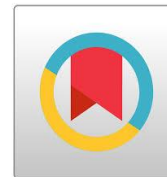


**Community Empowerment Through the Village-Owned Enterprise "Bareng Lestari" in Bareng Village, Sawahan Subdistrict, Nganjuk Regency**



**Pemberdayaan Masyarakat melalui Badan Usaha Milik Desa "Bareng Lestari" di Desa Bareng Kecamatan Sawahan Kabupaten Nganjuk**

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	
<p><b>Keywords</b>                      Community Empowerment;                      Village-Owned Enterprises                      (BUMDES);</p>	<p><b>ABSTRACT</b>                      This research aims to analyze community empowerment through the Village-Owned Enterprise "Bareng Lestari" in Bareng Village, Sawahan Subdistrict, Nganjuk Regency. The type of this research is qualitative-descriptive research with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. The theory applied in this study is the 5P community empowerment approach, namely enabling, strengthening, protecting, supporting, and maintaining. The results of this research indicate that the community becomes empowered after the establishment of the village-owned enterprise (BUMDES) "Bareng Lestari", yet, this has not been achieved maximally. Out of the 5 indicators, 3 of them have been successfully achieved, including Strengthening, carried out by amplifying the BUMDES internally and externally by providing socialization and counseling for the community in Bareng Village; Supporting, can be seen from the existence of strong partnership networks, marketing of local products and processed products, as well as subsidized fertilizers; and Maintaining, carried out in all aspects including physical maintenance and the maintenance carried out in all fields starting from quality, existence, business units and programs, as well as partnership networks, thus the empowerment can be sustainable. Meanwhile, the other 2 indicators that have not been achieved maximally are including Enabling, where the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has not been able to create good possibilities or atmospheres that allow the community to develop optimally, because in fact, there are still many barriers between communities which make it difficult for the weak communities to develop; and Protecting, which is not optimal because there are still unachieved work programs due to the lack of participation from the community.</p>
<p><b>Kata Kunci</b>                      Pemberdayaan masyarakat;                      Badan Usaha Milik Desa                      (BUMDES);</p>	<p><b>ABSTRAK</b>                      Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Melalui Badan Usaha Milik Desa "Bareng Lestari" di Desa Bareng, Kecamatan Sawahan, Kabupaten Nganjuk. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif dan teknik pengumpulan data berupa observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Teori yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan pemberdayaan masyarakat 5P yaitu pemungkinan, penguatan, perlindungan, penyokongan, pemeliharaan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat menjadi berdaya setelah adanya BUMDES "Bareng Lestari", namun hal tersebut belum maksimal. Dari 5 indikator, 3 diantaranya yang telah berhasil dicapai dengan baik yaitu Penguatan, dilakukan dengan penguatan internal BUMDES dan eksternal yaitu adanya sosialisai dan penyuluhan bagi masyarakat Desa Bareng; Penyokongan, dapat dilihat dari adanya jejaring kemitraan yang kuat, pemasaran produk lokal serta hasil olahan, dan juga pupuk subsidi; dan Pemeliharaan, dilakukan disegala aspek yaitu pemeliharaan fisik dan pemeliharaan yang dilakukan kesemua bidang mulai dari kualitas, eksistensi, unit usaha dan progam, jejaring kemitraan sehingga pemberdayaan dapat bersifat keberlanjutan. Sedangkan 2 indikator lainnya yang belum maksimal yaitu Pemungkinan, dimana BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" belum bisa menciptakan pemungkinan yang baik yaitu suasana yang memungkinkan masyarakat untuk berkembang secara optimal karena pada nyatanya masih banyak sekat-sekat antar masyarakat yang menyulitkan masyarakat lemah untuk berkembang; serta Perlindungan, yang kurang maksimal karena masih terdapat progam kerja yang belum dapat tercapai karena minimnya partisipasi dari masyarakat.</p>

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## **Introduction**

Development is one of the efforts to improve the welfare of a just and prosperous society, both materially and spiritually, in national and state life based on Pancasila (the five principles) and the 1945 Constitution. In realizing the national development, it must target all aspects, including the smallest political unit of government, the villages. Currently, villages are still considered underdeveloped compared to big cities in terms of economy, education, health, welfare and other supporting facilities. Based on the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 114 of 2014, village development is an effort to improve the quality of life and living for the greatest possible welfare of village communities. Village development is one manifestation of national development, and in order to achieve national development goals, villages are one of the government's frontline agencies that can reach real target groups.

Thus, development that has only been carried out by positioning the village communities as the objects of development by receiving programs from the government so far is considered less effective. In national development efforts, village communities must be the subjects of the development process, or also known as community empowerment. Village community empowerment itself is an effort to develop community independence and welfare by increasing knowledge, skills, attitudes, behavior, awareness, abilities and utilization of resources through the establishment of programs, policies, activities and assistance in accordance with the essence of the problems and priority needs of the village communities. Community empowerment is an effort to make the community independent through the realization of their potentials and capabilities (Pebriyani & Hermawan, 2021).

