

# Village Innovation Based on Community:

## Lesson Learned From Indonesia

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**Abstract**—Discussions on village innovation have become the most recent topic. Village innovation is a great hope for social change that encourages community welfare. The creativity of the village government requires the support of other entities that produce a large force for change. Collaboration between actors at the village level must be carried out, non-profit organizations and the community must be in harmony with the village government. The design of the framework of relations between actors in each village is unique to one another. The implementation of community-based village innovation must fulfill the principles of: participatory, transparency and accountability, collaborative, sustainable, and fair and equal. This paper reveals village innovation with local spirit and stakeholder work collaboration lessons from Banyuwangi Regency Indonesia. Village innovations in Banyuwangi Regency include improving quality of village-scale public service, strengthening the community's economy based on local potential, and improving the welfare of local communities.

**Keywords**—village innovation, community, welfare

### I. INTRODUCTION

The development of village governance found a turning point with the enactment of Law Number 6 of 2014. The village is asked to be the development spearhead with the granting of authority. Changes in village governance are in accordance with development planning that move villages for their success. Orientation in this village needs availability of adequate capacity. The village should be able to achieve success and welfare of its people. Therefore, the government encourages various breakthroughs to make the real village that becomes the vanguard of successful development, including various innovations that are created or fostered at the village level.

*Program Inovasi Desa* (Village Innovation Program) is one of the government's efforts to improve the welfare of rural communities. The program starts with improving the quality of village capacity in developing village development plans and implementation. *Program Inovasi Desa* is based on local potential by increasing the quality of village fund utilization. Utilization of village funds is directed at developing local economic potential and entrepreneurship, developing human

resources, and village infrastructure. The effectivity and efficiency of village funds use is expected to increase community creativity and productivity. In the end, it will trigger the emergence of various innovations in the village.

Innovation means active action to change something to have better quality. This can be traced etymologically from the Latin "*innovare*" or "*innovatio*" which is absorbed into English "*innovation*" which means renewal. Renewal is an action taken in an effort to improve a condition. Changes that occur can be a modification or change that is different from the previous condition. The spirit in it is a planned change, and followed by the seriousness of the actor. Furthermore, the Merriam-Webster dictionary explains innovation as a new way; having new idea to take certain actions. The last requirement is that new idea, new way obtained should be accepted as things that are believed and adopted [1]. Innovation is not a one-time phenomenon activity, but rather a long and cumulative process that includes many decision-making processes in and by organizations from the discovery of ideas to their implementation. Based on some of the literature references, village innovation has the meaning of changes in ideas or new ways that have effects on improving the welfare of rural communities.

One of local governments that aggressively encourages village innovation is Banyuwangi Regency, East Java. Various ways, from policies, budget support, and technology continue to be done to boost villages in Banyuwangi continue to innovate. The regional government believes that innovation can boost village economic growth. The improvement in the village economy is the main door for village independence. Each village has a different creation space based on the potential of existing resources. The local government facilitates cooperation among villages to be able to exchange ideas in fostering ideas and even duplicating ideas for the innovation development in all villages. In fact, they can directly replicate innovations that they think are good and suitable to be developed in their villages.

In order to maintain the spirit of innovation, the Banyuwangi Regency Government held a village innovation festival. Various innovations have been produced, which can be categorized into three major groups, namely: infrastructure,

entrepreneurship, and human resources. The infrastructure category includes appropriate technologies, such as hydroelectric power plants and the provision of Javanese *erak* houses to control plant pests. Then, in the entrepreneurial category, the example is Robusta coffee processing, dodol making in various variants and kites making. While, in the third category, namely human resources (HR), the example is *gardu amazing*, in which it is an integrated social movement in overcoming the problem of nutritional stunting. All innovations made are based on the potential that is owned and the problems faced by the community in each village. The idea is to collaborate on innovating for a variety of problems for mutual progress and welfare.

