

Is It True That CSR Programs Can Empower Local Communities: A Lesson from the People of Gag Raja Ampat Island Indonesia

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Abstract

Self-reliance as an expected outcome of community empowerment can reduce the level of vulnerability and dependence of the community on assistance in the long term. As a form of its social responsibility, the company strives to create sustainable independence in the surrounding community through community empowerment activities. This research will illustrate the independence that occurs in the community on Gag Island through CSR programs implemented by the company. Independence is seen in the implementation of CSR programs. The research method used was a descriptive research with a qualitative approach by involving local communities on Gag Island, Raja Ampat Regency, and Southwest Papua Province as the parties involved. The results showed that the community's activeness, consistency, determination, and trust indicate independence in implementing empowerment programs. In addition, the provision of knowledge, capacity building and community trust, and strengthening community participation based on integrity, consistency, loyalty, and openness, as well as collaboration with the merger of interests between the company itself and the stakeholders involved, are essential aspects in implementing CSR to create independence. However, this independence needs to be maintained and expanded properly and evenly so that CSR programs by the company can impact and benefit the community, not only for the people of Gag Island but also for those living on the surrounding islands.

Keywords: Community Self-Reliance, Corporate Social Responsibility, Community Empowerment, Gag Island.

Independence is an individual's ability to collaborate with the skills of other individuals, thereby creating cooperation to improve their welfare (Malta, 2022). Independence, as an expected result of community empowerment, seeks to reduce vulnerability and community

dependence on assistance in the long term (Pawar, 2014). Independence can be interpreted as a condition where people have good abilities in thinking, making decisions, and acting quickly and precisely to solve problems and optimize their potential (Tambunan, 2019). Besides that,

independence achieved through creating better conditions in society and providing support, motivation, and opportunities to contribute can increase society's opportunities to be free from dependence on other parties (Suryo, 2016). The concept of independence emerged as an impact resulting from the implementation of community empowerment and is related to the ideas of self-reliance, cooperation, participation, and rural development. (Fonchingong & Fonjong, 2002). This shows that implementing community empowerment is an essential starting point for achieving a better community life (Anyanwu, 1992).

In this case, community empowerment seeks to make the community independent and empowered and they can face problems and improve several aspects of social life, strengthening relations between parties and increasing community collectivity. (Phillips & Pittman, 2014). This collectivity undoubtedly follows the concept of community development, which emphasizes the importance of growing community responsibility in viewing aid as only a complement and still prioritizing self-sufficiency. (Fonchingong & Fonjong, 2002). This collectivity or self-sufficiency is expected to increase community participation, create community development activities centered on the community, and meet their needs (Anyanwu, 1992). In this case, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) carried out by companies is one of the community empowerment activities that can create sustainable independence for the community (Henningfeld et al., 2006).

CSR includes community empowerment activities that create linkages and continuity between companies and the local communities where the company operates and how the company is related to its stakeholders (Crowther & Aras, 2008). CSR activities carried out by companies are expected to have a significant impact, namely, Thus, that people become independent and improve welfare and quality of life by utilizing natural and human resources as fully as possible (Yunus et al., 2017). Ploch in

Mattessich & Monsey (2004) said that community empowerment activities through CSR by companies need to be carried out by paying attention to appropriate and appropriate processes. Thus, they can provide impacts and benefits that lead to strengthening the community itself. A series of implementation of community empowerment activities through suitable CSR activities will collaborate between two interests, namely shareholders and stakeholders, by focusing on achieving specific results, namely independence (Suharto, 2010).

Based on the perspective of community empowerment, Verhagen in Amalia and Syawie (2016) state that independence brought about through activities, whether initiated by the private sector or by community initiatives, is a condition that individuals want to achieve where, in this condition, they no longer depend on assistance. Third parties to meet their needs. Independence as output from community empowerment, in this case, CSR programs carried out independently by companies can meet the community's needs collectively so that both directly and indirectly, they can increase community independence (Anantanyu, 2011). Therefore, community independence through community development activities, in this case, the CSR program, can be achieved if the community meets various indicators of independence, including having knowledge, self-capacity, trust, and participation, which are closely related to the implementation of community empowerment, (Pratiwi et al., 2012). Trust is part of the norms that apply in society and can give confidence to members of society always to do good, work together, and work together in realizing relationships between communities that are based on integrity, competence, consistency, loyalty, and openness (Coleman, 2011; Nurhayati, 2019). In this case, trust is one of the primary keys for society, both directly involved and those not directly involved in community empowerment activities aimed at achieving independence (Fukuyama, 2002).