In an effort to achieve national development goals carried out through the empowerment of village communities within rural areas, one of the ways is through the existence of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES). BUMDES is a business institution located in the village and managed independently by the village community and also by the village government in an effort to strengthen the economy. It is formed based on the needs and potential of the village. BUMDES is one of the government programs based on empowerment and decentralization. The institutionalization of BUMDES to empower and mobilize the economic potential of villages aims to support the government's macro policies in efforts to eradicate poverty, especially in rural areas.

The establishment of BUMDES in each village is one of the efforts to create prosperity for the community in the village. With the existence of BUMDES, the community will be more empowered and independent. Therefore, BUMDES must be managed and developed

optimally, thus the community empowerment process can be maximized and the goal of community empowerment to improve community welfare can be realized.

The existence of Village-Owned Enterprises or BUMDES is very strategic, which ultimately serves as a driving force for the village economy and community welfare. The establishment of BUMDES is hoped to create new businesses that are rooted in existing resources and can optimize the existing economic activities of village communities. In this way, BUMDES can be a forum for the village governments to empower and utilize the resources and potential of the village communities. Nganjuk Regency is one of the regencies in East Java which consists of 20 sub-districts, 20 wards and 264 villages. Nganjuk Regency is an area with abundant natural potential that needs to be developed further. With the abundant potential, villages in Nganjuk Regency begin their movement to develop and optimize the existing potential as a manifestation of national development efforts through the smallest government unit. Efforts in this development are carried out through Village-Owned Enterprises which operate from the village and return to the village. This is also in line with what was expressed by the Head of the Community and Village Empowerment (*Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Desa/ PMD*) Service of Nganjuk Regency, who also seeks to encourage the development of BUMDES through the utilization of village potential. As quoted from online media SURYA.CO.ID:

*"The Community and Village Empowerment (PMD) Service of Nganjuk Regency seeks to encourage the development of the role of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) in utilizing village potential. This aims to improve the village economy and increase community efforts in managing the economic potential of the village." (Head of the Nganjuk Regency PMD Service)*

Bareng Village is one of the villages in Nganjuk Regency located on the slopes of Mount Wilis with abundant natural resources. However, this does not guarantee the prosperity of the community within the village. It can be seen from the struggle of the community in fulfilling their needs fully. There are still many people who are in a powerless position. Powerless position itself means a condition where the people have no power or helpless. This can be identified from the large number of people who still cannot overcome the problem of poverty. Bareng Village is a village with a lot of natural resources, yet the people have not been able to utilize them. Another form of helplessness can be seen from the large number of people who still have no jobs or permanent employment. Moreover, they have not been able to create their own businesses due to many factors, such as capital and limited ability to open a business. Apart from the difficulty of finding jobs and opening business opportunities, many children do not continue their education and there are still many early marriages. It is due to many factors such as no interest in school, the high cost of education and lack of education. As an effort to

achieve the goal of improving the economy and the welfare of the community, Bareng Village established a Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDES) which was named "Bareng Lestari". the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" was founded in 2018 based on the Regulation of Bareng Village Sawahan Subdistrict Nganjuk Regency Number 2 of 2018 concerning the Formation of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES). From the beginning of the establishment, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" can be said as one of the successful BUMDES and becomes an example for other BUMDES in Nganjuk Regency. This is because in 2018, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" succeeded in becoming the best BUMDES in Nganjuk Regency awarded by the Community and Village Empowerment Service of Nganjuk Regency. Mr. Narto Wibowo, Head of Bareng Village, further explained in the online media Sadhapnews:

*"NGANJUK, Sadhapnews - In maximizing the performance of the government in order to organize the village and community development, Bareng Village has the potential to become an example for other villages, especially those in Nganjuk Regency. The village has succeeded in making an innovation that becomes a new economic force and improves the living standard of its people. "One of the way is through BUMDes. We must be able to manage and maximize it for the community, because the potential of the village can be a barn for the community," said Narto. Furthermore, the Head of Bareng Village said that BUMDes in Bareng Village, Sawahan Subdistrict, has its own innovations in developing its business. "One of them is setting up shops, savings and loan offices, as well as warkop (coffee stalls). Additionally, educational attractions have also been arranged and packaged properly. It must be innovative and creative thus the business can make progress and compete healthily," said Narto. The Head of Bareng Village also explained various concepts that can be implemented through BUMDes. "Among them are agrotourism and superior product sales.*

The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has also developed its business units and partnership network widely. At the beginning of its establishment, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" only had eight business units, and now, it has grown to eleven business units. Business units that were deemed unsuitable for the needs of the community have been replaced with business units that meet the needs of the Bareng Villagers. The process of community empowerment through the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" in Bareng Village has brought a major impact toward the lives of the Bareng Villagers. People who previously had no job or ability to be entrepreneurs are now starting to be helped by the existence of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari". One of the most popular business units is savings and loans. The community is given capital to be able to start their entrepreneurship, thus people who initially have no income become more empowered and have income. The form of cooperation between BUMDES, the Village Government and Perhutani (the State Forestry Public Company) in developing existing local potential has also led to a huge impact on the community. The opening of the Plaza Bukit Surga (the paradise hill plaza) tour which is also managed by BUMDES is able to attract many people to be empowered. This is in line with the statements expressed by the Head of Bareng Village as quoted in the online news beritajatim.com:

*"Nganjuk (beritajatim.com) - Narto said that Plaza Bukit Sarga began construction in January 2020. The tourist area is managed by the village-owned enterprise (Bumdes) Bareng. They (tourists) are not only from Nganjuk, but also from outside the city, for example Kediri, Madiun, Jombang, and even Surabaya. Moreover, to enter the location, the ticket price is also quite affordable, which is IDR 5,000 (including parking). "In December, the income from Plaza Bukit Sarga reached IDR 13 millions. That's the net income for Bumdes. This means that profit sharing with Perhutani has been deducted. The people in Bareng Village are also more economically empowered by this tourism," Narto explained."*

With the establishment of the Village-Owned Enterprise "Bareng Lestari" in Bareng Village, it also affects the local revenue (*Pendapatan Asli Daerah/PAD*) in Bareng Village, as can be seen in the table below. However, this does not always go smoothly. The Covid-19 pandemic has left Plaza Bukit Sarga devoid of visitors and has also impacted the community empowerment process.

**Table 1. Net income of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" in 2018-2022**

Year of 2018	Year of 2019	Year of 2020	Year of 2021	Year of 2022
IDR 25,502,003	IDR 30,375,671	IDR 60,315,683	IDR 39,285,975	IDR 25,567,680

*Source: Internal Data of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" 2018-2022*

Thus, there is indeed empowerment after the existence of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari", yet, many obstacles are still faced by the BUMDES in the process of empowering the community. Challenges in the process of community empowerment through BUMDES come from many factors, including internal and external factors. Therefore, the implementation of the process and the achievement of community empowerment goals is carried out through the application of an approach abbreviated as 5P (*Pemungkinan, Penguatan, Perlindungan, Penyokongan, Pemeliharaan*) or in other words: enabling, strengthening, protecting, supporting, and maintaining (Endah, 2020, p. 140). Based on this, this research aims to identify and analyze community empowerment through the Village-Owned Enterprise "Bareng Lestari" in Bareng Village, Sawahan Subdistrict, Nganjuk Regency.

## Method

This research is a qualitative type of research with a descriptive approach, since it intends to describe in detail the process of community empowerment through the Village-Owned Enterprise "Bareng Lestari" in Bareng Village, Sawahan Subdistrict, Nganjuk Regency. This research was conducted at the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" located in Bareng Village, Sawahan Subdistrict, Nganjuk Regency. The focus of this research is the implementation of the process and the achievement of community empowerment goals through the application of an approach abbreviated as 5P, namely Enabling, Strengthening, Protecting, Supporting, and



Maintaining (Endah, 2020, p. 140). The data collection techniques used in this research were observation, interviews, and documentation. Hence, the data sources used were including words and actions, written data sources, as well as photos.

Informants in this research were selected using purposive and snowball sampling techniques, consisting of the Chairman and members of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari", as well as the Bareng Villagers. The data analysis technique used in this research was the interactive model analysis, including Data Collection, Data Presentation, Data Reduction, and Conclusion Drawing. This research applied data validity which includes credibility through the methods used by the researchers, thus the research results have a high credibility, such as Extension of Observation, Trigulation, and the Using of Reference Materials. Further, data validity were conducted through transferability, dependability and confirmability.

## **Result and Discussion**

The results of this research are the description of the field data found at the research location based on the researchers' observations, interviews, and documentation, thus the data collection process can run accordingly based on the real events related to the research focus on community empowerment through the Village-Owned Enterprise "Bareng Lestari" in Bareng Village, Sawahan Subdistrict, Nganjuk Regency. The Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDES) in Bareng Village was first established in 2018 based on the Regulation of Bareng Village Sawahan Subdistrict Nganjuk Regency Number 2 of 2018 concerning the Establishment of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES), and named as the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari", which is located at Jendral Sudirman Street No.1, Bareng Geneng Hamlet, Bareng Village, Sawahan Subdistrict, Nganjuk Regency. It has a vision of "Improving the Economy of the Bareng Villagers" and also the several missions, such as Expanding employment opportunities, Making it easier for the community to get business capital, and Making it easier for the community to rent development facilities. Furthermore, the establishment of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has some objectives, including: Increasing the village economy, Optimizing village assets to be useful for the welfare of the village community, Increasing the village community efforts in managing the economic potential of the village, Developing business cooperation plans within the village and / or between villages or with third parties. Hence, the purpose of establishing BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" is to accommodate all activities in the economic field and or in the field of public services managed by the village based on empowerment originating from the government. Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDES) are economic-based institutions that have a large share in managing village potential. In managing

the potential of the village, it is necessary to have qualified Human Resources (HR). Thus, a great results can be obtained from the efforts to develop human resources or community empowerment through the BUMDES, since one of the objectives is to create a better economic situation in society through community empowerment thus the people are more independent and productive and the community welfare can also be realized. In the process of community empowerment carried out through BUMDES, the Village-Owned Enterprise "Bareng Lestari" applies programs and activities as an effort to empower the community. Based on the in-depth interviews conducted, the researchers obtained data according to the empirical facts in the field, related to the existence of community empowerment activities in each business unit in the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari".