Innovative village needs support from various parties, both government and stakeholders. It is essential to raise awareness regarding the importance of acting smart in dealing with the problems faced. It is also important to strengthen the belief that independence and welfare can be realized by their efforts together to optimize the potential in their village. The intended innovation is an effort to create new ways, processes, and products that add value to people's lives and welfare. The success of the Banyuwangi Regency Government in encouraging and facilitating the growth of village innovation is important to be taken as an example for other regions. Therefore, this paper reveals the reality of successful community-based innovation collaboration in Banyuwangi.

## II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

### A. Village Innovation

Robbins [2] defined innovation as a new idea applied to initiate or improve a product or process and service. Based on this understanding, Robbins focuses more on three main things, namely: (1) A new idea which is if a thought in observing a phenomenon that is happening, including in the field of education, this new idea can be in the form of the discovery of an idea of thoughts, ideas, systems, and the possibility of crystallized ideas; (2) Products and services, namely the results of further steps from the existence of new ideas that are followed up with various activities, studies, researches, and experiments so that it can produce more concrete concepts in the form of products and services that are ready to be developed and implemented, including the results of innovation in the field of education; (3) Improvement efforts which are systematic efforts to make completion and make improvements continuously so that the benefits of innovation can be perceived.

Zaltman and Duncan [3] explained that innovation is a social change that is used to achieve certain goals and is observed as a new for a group of people. However, social change does not necessarily mean an innovation. "An innovation is an idea, practice, or material artifact perceived to be new by the relevant unit of adoption. The innovation is the change object". In this case, Schumpeter mentioned that "carrying out innovations is the only function which is fundamental in history".

Then, according to Hilda [4], a successful innovation is the result of the creation and implementation of processes, service products, and new service methods and also the results of real development of efficiency, effectiveness or quality of results. Initially, service innovation is a product innovation, which then continues to process until continuous quality improvement. Service innovation broadly can be divided into two types, namely method innovation and strategy or policy innovation. Method innovation is related to the interaction way between service users and service providers. Meanwhile, strategy innovation refers to changes in vision and mission, and the strategies adopted [5]. Then, the level of innovation starts from incremental, radical, to transformative. Incremental innovation is a small change in a process. Then the second level is radical innovation in the form of fundamental changes by introducing completely new ways of public service. Meanwhile, transformative innovation is a systematic change in all sectors that dramatically changes the organization. In its implementation, these innovations need more time and need fundamental changes in the social, cultural, and organizational structure [5]. While seen from the process of innovation, it can be divided into two, namely sustaining innovation and discontinues innovation. Sustaining innovation occurs when the process of innovation brings new changes but remains based on the conditions and systems that are running or already exist. Meanwhile, discontinues innovation is an innovation process that brings totally new changes and is no longer based on existing conditions.

In the context of a village innovation program, the term innovation refers to a way or approach that is different from usual (whether it is a new method or a method developed from an existing one) taken by a community (group) or agency, in responding to a problem/challenge faced or in doing something, applicative and proven successful. Village Innovation Program/Program Inovasi Desa (PID) is one of the government's efforts to improve the welfare of rural communities through enhancing village capacity in developing quality village development plans and implementation. PID supports village development more creatively so that it can encourage the development of the local economy and the development of human resources.

PID is an innovation/renewal in the practice of development and exchange of knowledge. This innovation is drawn from the reality/work of the villages in carrying out development activities that are used as knowledge to be transmitted widely. PID also pays attention on technical support from professional technical service providers. These two elements are believed to contribute significantly to village investment, namely meeting the needs of the community through development funded by the Village Budget and Expenditure (APB Desa), especially the Village Funds. Thus, PID is expected to answer the needs of villages for quality technical services, stimulate the emergence of innovations in development practices, and innovative solutions to use Village Funds as appropriately and effectively as possible.

Village Innovation is a pattern of approach in village development that is carried out in an integrated and systematic way in order to solve the problems and challenges faced. Good components of policies, actors, institutions, networks, partnerships, social processes, and joint actions in the context of innovation diffusion are expected to be able to influence the development of community life and the achievement of village development targets. Basically, the village innovation system is a unity of stakeholders, institutions, relationships, networks, interactions, and social processes that influence the direction of development and the speed of innovation and its diffusion (including technology and good practices), as well as the learning process.