Through this research, researchers want to know how independence is experienced by the people on Gag Island, Raja Ampat, Indonesia, which is reviewed through implementing the company's CSR program. Thus, the indicators of independence identified in the implementation of CSR programs can represent the independence experienced by the community.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Community Independence

Independence is one of the values humans obtain due to realizing the protection of human rights for needs, including clothing, food, and shelter. (Pawar, 2014). Besides that, independence is assessed not only as a human right to fulfill human needs but also as how the individual, group, or community can meet their needs sustainably (The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2005). Independence, as an aspect of resilience, can be conceptualized as a belief that an individual has to utilize their capacity or ability to solve a problem and reduce vulnerability and dependency in the long term. (Ortega & Alegría, 2002).

The concept of independence is not much different from the principles related to self-sufficiency and mutual assistance between people in a community where Ghari (1980) stated that independence through cooperation, which is being echoed throughout the world, is starting to develop because people with unequal economic levels are unable to meet their daily needs. Thus, self-help carried out by the community allows them to exploit the resources they have for the common good, and vice versa, thus, the community development and empowerment activities that lead to self-reliance will increase the community's ability and capacity to face life independently. (Fonchingong & Fonjong, 2002).

Community empowerment activities carried out by the government and companies as part of

the CSR Program can impact the community, namely empowerment or independence. Thus, that the community has the strength to fulfill their daily needs. (Muhtadi, 2018). The independence or empowerment experienced by the community, in this case, refers to the level of success of the community in carrying out empowerment. Thus, that the community becomes empowered or independent, which includes four indicators. (Suharto, 2004). As for the indicator, according to Awang (2010), it provides society's ability to maintain the resources they have, rise from adversity, optimize various sources to improve the quality of life, and appreciate the different social changes occurring. Then, these indicators were strengthened with indicators of community independence by Sumardjo (1999), including the community's ability to explore their potential, develop plans, direct themselves to better conditions, and discuss and negotiate. However, these indicators are necessary.

Independence as a result or impact from community empowerment activities, in this case, the CSR program carried out independently by the company, is expected to be able to meet the needs of the community collectively for the common good so that later this can lead to community independence (Anantanyu, 2011). Therefore, community independence obtained through community development activities can be realized if the community can fulfill various existing indicators of independent, according to Pratiwi (2012), including knowledge, self-capacity, trust, and participation, which are closely related to implementing community empowerment. In this case, trust becomes part of the norms or values that apply in society and can give confidence to members of society always to do good, work together, and work together in realizing relations between communities based on integrity, competence, consistency, loyalty, and openness. (Coleman, 2011; Nurhayati, 2019). In this case, trust is one of the primary keys for society, both directly involved and those not directly involved in community

empowerment activities aimed at achieving independence (Fukuyama, 2002).

2.2 Community Development and Empowerment

Community development and empowerment are exciting issues for some people because the term contains an element of power that is believed by the community to be something that can improve a person's living conditions. (Malta, 2023). This happens because the term indirectly conveys that each person has control over himself and the environment around him and can carry out independent evaluations to obtain better conditions. (Ye & Yang, 2020). In this case, community development and empowerment is a process to increase community capacity and freedom in dealing with various social, economic, and political problems (Malta, 2023).

Community development and empowerment is defined as an effort to develop community conditions sustainably based on the principles of social justice and mutual respect. Community development and empowerment are aimed at building supportive communities, namely a community structure whose life is based on equal development and distribution of resources and is supported by social interaction, participation, and efforts to help each other (Zubaedi, 2013). Meanwhile, Ploch, in Mattessich & Monsey (2004), states that community development and empowerment are forms of involvement in a process carried out to achieve improvements in several aspects of society, which leads to strengthening human communities and institutional relationships. Community development and empowerment are forms of social capital that lead to independence in the community (Phillips & Pittman, 2014).