#### **a) Enabling**

Enabling means creating an atmosphere that allows the community to develop optimally. So, empowerment must free something that is blocked from the community (Edi Suharto, 2005). Therefore, in community empowerment, 'enabling' becomes one of the factors that determine the success or failure of an empowerment. In creating a good 'enabling' or possibility to make the community more empowered, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has carried out various efforts, one of which is the management of Bukit Surga (Paradise Hill) as one of the icons of Bareng Village. This is emphasized by the statement from Mr. Lasmono, chairman of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" and also a key informant in this research, who said:

"Yes, the utilization of local potential in Bareng Village is the opening of the Plaza Bukit Surga (paradise hill plaza) tour. That is a form of cooperation with Perhutani, it is because the land still belongs to Perhutani. Then, there were many employees recruited, around 20 people. When it comes to creating good opportunities, yes, of course, the community is always equalized when it comes to savings and loans, yes, all are allowed. Thus, all people can get capital to open a business, so there is no barrier. Further, the environmental conditions are definitely supported too, around the outer area of Bukit Surga, there are many people who open stalls, and the road to the tourist area was also repaired because it was earthen road before. So, those all are intended to create good possibilities, thus the community can be more empowered, and this has always been attempted." (Interview result April 17, 2023).

The same thing was also conveyed by Mrs. Sulalatul, an employee of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari", who said:

"...Yes, there is a good possibility, yes, shops are also opened. This cafe also creates a good atmosphere too, the residents are also more empowered since the existence of this BUMDES. Then, there are also others who open stalls around Bukit Surga. So yes, if it is about a good possibility, it is always strived to continue thus the community is also more empowered..." (Interview result April 17, 2023)



In order to create an ‘enabling’ environment that allows communities to develop optimally, it is necessary to remove all structural and cultural barriers that weaken the communities to be more powerless. However, in the life of the community, the barriers and social status of the community are certainly still difficult to eliminate, and there are still many gaps in society. Structural and cultural barriers still naturally go hand in hand with the community life. This was added by Mr. Lasmono, who said:

“But.. how we can address it.. about the barriers, it is definitely still there, and it runs naturally in the community. Indeed, there is always a distance between the weak and the strong. Yes, the point is that in the BUMDES, it certainly does not discriminate, but in the community itself, it must be difficult to eliminate the thing.”

Based on the statement of Mr. Lasmono, chairman of the BUMDES and also a key informant, the situation can be seen from the table of the welfare level of the Bareng Villagers, as follows:

**Table 2. Welfare Level of the Bareng Villagers in 2022**

Welfare Level	Amount of Family	Percentage %
Amount of Underprivileged Family	360 Families	22.1%
Amount of Prosperous Family 1	378 Families	23.3%
Amount of Prosperous Family 2	378 Families	15%
Amount of Prosperous Family 3	378 Families	26.9%
Amount of Prosperous Family 3 Plus	378 Families	12.7%
Amount of Family Head	1624 Families	100%

*Source: Bareng Village Government, 2022*

It can be known from the table that the amount of people who are in poor conditions or experiencing poverty is still quite a lot, proving that the performance of BUMDES in creating good ‘enabling’ or opportunities cannot be said as maximized.



Figure 1 & 2. Community Empowerment Programs and Activities in Bareng Village  
Source: authors’ documentation, 2023

In empowering the community through BUMDES based on Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, it explains that Village-Owned Enterprises or often referred as BUMDES is an institution managed by the village

government and also the community with the aim of improving the village economy, and its formation is based on the needs and potential owned by the village. It needs to be supported by community empowerment, as one of the goals in community empowerment is to create good possibilities, thus the community becomes more empowered. In creating an atmosphere that allows the community to develop optimally through local potential, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has carried out its function well. Through collaboration with Perhutani, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" was able to develop and manage the Plaza Bukit Surga tourist attraction which now exists and has also become an icon of Bareng Village. Apart from developing local village potential, it also can attract employment, thus realizing the community empowerment. Efforts to create good possibilities are also carried out in the form of physical environmental development, such as building roads to facilitate mobility, thus the empowerment can run optimally. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" also creates good possibilities by trying to free society from things that hinder it. Apart from that, the efforts made by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" are trying to create conditions where there are no structural and cultural barriers between communities. With this, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" never differentiates between communities. Everyone can receive the facilities available at BUMDES without exception. However, in the real life of the society, there are still divisions between the weak and the strong communities. These divisions are felt to occur naturally and are difficult to break.

Hence, it can be concluded that for the first indicator of the 5P approach, enabling, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has made some efforts to create good possibilities, yet it is still not optimal. This can be realized through the efforts made by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" which are carried out through the utilization of local village potential, which now has attracted many people for empowerment. There is also physical development to facilitate tourist accommodation as well as the use of land for shops and cafes to empower the community further. Apart from that, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" also creates good possibilities through efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination in society, but these efforts are not optimal because the divisions grow naturally in the life of the society.