### *B. Community-based Innovation*

Village development should be easier because the village has a strength factor in the form of abundant natural resource potential and relatively has not been managed optimally. In addition, there is also potential for human resources that tend to be easily mobilized due to the high level of brotherhood spirit. The spirit of togetherness is the main capital in fostering a spirit of participation. It is similar to the village institutions that currently have a large enough budget available and the authority to conduct a self-governing community. Therefore, the opportunity to improve the quality of life and welfare of the community is wide open. A village development approach and strategy based on local communities are needed. An approach that is able to encourage the improvement of community welfare is done through the use of potential resources, assets, and funding in an organized and accountable way.

Community-based approach is an approach as the part of participatory development. This approach provides an opportunity for local communities to control and get involved in village management and development. People who are not directly involved in the development process also enjoy development benefits. Thus, it demands political empowerment, democratization, and distribution of profits to disadvantaged communities. Furthermore, Suansri [6] explained that community-based approach in its implementation shall pay attention on social and cultural aspects, and sustainability principle. It is a development approach that emphasizes community empowerment and environmental sustainability. Timothy [7] explained that the community-based approach is related to the benefits gained and the existence of a mentoring planning effort that defends local communities. Community has a great control in the social process to realize welfare. Meanwhile, Murphy [8] emphasized that community-based approach is a strategy that focuses on identifying the goals and desires of local communities and their ability to absorb the benefits of development programs or activities. Each community must be encouraged to identify their own goals and direct activities carried out to improve the fulfillment of local community needs.

Furthermore, Garrod [9] conveyed some requirements so that the community-based approach can be implemented well, namely the existence of effective leadership. It means leaders

who have the ability to understand, empathize, and care about stakeholder conditions. The leaders should also have good managerial and network skills so that they are able to identify problems and integrate various solutions from various parties. They also should be competent in moving and directing participants. A community-based approach to development is based on empowering local communities. Harmonizing economic benefits with conservation is done through the dynamics of local stakeholder involvement in each program. Another requirement is the participation of stakeholders in the economic and social development of the community. In addition to improving community livelihoods, it also aims to increase wider participation space, and to build good relationships or networks from various sectors. Sustainable community participation can encourage equitable distribution of benefits. The use of local resources is done on an ongoing basis and managed by all members of the community, both individually and in groups. It can foster concern, self-respect and pride for all members of the community. Finally, it strengthens local institutions which involve all members of the community.

On the other hand, Yaman & Mohd [10] provided a sign that programs that use a community-based approach must have government support. A community-based approach is oriented towards balance of access to enjoy the program benefits implemented and support poverty alleviation. Poverty alleviation with an economic orientation must be done by encouraging the government and the community while maintaining the preservation of natural and cultural resources. The government carries out the facilitator's function and carried out institutional empowerment.

Based on the literature references aforementioned, a number of principles can be formulated as the basis for implementing community-based Village Innovations, namely: participatory, transparent and accountable, collaborative, sustainable, fair and equal. Participatory means that the implementation process must involve people from all levels and groups. The community is facilitated to play an active role in all stages of the program and contribute both materially and immaterially. Then, transparent and accountable means that the management of activities must prioritize openness, deliberation, and accountability. Activities for village innovation must be done collaboratively. All interested parties have an equal opportunity to contribute positively. Joint activities must be framed within a cooperative framework and synergize for the successful implementation of activities or programs. The next principle is sustainability which means that village innovation activities undertaken must be oriented to the sustainability of the utilization of local potential both natural and social potentials. The final principle is fairness and equality, namely that each member of the community has an equal role at each stage of the program and has the same opportunity to enjoy the benefits of the activities carried out.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted in 2019 by using qualitative method. Descriptive analysis was performed by using primary data in the form of data from interviews with informants. Then, it was strengthened by data taken from various sources such as documentation and news content in the mass media about village innovations in Banyuwangi Regency. Observations were made to strengthen understanding of the reality context of village innovation. Data analysis was carried out with the condensation stage of the data obtained, then displayed, and finally concluded with the conclusion formulation. These stages were circular in nature, that the analysis process can be repeated at an early stage as long as the data obtained did not meet the saturated or valid criteria [11].