In carrying out the community development and empowerment process, the community actively and participatively finds existing problems and potential, makes plans based on assessment, executes the plan, and consistently monitors and evaluates the process and outcomes here (Helmita et al., 2021). The implementing

community development and empowerment needs to be based on principles, according to Ife and Tesoriero (2008). There are 22 principles in carrying out community development activities, which can be considered in determining the level of success and consistency of a community development activity.

2.3 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

In the 1950s, in the United States, the role of companies in society became a matter of debate. Many even considered that the book by Howard R. Bowen entitled *Responsibilities of the Businessman* in 1953 became an essential contribution to the discussion regarding CSR (Carroll, 1999). One of the early contributors to the CSR field associated this concept with the concept of philanthropy (Carroll, 1979). Meanwhile, CSR behavior is usually realized when businesses can support organizations and/or other organizations in various fields outside the business they run, such as humanitarian, health, social, environmental, cultural and heritage protection, philanthropy, and sports. Apart from that, the emerging theoretical basis increasingly shows that CSR can be a driving force for companies to provide benefits for the company itself and society. (Camilleri, 2013; Falck & Heblich, 2007; Porter & Kramer, 2011).

CSR is one of the bases or policies established by the Government and companies that implement empowerment activities that involve direct and full community participation to produce sustainable independence. (Henningfeld et al., 2006). CSR, in a broad sense, has a solid connection to the relationship that is or what should occur between companies, governments, and individuals as citizens. However, another local definition states that CSR is the relationship between a company and the local community where the company operates and how it relates to its stakeholders (Crowther & Aras, 2008).

In carrying out corporate social responsibility, there are several assumptions, such as the company having a policy that can

relate to the sustainability of its business or business in the community in various economic, social, and environmental aspects. (Aluchna, 2016). Apart from that, the implementation of CSR in company business practices is driven by a series of forces that support the sustainability of community empowerment activities for the community (Aluchna, 2016). In this case, theoretical and institutional developments reflected in regulations established in international debates related to corporate responsibility, sustainable development, and aid programs to third-world countries can encourage companies to develop CSR implementation standards in reporting and management. Supply chain, communication, certification, and ranking in the sustainability index (Aluchna, 2016).

Besides that, social awareness and efforts to change stakeholder empowerment are related to increasing social and environmental awareness. This is illustrated by an increase in the number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) as well as social organizations and associations that fight against uncontrolled actions carried out by companies and their impact on society and the environment. The main problems that occur lie in human and environmental rights, consumer rights, and environmental protection (Kendall et al., 2007). Market and customer preferences, which include new, aware, and educated customer groups, also contribute indirectly to CSR implementation, where they prefer healthy and sustainable lifestyles that are ethical, responsible, environmentally friendly, and fair consumption. This consumer group allows for creating income potential and its impact on market trends. Increased internet access and transparency are closely related to faster and more flexible communication between stakeholders, improved methods for exchanging information between companies, and the power of social media in coordinating activities carried out by stakeholders (Aluchna, 2016).

Then, policies carried out independently by the company include actions taken by the company in formulating best practices and

setting norms for the company. Thus, that actions, standards, and ethics transparency are strengths in implementing CSR in the community. (Garriga & Mele, 2004). Thus, implementing CSR is perceived as a distinct aspect of corporate strategy and becomes a sustainable competitive advantage that can lead to increased profits and better financial performance. The CSR approach reduces the risk of company operations and the uncertainty of market conditions (Charitoudi et al., 2011). Apart from that, the CSR approach and responsible management can be considered essential factors in crisis conditions. It can strengthen customer loyalty and prevent negative consequences from decreased sales or economic decline. (Arevalo & Aravind, 2010).