#### **b) Strengthening**

Strengthening refers to the reinforcement of knowledge and abilities given to the community, thus they are able to solve problems and fulfill their needs. By this way, people are able to develop and be confident in all their abilities, which will support community independence. According to Hendrawati (2018), empowerment comes from the basic word

“power” which means "strength" and is taken from English term. Hence, it can be explained that empowerment means providing power or strength to the weak communities who have no power or strength yet to live independently, especially in fulfilling their basic daily needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and health. In empowering the community, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has attempted several efforts to realize the strengthening. One of the efforts is by strengthening the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" from the inside involving the BUMDES administrators. Apart from strengthening the Human Resources (HR), the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" also strengthens the quality and quantity of the BUMDES activities. Programs and business units that are already in the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" remain maintained and will always be developed according to the needs of the community. Furthermore, strengthening is also carried out by the BUMDES through maintaining and expanding partnership networks. This was conveyed by Mr. Lasmono as Chairman of the BUMDES and also a key informant of this research, who said:

"There is clearly a need to strengthen the community itself. In the past, there was also MSME socialization at the village hall in collaboration with the village government. There is also strengthening for farmers, as most of the people's livelihood here is as farmers. There is also technical guidance for the promotion of regional tourism events received by the BUMDES, because here the village potential is quite large. Then, there is also the need to strengthen the management. In the past, consultants were brought here specifically to guide the BUMDES administrators. Apart from that, recruitment is also carried out for program activities and also business units from BUMDES itself, therefore, not only human resources but also the products are strengthened" (Interview results 17 April 2023)

In line with Mr. Lasmono's statement, Ms. Lela as the secretary of the BUMDES also said:

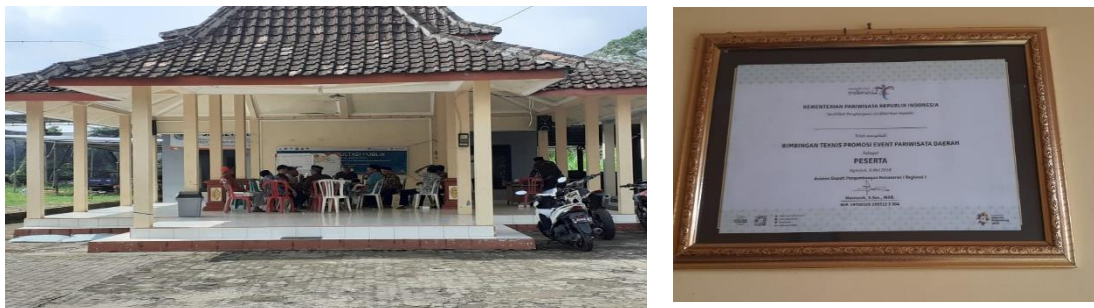
"...yes, there was a consultant who was specifically brought to train the BUMDES administrators. Then, strengthening is also about maintaining the partnership network that should always be developed. Regarding the strengthening for the community, yes, there is one (socialization) for farmers, where they were taught about how to market the results of their agriculture. There was also socialization and counseling for MSMEs for the community in collaboration with the village government ..." (Interview result April 17, 2023)

This was also emphasized by Mr. Sami, the treasurer of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari", who said:

"...Yes, for the strengthening, the first thing is to strengthen the BUMDES administrators themselves because if the administrators are good, they can provide better services to the community. As for the community, there is one (socialization) for farmers, and also one for MSMEs..." (Interview results 17 April 2023)

From the results of the interviews and observations above, it can be indicated that the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has implemented “strengthening” not only for the internal BUMDES but also externally. This strengthening is performed to make the community more empowered. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" provides “strengthening” or

reinforcement to make the community empowerment process in Bareng Village more optimal. In this way, the strengthening efforts sought by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" are not only for the community but also for the internal BUMDES.



**Figure 3 & 4.** Socialization and Certificate of Technical Guidance for Promotion of Regional Tourism Events

*Source: authors' documentation, 2023*

The “strengthening” performed by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" as an effort to empower the community in Bareng village through Village-Owned Enterprises was carried out with various efforts, both internally and externally. The internal strengthening is considered to be highly important because in the process of empowering the community, qualified human resources must be provided thus they are able to direct the community. Apart from the internal strengthening, there is also external strengthening by strengthening the community, which becomes the main point in the community empowerment process. In Bareng Village, external strengthening is carried out through socialization and counseling for MSMEs provided by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" in collaboration with the Village Government. Additionally, there is also outreach to farmers about the management and marketing of their harvests, thus they can become more advanced. Apart from strengthening through outreach and socialization, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" also strengthens its programs and business units. In this case, programs and business units are one of the important factors in achieving community empowerment. Therefore, the existing business units and programs in the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" must always be developed in accordance with the community needs, thus community empowerment can be achieved more optimal. Strengthening here is maintaining the existence of business units and programs in the BUMDES, thus it won't experience any setbacks or failure. Thus, it can be concluded that for the “strengthening” indicator, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has succeeded in providing optimal strengthening. Strengthening is carried out internally inside the BUMDES and externally for the community. By this way, the

community becomes more empowered and the components in community empowerment have also been fulfilled, namely qualified human resources and strong programs.