### IV. DISCUSSION

This research is an effort to explore and deeply understand the reality of village innovation in order to build a model that can function as a center of excellence based on good practices in several villages in Banyuwangi. The resulting model can be a framework in the innovation development for the realization of a Superior and Sustainable Village. This research emphasizes the process of government innovation and its implications for the quality of public services. The development of village innovations must be based on community inclusively and fairly. Community activeness in village innovation is as a space to suit the fulfillment of community life needs independently and sustainably. The concept of innovation in the public sector is as the adoption of the concept from the private sector. Implementation of innovation is currently an important concern in the public sector. The specificity of innovation in the public sector is to improve the quality of public services not just in profits as in the private sector [12].

The village innovation is embraced by the Banyuwangi Regency Government's policy in East Java to continue to encourage improvement in the quality of public services to the village. The village innovation program (Program Inovasi Desa) implemented by Banyuwangi Regency is the part of continuous innovations of village development and community empowerment. The Banyuwangi Regency Government implements a community-based village innovation program. The Banyuwangi Regency Government facilitates and encourages each village to continue to be creative in creating innovations in accordance with their respective potential resources. Innovation creation must be truly perceived by the community. The village government which succeeded in developing its public service innovation will have effects on community satisfaction.

The first program is the improvement of public services quality to the village level. Public service innovation in this regency is based on the use of information technology. At present, all villages (totaling 189 villages) in this regency are already served by fiber-optic internet. The delivery of public services in villages has made use of the internet, which relies

on the speed of service time, service accuracy, and service efficiency and effectiveness. The existence of internet-based public services provides comfort and satisfaction for rural communities. In addition to direct benefits in the form of ease of service, the presence of internet-based service innovation injects knowledge and opens up the villagers' insights about information technology so that they are not into technology illiterate. Based on the experience of each village, several unique village innovation programs were obtained. For example, the creation of innovations carried out by Kalibaru Kulon Village, Kalibaru District, in the form of innovations in improving administrative services by Jemput Bola (Being Proactive) (using Godes application). This innovation is done by village officials who are proactive to the population related to population administration services. The community does not need to come to the village office to administer population services. This application is welcomed by the community because it is considered facilitating them.

Then, other innovation programs developed by the Banyuwangi Regency Government in realizing village innovation are increasing the capacity of human resources (HR), welfare and health, and economic development of rural communities. This program is transformed into several community-based programs. The village community economic empowerment innovation program is truly realized in the form of practical actions by utilizing the potential and conditions of each village. An example is the innovation carried out by Kedungrejo Village, Muncar District, which made innovations in the utilization of processed plastic waste into bags and wallets. The innovation program is a form of reading the condition of the village where there is abundant plastic waste so that in addition to providing economic benefits, it also solves the problem of handling plastic waste. Then the experience from Tegalsari Village, Tegalsari Subdistrict, which improved the economy of rural communities by the innovation of making liquid soap. Also, Glagahagung Village, Purwoharjo District which empowered the community's economy by utilizing recycled waste (newspaper). The recycled waste is made into various forms of handicrafts, such as replicas of boats, bicycle, and flower vases.

Meanwhile, the welfare and public health innovation program is also created with the spirit of locality. For example, the "Kanggo Riko" Program, which means "For You"; this program focuses on empowering the rural poor to become economically independent. Empowerment is done by providing business capital assistance to poor households. The target group of this program is people who are starting a business or intend to increase their business. Business capital assistance provided is Rp 2.5 million for each member of the business community. This program was carried out in 29 villages. The budget is taken from the Village Funds Allocation (ADD) from the Local Government Budget of Banyuwangi and the Village Funds from the State Budget. The aim of the "Kanggo Riko" Program is to empower the community's economy to be more productive and able to meet their needs. Thus, the target is poor people who are still of productive age and have the opportunity to improve their economy. Furthermore, there is another village

innovation program namely "Rantang Kasih" Program. This program is in the form of providing nutritious food every day to the poor elderly. In Rantang Kasih program, the poor elderly get free fast food packages every day. The village innovation program in Banyuwangi is rooted in local values and culture. This is in line with what was stated by Suansri [6] that community-based village innovation must take social and cultural aspects into account.