3. METHODS

The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive, considering that this research will describe the independence of relationships in the community on Gag Island through the CSR program implemented by the company. This independence can be seen in the processes of implementing the CSR program. The research method used is a descriptive research with a qualitative approach involving local communities on Gag Island, Regency Raja Ampat, Southwest Papua Province as the parties involved. The data collection techniques used in this research include 1) in-depth interviews with stakeholders who are involved in this program; 2) Focus Group Discussion or FGD with the company and local communities; 3) a literature review of sources relevant to the research issue, such as the concept of independence, community development and empowerment, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR); and 4) studies documentation to company documents related to CSR programs implemented together with the community.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Capacity Building and Formation and Mentoring of Assisted Groups

One of the dynamics in implementing the CSR program on Gag Island is the facilitation, mentoring, and implementation of community development activities that have been mutually agreed upon. These activities can be carried out independently and independently by the community or facilitated by the government or the private sector. After carrying out facilitation and assistance, the community is expected to be able to implement the various knowledge and skills they have to carry out the program according to the plan. This activity is carried out as a form of facilitation by the company to the community and they can gain increased capacity, both in the form of abilities and insight.

This activity involves the people of Gag Island, who are candidates for leadership of the target group and have basic knowledge and skills in gardening and farming. In this process, the people who will later become the target group get the opportunity through training as a form of collaboration between affiliated companies. The training is closely related to knowledge relevant to the CSR program. After the community has received training and comparative studies, it is hoped that they can do it and transfer learning to other people who will later become members of the target group.

To support the implementation of the CSR program in the form of post-mining environmental reclamation for the community on Gag Island, in this case, coordination and monitoring, a target group was formed to drive community empowerment activities. The first group successfully formed was the Fanun Tilari Development Group in 2020. This group was formed as the front guard for growing and caring for seedlings in nursery areas, planting plants on reclaimed land, and caring for plants. After the Fanun Tilari Assisted Group was formed, another assisted group was also formed, and its role was to help the Fanun Tilari Assisted Group

provide plant seeds. The other groups that were formed were domiciled on Gag Island, Meosmannggara Island, and Gebe Island, such as the Pamar Assisted Group and the Tiger Assisted Group. Apart from that, the Maju Bersama Compost Production Group was also formed, which supplies compost fertilizer to grow seeds and plant plants on reclaimed land. These groups are directly affected by implementing the Post-Mining Environmental Management PPM Program, and it is hoped that they can improve the welfare of the surrounding communities involved.

The training carried out to the community is considered capable of providing benefits for the community representatives involved and other communities who receive transfer learning. This benefit is not only oriented towards increasing people's knowledge and capacity, but they can gain relationships or networks with various parties, including affiliated companies. Thus, if they have good relationships and are supported by adequate knowledge and capacity regarding seed management and plant care for post-mining land management, they can negotiate with other parties to improve the quality of life in the future.

Apart from that, the formation of target groups in the same process is carried out, considering that development and empowerment activities cannot be carried out independently but require various parties. Each fostered group has a leader who is tasked with managing the group. The group leader was selected based on the results of deliberations and discussions between the community and local traditional leaders, who were then selected based on various considerations, including the aspects of ability, knowledge, and ability in leadership.

As stated by Fukuyama (2002), trust is an essential aspect of community development activities that can direct society to a state of independence. In other words, existing considerations are based on faith or the belief that the parties involved are selected people and can be trusted to bring about good change in people's lives. Besides that, there is a trust or

public trust in the company is a good sign of the sustainability of the company's program, and it is hoped that the program will have a good influence both for increasing community welfare, improving and maintaining the environment, as well as the sustainability of the company itself. In this way, the community feels that they have participated in every community development and empowerment activity.

4.2 Facilitation of Fostered Groups to Support Community Empowerment Activities

After the group has been formed and obtained transfer learning regarding capabilities and insight regarding the implementation of post-mining land reclamation, the community also receives facilities in the form of tools and materials that support the activities of growing and caring for seedlings in nursery areas, planting plants in reclaimed land, and caring for plants. The facilities provided include paranets, water pumps, Polypipe, polybags, assistance with industrial fuel oil (BBM) subsidies, chopping machines, signboards, and pest-repellent liquid. After the assisted group has received a series of facilitation from the company, CSR program activities in the form of post-mining environmental reclamation can be carried out by the agreements and plans that have been determined.

