational needs, formulation of development objectives, and preparation of operational programs. The findings indicate that local resources and socioeconomic conditions were considered during planning, particularly through the identification of neighborhood economic potential and the development of collaborative business strategies involving micro, small, and medium enterprises. Financial prudence was also evident in operational planning, where employment expansion and business development were designed according to the cooperative's actual financial capacity. During implementation, institutional progress was constrained by limited capital, insufficient cooperative literacy, incomplete operational facilities, and varying levels of institutional readiness between central and local government actors. Supervision has been formally structured through internal and external monitoring mechanisms, although community-based oversight remains limited because business operations have not yet reached full implementation. Initial evaluation further indicates that the effectiveness of community participation will depend on the cooperative's ability to generate tangible economic benefits, strengthen institutional credibility, and maintain transparent and democratic governance as operational activities continue to develop.

The findings contribute to the understanding that the effectiveness of community participation in development planning should be assessed not only through the existence of participatory forums but also through the extent to which community members influence strategic decision-making from the earliest stages of planning until evaluation. The Sukalaksana case illustrates that a government-initiated cooperative program can gradually evolve toward participatory governance when institutional mechanisms provide broader opportunities for community involvement in organizational management, business planning, and performance evaluation. Strengthening cooperative education, expanding public access to planning and decision-making processes, improving financial sustainability, and reinforcing collaboration among government institutions, cooperative managers, and local communities represent important priorities for enhancing participatory effectiveness. Future studies may compare the implementation of the Merah Putih Cooperative across different regions or employ longitudinal approaches to examine changes in community participation after cooperatives become fully operational. Such investigations would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how participatory

development planning influences the long-term sustainability of community-based economic institutions.

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