Based on data on village innovation in Banyuwangi Regency, it can be categorized into three innovation groups. This categorization is based on the form and usefulness of the innovation. The village innovation categories are the categories of public service infrastructure, community economic development, and public welfare and health.

TABLE I. COMMUNITY-BASED VILLAGE INNOVATION CATEGORY IN BANYUWANGI REGENCY

No	Innovation Category	Innovation Implementation
1	Public service infrastructure	Public services based on information technology (internet) Utilization of small-scale appropriate technologies such as hydroelectric power and the provision of Javanese erak houses to control agricultural pests
2	Community economic empowerment	Local potential processing, such as processing plastic waste into handicrafts, processing waste recycling Agricultural crops processing, such as Robusta coffee to provide higher economic benefits Dodol making in various variants
3	Public health and welfare	Integrated movement to overcome the problem of nutritious stunting ( <i>Gardu Amazing</i> ) Business capital assistance program for the poor ( <i>Kanggo Riko</i> ) Program of nutritious food provision for elderly ( <i>Rantang Kasih</i> )

Data were processed by the researcher, 2019

The analysis context of the village innovation is the uniqueness of the village area which is an area far from the center of growth, the nature conditions are relatively natural, and the community runs activities based on local community values. Then, seen from the population, it also tends to be small, which is in line with the availability of a lot of vacant land that is generally used for agricultural land and plantations. Meanwhile, the economy of rural communities tends to be low, while the main livelihood is agriculture.

Village is frequently identified with underdevelopment and poverty. Village communities seem to be underdeveloped compared to urban communities. Development in several fields such as education, health and economy is even slow. This phenomenon occurs due to various factors such as infrastructure which is limited, human resource capacity that

still tends to be low, and the economic activities of the community have not had too high added value. This is also driven by the mindset of rural communities who tend to urbanize to improve their welfare. However, in fact, rural communities have advantages that are not owned by the urban communities. Even though they are categorized as poor, their lives tend to be more peaceful, because of the support of natural potential and the strength of values of harmony, tolerance, and togetherness. Village communities hold the key node to meet the needs of other communities, namely food needs. However, due to limited knowledge and insight, and simple life orientation, the abundant rural potential is rarely managed properly. Moreover, the younger generation of villages are more interested in sacrificing their lives in urban areas. As a result, villages are increasingly left behind because there are not enough human resources available to innovate to build villages. The condition of limitations is what is later alleged as the cause why many villages in Indonesia have not been able to manage village funds to create the welfare of their communities.

The enactment of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages opens up new creative spaces for villages to improve their quality. Villages are given bigger authority to manage their development potential. This was welcomed and implemented well by the Banyuwangi Regency Government with its village innovation programs. This local government understands that building a village must be community based. Therefore, providing a broad creative space for the community is the right approach. Village communities must be assisted, directed, and supported in order to develop. They are the subjects of development; they are the main actors in changing or improving the quality of their lives.

The three categories of village innovation programs that can be identified in Banyuwangi Regency are fundamental forms of innovation. These three forms of innovation touch directly on the lives of rural communities. Improving the quality of public services in the village must be done so that the motivation of business and the spirit of change from the community find the right acceleration. The local government must become a facilitator of acceleration, not being an obstacle to the change process otherwise. Service providers have a central role especially in conditions of powerlessness [13]. Therefore, service must be improvised, and be done by utilizing information technology. Building ease of the service process and injecting the public that the management of everything is easy and simple should be done. Aligning with the mindset of rural communities who are simple, not into complicated processes, and cheap cost should be informed as well. Public organizations must be able to continue to develop along with the development of community needs and demands. Based on this opinion, it can be understood that public sector innovation becomes an important concept in community development, especially rural communities.