Apart from that, the facilitation provided by the company to the target groups has a significant impact, both for the welfare of the community and the program's sustainability. These impacts include ease for group members in obtaining water sources for watering seedlings, moving seedlings from nurseries to reclamation sites, cost efficiency in using compost fertilizer, fuel savings for planting seedlings at mining sites, and others. Thus, the benefits will be felt if the target group maximizes the use of the provided facilities, which are accompanied by monitoring from the company as the provider.

It cannot be denied that companies face obstacles in this process, namely that the community needs adequate administrative capabilities. In this case, the community persists

with conventional recording methods, thus preventing the CDO as the company representative from making reports regarding the community's procurement and use of facilities. On the other hand, problems in recording give rise to its issues, namely that companies need more transparency to improve or add similar facilities. Meanwhile, companies first have a specific budget accompanied by systematic reporting. In making improvements or additions to facilities, the CDO needs a certain period to obtain approval from the company. Thus, the company's role in providing additional administrative assistance and training is high needed.

This training and mentoring is not carried out solely for the company's benefit but can be an opportunity for the community to review their potential and abilities. The community believes this training can be a blessing and complement to continue community empowerment activities carried out through the CSR program. In this case, the training and mentoring seek to meet various indicators of independence, according to Pratiwi (2012), namely having knowledge, personal capacity, confidence, and participation in community development activities. Belief or trust It is hoped that this will grow well in the minds of the community and be demonstrated through the behavior of the community itself, the same as training that has been carried out previously, including the high enthusiasm and curiosity of the community regarding the material presented as well as the community's desire to continue to develop and process to improve the quality of life.

4.3 Assisted Groups as Parties that Provide, Raise, and Care for Seedlings

The implementation of the CSR program for the community on Gag Island is carried out following the agreement previously made with the community, starting from providing, caring for, and enlarging seeds to producing fertilizer and planting plants on reclaimed land by the assisted group. It must be accepted that program implementation can be separated from the role of

the community members and members of the target groups in supporting and carrying out most of the program activities. Thus, the role of fostered groups is crucial in the company's implementation of community development and empowerment activities.

The activity of providing seeds is carried out by the Fanun Tilari Assisted Group together with other assisted groups by collecting seeds from the wild and then caring for them and growing them to a specific size. Seeds were collected considering that natural resources are abundant in Raja Ampat Regency, which the community can use to achieve prosperity. However, this must be balanced with environmental and ecosystem improvements. These improvements are intended not only for the community itself and it can always provide benefits but also for the environment and it can maintain its natural ecosystem.

The assisted group carries out the care and enlargement of seedlings through good cooperation between its members. In this case, they divide tasks and distribute the number of seeds that are cared for and raised evenly and fairly. This, of course, has implications for equalizing its members' conditions or quality of life. Social jealousy becomes a taboo subject, considering that no injustice is experienced and that members and leaders of assisted groups can live in harmony and peace as a community.

The community's consistency in contributing to planting and caring for plants in the post-mining environment should be appreciated, considering that they also have other activities, such as gardening, fishing, taking care of their families, and so on. Changes in activities that previously only carried out the main livelihood changed to individuals or communities being able to manage their time. These changes certainly impact society by allowing them to fill their free time with productive activities. This is relevant to Coleman's statement (2011) and Nurhayati's (2019) statement that the trust given to the community regarding community empowerment activities will create relationships

between communities based on responsibility, competence, consistency, loyalty, and openness. In this case, society can greatly appreciate itself through its commitment and consistency. They realize and believe that this consistency will bring society to a better condition.

4.4 Production of Organic Fertilizer to Support Environmental Sustainability

Apart from planting, caring for, and growing plant seeds, there is one fostered group with different duties and roles, namely the Maju Bersama Compost Production Group. People only need a little capital to produce organic fertilizer. This is because the community culture is still close and upholds cooperation between local communities. Thus, they can complement each other in various ways. Apart from that, the wealth of natural resources in Raja Ampat Regency, especially on Gag Island, is still abundant, which means that the community can still depend on the potential of available natural resources.