### c) **Protecting**

Protecting, refers to the protection of the weak communities from the strong communities to avoid unbalanced competition. This will prevent oppression and exploitation of the strong communities against the weak communities. In empowerment, the protection required is not only in form of physical protection but also social protection. According to Law No. 11 of 2009 concerning Social Welfare, social protection is all efforts directed at preventing and dealing with the risks of social shocks and vulnerabilities of a person, family, group and/or community, thus life can be met in accordance with minimum basic needs. In community empowerment, the main thing that needs to be considered is strength and independence. When people are strong and independent, they will become more empowered. The protection provided by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" to the community is in the form of indirect protection. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" seeks to eliminate all types of discrimination between communities, and tries to help develop the potential that exists in the communities, especially the weak communities. Another form of protection carried out by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" is protection for the community to be able to open a business without discrimination and criminalization. The community is given the freedom to be entrepreneurial and market MSME products without any restrictions and their existence is protected. This is in line with what Mr. Lasmono said as the chairman of the BUMDES and the research's key informant:

"For the protection carried out by the BUMDES itself is just in form of general protection. There must be protection efforts, such as protection for weak communities which must be prioritized. We always try to fulfill their rights, the right to receive facilities from BUMDES, the right to be able to do business safely too. It can be seen along the road to the tourism spot, there are people selling their processed products, (and) setting up food stalls. So, it's protected, which means it's still safe, there are no such illegal charges as well," (Interview results, 17 April 2023)

However, there is still a lot that needs to be improved in efforts to protect the community as a manifestation of maximum community empowerment. Mr. Lasmono added that the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has tried to provide protection yet not optimal due to the lack of participation from the community itself. It is because in protection, participation from the community is also highly necessary, such as the formation of a forum to discuss and deal with community problems directly. The BUMDES chairman said that there was already such a discourse, but the lack of participation from the community made it



unsuccessful. Meanwhile, if protection is only carried out by the BUMDES management, who only have 6 people, it cannot target the entire community. In protection, there is a need for synergy from the community itself, as Mr. Lasmono said:

"...But yes, this protection cannot be done if only the administrators of the BUMDES that are involved. There are only 6 people, so there must be participation from the community too. Actually, there has been talk of forming a forum, but yes, the community participation is still limited, so until now, it remains stuck..." (Interview results, 17 April 2023)

This is also in line with what Mrs. Lela said as the secretary of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari":

"...As for protection, it is just like that, there must be an effort to protect the community, as Mr. Lasmono said, basically, protection requires synergy from the community as well. But, we always try to give protection to the community.. " (Interview results, 17 April 2023)

Based on the results of the interviews and observations above, it can be seen that the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has made efforts to protect the people of Bareng Village. This can be seen from the efforts of the BUMDES administrators in minimizing discrimination between communities as well as limiting the unequal competition between the strong and the weak communities. It is a form of protection served for the weak communities. Apart from that, The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" also strives to always protect the rights of the community without any discrimination or criminalization.



**Figure 5 & 6.** Community Empowerment Activities by Creating Business Opportunities  
*Source: author's documentation, 2023*

The protection efforts carried out by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" are physical protection in the form of security guarantees in entrepreneurship. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has attempted to eliminate all forms of discrimination and criminalization in the process of community empowerment. Here, people can set up their businesses without having to worry about criminalization with illegal levies or other crimes. Furthermore, protection efforts are also carried out on a social basis by protecting the people's rights to set up their businesses, as well as obtain capital and physical form of assistances. However, this protection effort is felt to be less than optimal because there is still a program from the



BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" which is unachieved, such as the discourse on establishing an official forum to protect the community thus all forms of complaints and problems from the community can be discussed, helped, and solved. Hence, the social protection is considered as not optimal because it cannot support the community maximally.

Thus, it can be concluded that the protection indicators have not been achieved optimally. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has made efforts to provide protection for the community to make them more empowered, but these efforts are considered less than optimal because there are still work programs intended to protect the community that have not been realized.

#### **d) Supporting**

Supporting means there are supports provided for the community to carry out their roles and duties. Thus, essentially, empowerment is being able to provide support to the community thus they are able to perform their duties and not feel marginalized. Hence, support is an important aspect in the successful process of community empowerment. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has attempted to provide support by carrying out several efforts, such as building the widest possible partnership network. By opening a partnership network, it can provide a lot of support for the community, thus they can easily access and increase small business income. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has cooperated with various types of partners engaged in goods and services, maximally. In addition, support is also carried out through opening programs or business units in accordance with the potential and needs of the community. This is in accordance with what Mr. Lasmono said as the Chairman of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" and also the research's key informant:

"There is definitely support (for the community). The BUMDES always tries to support the community in any form, especially regarding community empowerment. What is certain is that there is support for the community, so that they are more willing to be open, that is, yes, participative and continuously productive too. There are also guidance and provision of a place for processed products or local products. What is certain is that the programs and business units will be adapted to the community. The aim is yes definitely to support the community." (Interview results, April 17 2023)

Similar things were also conveyed by Mrs. Lela as the secretary of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari":