Afterwards, another fundamental problem faced by the village is the low economy of the community. Again, this is well understood by the Banyuwangi Regency government;

village innovation is directed at empowering the economic community through reading the economic potential of each village. Therefore, various ideas and activities based on local potential emerge in each village. Innovation programs are packaged in a variety of local identities that are targeted at the spirit of the local community. Furthermore, village development must be carried out by the village community itself. Through the spirit of self-independence, it certainly can arouse a sense of belonging, belief, and harmony with the social values that develop in society.

The next dimension of village innovation in Banyuwangi Regency is community welfare and health. It is believed that in order to develop a community unity, it must be ensured that health and humanity issues are no longer limiting factors. Therefore, the local government is attempting to build awareness of the village community to maintain the health and welfare of its community. Thinking about togetherness and putting aside the values of individuality are needed to do. Development of village human resources, young and elderly human resources is also essential to do. The productivity of the village community is not only influenced by the availability of human resources of working age or productive age, but also the handling of the elderly generation is an achievement. The community works together to find solutions to the problems faced [8].

Innovations made at the village level are indeed oriented towards efforts to strengthen fields that can support village independence and sustainability. These fields include food security, health, local economy, education, and active community participation, including the use of information technology. The success of innovation is influenced by driving factors, namely leadership, cooperation/networking, and institutionalization of various activities and programs so that sustainability can be maintained [9]. The leadership and networking factors are available quite well in Banyuwangi Regency. The leadership of the regional head oriented towards the advancement of the community is in line with the culture of the Banyuwangi community who have strong personalities. Therefore, the process of institutionalizing various innovation programs and activities is easier to do. Regional heads should read carefully the mandate of Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Local Government. The law strictly explains that local governments can innovate by referring to the principle of (a) increasing efficiency; (b) improving effectiveness; (c) improving service quality; (d) no conflict of interest; (e) public interest oriented; (f) conducted openly; and (g) fulfilling decency values. Wider authority space can encourage ideas and creativity which are the important components of innovation that are expected to emerge at the local government level. Ultimately, improving service quality is the main expected effect of public sector innovation practices. According to Muluk [5] and Hilda [4], innovation can be done by improving the way in doing a program or changing program policies and strategies. What is done in Banyuwangi Regency covers both, modifying activities or existing service systems so that they perform better and also bring up new things that are based on local wisdom.

Basically, Community-based Village Innovation is a village development concept that emphasizes the characteristics and values of village communities [14]. One of approaches that can be used in village development is the use of technology. Through technology, various development problems such as limited information, public knowledge and infrastructure can be overcome. In the end, the development gap between cities and villages can be minimized by the realization of a Superior and Sustainable Village. The concept of Community-based Village Innovation actually focuses on overcoming various village development problems; one of which can be done by utilizing appropriate information technology. This is based on the idea that rural development problems are influenced by various environmental conditions such as social aspects and carrying capacity of natural resources that are unique. Therefore, various potentials of the village including the existing local wisdom can be a strength for the local community to build and develop their potential. The village innovation application in Banyuwangi Regency has been attempting to cover the basic concept, so that its development can be carried out without experiencing serious issues.

## V. CONCLUSION

Village innovation is a village development concept that emphasizes on empowerment activities. The development program packaged in the form of improving the quality of life and behavior includes aspects of improving the community capacity, increasing community participation, increasing community economic activities and increasing local government based on science and technology. Village innovation is useful for the recognition of the existence of individuals, groups or institutions that make innovation. Then, it also boosts the creativity of the village to increase its competitiveness and excellence. In addition, it also encourages the improvement of the public services quality in the village. Public service innovation contributes to increasing efficiency, improving effectiveness, improving service quality, and encouraging social cohesion and preventing conflicts of interest. Innovation makes public services in the village more oriented to the public interest and meets the values of decency. In fact, because it is done openly, it is easy to justify the results. In the end, village innovation can encourage improvement in the life quality of rural communities.

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