Community independence is demonstrated through organic fertilizer production activities, namely that they can maintain and optimize the resources they have as best as possible to improve their quality of life. This shows that the Maju Bersama Compost Production Group members can plan for the future, orient themselves to better conditions, and discuss matters needed to support compost production activities with other community members. In this way, people cannot only explore their potential and direct themselves to better conditions, but they can also think in the long term to plan for the future to obtain sustainable improvements in the quality of life.

It can be seen that an independent society has excellent determination and high confidence to strive for independence itself. In this case, self-sufficiency carried out by the community, which aims to meet the community's needs collectively, can increase the community's independence (Anantanyu, 2011). This determination, self-reliance, and trust include community efforts to maintain and optimize the available resources,

which can be utilized to the maximum extent possible. Thus, the community can achieve the social changes regarding independence due to the persistence and determination devoted to community empowerment activities.

4.5 Community Interaction with Stakeholders

In carrying out a CSR program, the community as a target group and subject of empowerment needs to receive an evaluation or assessment of the sustainability of community development and empowerment activities. If activities need to end, there needs to be an end to the contract between the parties involved and the community. Meanwhile, if community development activities are carried out by doing capacity building to continue, a formulation is needed, and lessons learned aimed at subsequent community development activities.

In this process, the community has not received its treatment in the form of termination. Termination refers to stopping intervention or assistance in the program or activity. This is motivated by the fact that the reclamation carried out by the company must be carried out for the next 25 years by the Forest Area Borrow-to-Use Permit and will end automatically unless it is extended.

The company also strives to obtain input and constructive criticism from implementing community development and empowerment programs or activities. These constructive inputs can be obtained through collaboration with various parties, both other companies and academics. One of these academic parties is Padjadjaran University through the Center for CSR, Social Entrepreneurship, and Community Empowerment Studies. The assessment and evaluation carried out are through studies of Social Return on Investment (SROI) and Community Satisfaction Index (IKM).

The evaluation or assessment can positively or negatively impact the Post-Mining Environmental Management Program implemented by PT Gag Nickel. Through these activities, society and companies can improve

quality together, namely by becoming more self-aware and aware. They can always dedicate necessary improvements to the company's commitment to developing and empowering the community around Gag Island. Community interaction with academics through program studies in the form of SROI and IKM reports can provide researchers, the community, and companies with a complete picture of program implementation.

CSR and community development activities can elaborate on the company's interests and stakeholders, which focus on achieving results or output, precisely independence (Suharto, 2010). In this case, academics are essential for society, considering that academics are parties with the knowledge and skills related to cultural approaches. This knowledge and skills can benefit society by developing character and mindsets closely related to implementing community empowerment activities. This knowledge and skills also benefit academics and they can be readily accepted as part of society. Conducting assessments and evaluations and increasing community capacity by academics can enable communities to achieve independence in terms of mindset.

In this way, the community realizes that the enthusiasm, motivation, and assessment provided by external parties can be an opportunity for them to increase their confidence and participation as well as improve their performance and capacity in carrying out community empowerment activities, in this case, the company's CSR program. The community indeed believes this is a blessing that can build their character in cooperation and cooperation between communities.

5. CONCLUSION

The enthusiasm of the community to be involved in the CSR program carried out by the company shows that community empowerment activities through the implementation of CSR to create independence can give rise to the

characteristics of a community that has the desire, determination, consistency, and confidence in exploring their potential, protecting the available natural resources, rising from adversity, appreciating social changes in society, making plans, and discussing and negotiating. However, this independence must be maintained and appropriately expanded evenly by companies implementing CSR programs oriented towards independence and community welfare. There are essential things that companies need to pay attention to in

implementing CSR to create independence, namely through providing knowledge, increasing community capacity and trust, and strengthening community participation based on integrity, consistency, loyalty, and openness, as well as collaborating with the merger of interests between companies. Itself and stakeholders that are involved. This is intended and the company's CSR program can have an impact and benefit the community, not only for the people of Gag Island but also for the people living on the surrounding islands.

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