"...So the form of support itself is such as technical or verbal guidance for the community regarding marketing of local community products. It must also open a partnership network in accordance with the broadest needs of the community. As for the others, it is a kind of support to keep the enthusiasm of the people thus they are more willing to move forward..." (Interview results, 17 April 2023)

Additionally, Mr. Sami as the treasurer of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" also said:

"... for the support itself, yes, it is definitely by opening programs, activities or business units that are suitable with the needs of the community. In addition, support from the BUMDES administrators is usually more about selling processed products and local products..." (Interview results, 17 April 2023)

From the results of the interviews and observations above, it can be seen that the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has provided support for the community. This can be seen from the efforts made by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" starting from providing support and motivation to the community verbally to technical guidance for marketing local products and processed products produced by the Bareng Villagers, thus the distribution is more optimal. Moreover, the form of business support from the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" is by opening the widest possible partnership network, collaborating with various sectors of services and goods according to the potential and needs of the community, such as partnering with SAMSAT (One-Stop Single Administration System) in processing vehicle taxes. This is considered to be very helpful to the community, because if you have to go to SAMSAT directly, you have to go straight to the city, thus this really minimizes accommodation costs. Furthermore, support is carried out through activity programs or business units in the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" which are always developed according to what the community needs. Another thing that is done as an effort to support the community is the provision of subsidized fertilizer for the Bareng Villagers. It is known that the majority of the Bareng Villagers make their living as farmers. This subsidized fertilizer really helps the community in minimizing production costs and increasing yields or income. Apart from subsidized fertilizer, the community can also use heavy equipment rental services such as molens in the construction process, and the prices offered are also more fitted to the community's financial condition, this can be said to be very helpful.

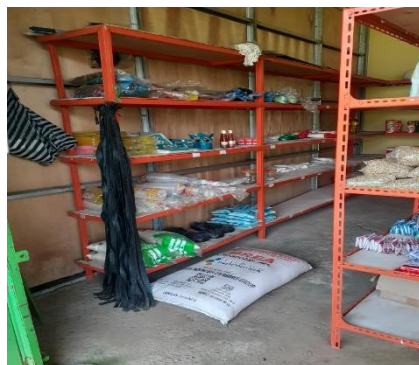


Figure 7 & 8. Providing a platform for promoting business results and fertilizer subsidies  
*Source: authors' documentation, 2023*

In carrying out the efforts to support the community, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" have tried to provide verbal support and motivation to the community as well as technical guidance for marketing local products and processed products from the Bareng Villagers to make the distribution more optimal. Apart from providing motivation, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" also provides a platform for the community to be able to sell processed products and local products in cafes and shops managed by the BUMDES. Furthermore, the BUMDES also opens the widest possible partnership network, collaborating with various fields of services and goods according to the potential and needs of society. Moreover, support is carried out through activity programs or business units in the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" which are always developed according to what the community needs. Another thing that is done as an effort to support is the provision of subsidized fertilizer for the people of Bareng Village. It is known that the majority of the people of Bareng Village make their living as farmers. This subsidized fertilizer really helps the community to minimize production costs and increase yields or income. Apart from subsidized fertilizer, the community can also use heavy equipment rental services such as molens in the construction process, and the prices offered are also more fitted to the community's financial condition, this can be said to be very helpful.

Thus, it can be concluded that the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has made maximum efforts to provide support to the community. Support is provided both verbally and physically. Verbal assistance is provided by providing motivation and also a platform for the community to be able to sell processed products and local products from the community. Physical support is carried out by providing facilities for the community to be able to develop and meet their needs through an extensive partnership network as well as support for subsidized fertilizer and heavy equipment rental.

#### **e) Maintaining**

Maintaining or maintenance refers to the effort to maintain a conducive environment to make a balanced distribution, thus everyone has the opportunity to try. Hence, maintenance is very necessary, thus all the working process can be sustainable, especially in community empowerment. In "maintaining" indicator, the efforts carried out by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" are not only by maintaining assets or capital but also maintaining Human Resources (HR). As has been stated, maintenance is basically maintaining a conducive environment to make the business opportunities remain open. In the process of community empowerment, the important subject is the community itself, so it always needs to be

maintained. The forms of maintenance include maintaining existing human resources, such as looking after the BUMDES administrators and employees, and then also looking after all workers who have been empowered by the existence of the BUMDES. Maintenance is also carried out on community enthusiasm and participation. The communities that have been empowered by the existence of the BUMDES, the communities that have opened businesses, or the communities that have gained knowledge for entrepreneurship are also always maintained by the BUMDES, thus they remain sustainable. Hence, all the empowerment is sustainable and does not just stop here. Apart from human resources, maintenance is also carried out on the BUMDES assets, thus their utilization can be maintained. Apart from assets, everything that has been obtained by the BUMDES, whether achievements, business units or programs and activities are also maintained. This is in line with what was conveyed by Mr. Lasmono as the chairman of the BUMDES and also the research's key informant, by saying:

"Maintenance will definitely be carried out, so all of these will not only be wasted and lost, all human resources, assets, partners, etc. will be maintained. Regarding human resources, of course (it is maintained), because in empowering community, human resources are very important, so they must be maintained. The employees, the people who are aware, the people who understand everything is looked after, so that in the future, it will continue to get better. Here, the BUMDES has already won (awards) and is also maintained, which means the quality of the BUMDES itself must also be maintained." (Interview results, 17 April 2023)

Mrs. Lela as the Secretary of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" also agrees with Mr. Lasmono's opinion by adding:

"...yes, when it comes to maintenance, of course there is (maintenance), we as the BUMDES administrators always try to look after everything, because if this maintenance is maintained, it will also have an impact on the community too..." (Interview results, 17 April 2023)

In line with Mrs. Lela's opinion, Mr. Sami as the treasurer of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" said:

"...Indeed, this maintenance is very necessary, in this BUMDES, all aspects are certainly maintained because the aim is that this empowerment can be sustainable. Everything that exists is maintained by the quality of the BUMDES, the assets are maintained, (and) most importantly the community, because if there is maintenance, the community can always become an entrepreneur..." (Interview results, 17 April 2023)

From the results of the interviews and observations above, it can be seen that the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has made maintenance efforts. This can be seen from the efforts to always maintain the quality and the success of the BUMDES itself. Apart from that, there is always maintenance for activity programs and business units, so the existing business units will always be looked after and maintained while they will continue to be developed according to the needs of the community. The partnership network is also always guarded

and maintained. Essentially, a partnership needs to have trust between both parties. For this reason, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" always maintains the trust, so in the future, the partnership network can be even wider. Furthermore, it is no less important to maintain all the assets that are owned. Apart from maintaining assets and products, maintaining Human Resources is also crucial. People who are already empowered must continue to be maintained thus they will continue to have strength and independence. Moreover, it is also necessary to maintain the employees and workers who have been empowered since the existence of the BUMDES, thus community empowerment can be sustainable.



**Figure 9.** Partnership of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari"  
Source: *authors' documentation, 2023*

In the process of community empowerment, maintenance is an important aspect. Maintenance here means that everything that is done can be sustainable. In community empowerment, indeed, it is hoped that the community will be empowered continuously without decreasing. This means that the empowerment must be sustainable. With the maintenance carried out by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari", it is expected that community empowerment can also be continued upward, in other words, be sustainable. The maintenance efforts carried out by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" is not only maintenance of assets or capital but also maintenance of Human Resources (HR). As has been stated, maintenance is basically maintaining a conducive environment thus business opportunities remain open. In the process of community empowerment, the important subject is the community itself, so it always needs to be maintained. This can be seen from the efforts to always maintain the quality and the success of the BUMDES itself. It is known that the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has been ranked 1st in Nganjuk Regency as the best BUMDES. For this reason, comprehensive maintenance is needed so that the existence of the the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" can be maintained. Additionally, there is always maintenance for activity programs and business units, so the existing business units will always be looked after and maintained while they will continue to be developed according

to the needs of the community. Furthermore, there is also asset maintenance, by maintaining all assets owned both in quality and quantity.

Hence, it can be concluded that the maintenance efforts carried out by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" have been maximized. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" is able to maintain all forms of existence as well as assets both in quality and quantity, thus the community empowerment performed will be sustainable.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that community empowerment through the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has run well. The community has become more empowered with the existence of the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari", yet it is felt to be less than optimal, thus further improvement efforts are still needed. This can be seen from the 5 indicators of the empowerment approach according to Edi Suharto (2005) that have not been achieved optimally. Of the five indicators, three of them have been achieved and implemented optimally, including the indicators of Strengthening, Supporting, and Maintaining. In the strengthening indicator, the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has made maximum efforts to provide reinforcement. This is proven by the existence of socialization and counseling for the Bareng Villagers. The BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" has also implemented the supporting indicator optimally. This can be seen from the existence of a strong partnership network and also the marketing of local products and processed products. It is similar with the maintaining indicator that also has been carried out optimally by the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari". This is proven by the existence of maintenance in all aspects of the BUMDES, not only physical maintenance, but also maintenance in all areas starting from quality, existence, business units and programs, as well as partnership networks thus empowerment can be achieved and sustainable. However, there are two other indicators, including the indicators of Enabling and Protecting, which have not been achieved and implemented optimally. This is because the BUMDES "Bareng Lestari" cannot provide good possibilities or atmospheres that allow the community to develop optimally, since in reality, there are still many barriers between communities that make it difficult for the weak communities to develop. The Protecting indicator is also considered not optimal because there are still unachieved work programs due to the lack of participation from the community.

Based on the conclusions drawn above, the researchers provide some recommendations for the next researches as follows: a). It is expected that future researchers will be able to evaluate and improve this research through more in-depth researches on community



empowerment through Village-Owned Enterprises; b). Life will always develop, thus it is expected that future researches will better adapt to existing conditions to make the researches more appropriate; c). For future researchers, it is expected that they will be able to dig up more detailed data and information from the community thus the researches can be more in-depth; d). Bareng Village is a village with great potential, thus it needs innovation and new breakthroughs to maximize the utilization of its potential.

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