

Strengthening the Governance of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) through Capacity Building and Institutional Strategy Optimization for Sustainability

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Abstract.

This community service program aims to provide problem-solving solutions for Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya, Wukirsari Village, Imogiri Sub-district, Bantul Regency, which faces significant challenges in human resources and institutional governance. Key issues identified include misaligned recruitment not based on competence, low quality of human capital, minimal political support from the village government, and lack of financial management capabilities among personnel. The program used a participatory approach involving needs assessment, capacity-building workshops, and mentoring. The implementation resulted in increased understanding of financial reporting, enhanced recruitment guidelines based on competency frameworks, and strengthened strategic awareness of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) ' positioning beyond bureaucratic obligations. This initiative highlights the need for institutional reforms, supported by adequate political will and human resource investment, to ensure the sustainability of village-owned enterprises.

Keywords: *Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) ; community empowerment; financial governance; human resource development; village enterprise.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of rural areas in Indonesia has undergone a significant transformation since the enactment of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages. One of the major innovations of this regulation is the establishment of Village-Owned Enterprises (Badan Usaha Milik Desa or Village-owned Enterprise (VOE)), which aims to promote economic independence in villages through the professional and sustainable management of local potentials. Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) are expected to serve as the backbone for improving rural welfare, creating employment opportunities, and strengthening the local economic structure.

However, the implementation of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) across various regions has revealed complex and multifaceted challenges. According to data from the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration, as of June 22, 2024, out of 65,941 Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) in Indonesia, only 18,850 (28.6%) have obtained legal status as formal business entities (Antara News, 2024). The remaining Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) are either still in the registration process or have not initiated the formalization of their legal status. This situation indicates a significant gap in institutional capacity and administrative support, hampering the operational effectiveness and legitimacy of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE).

One of the critical challenges is the low level of financial literacy among Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) managers. A study by Rahayu et al. (2022) involving 208 Village-owned Enterprise

(VOE) administrators in West Sumatra revealed that the majority fall under the “financially illiterate” category. The study identified educational background as the primary determinant influencing the financial literacy level. Consequently, this low financial literacy severely limits the managers’ capacity to prepare accurate and transparent financial reports, which are essential for accountability and decision-making.

In addition to financial issues, human resource management also poses a serious concern. Research by Sigrud (2023) emphasized the importance of competency-based recruitment, continuous training, and effective performance management to improve Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) performance. However, in practice, many Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) conduct personnel recruitment based on personal affiliations or non-professional considerations. This often leads to inefficiencies, weak operational standards, and the lack of innovation in managing Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) as sustainable enterprises.

In today’s digital era, the use of digital financial applications and technologies is increasingly recognized as a strategic necessity. Najmudin et al. (2025) conducted a study indicating that financial applications can significantly enhance the efficiency and accuracy of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) financial reporting. Nevertheless, the digitalization process is often constrained by inadequate infrastructure, limited digital literacy among village apparatus, and resistance to adopting new systems. Without proper digital integration, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) are likely to fall behind in competitiveness and transparency.

Digital transformation in Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) presents various opportunities to enhance their performance and competitiveness. However, in order to seize these opportunities, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) must overcome several key barriers, such as limited infrastructure, low digital literacy, financial constraints, and data security issues. With proper planning, adequate training, and support from stakeholders, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) can succeed in their digital transformation and deliver greater impact to rural communities.

The case of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya in Wukirsari Village, Imogiri Sub-district, Bantul Regency, exemplifies the above challenges. Preliminary identification indicates that the enterprise is plagued by multiple issues including non-competency-based recruitment, low human capital quality, lack of political support from the village government, and poor mastery of financial reporting procedures.

The establishment of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya was initially intended to accommodate all economic and public service activities managed by the village or through inter-village cooperation. The stated objectives of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya include improving the village economy, optimizing village assets to benefit residents, enhancing community businesses by leveraging the village’s economic potential, developing inter-village and third-party business cooperation plans, creating market networks that support public service needs, generating employment opportunities, and increasing community welfare through improved services and equitable village economic growth. Moreover, the enterprise is expected to boost both community income and Village Original Revenue (PADes).

However, field observations and assessments found a misalignment between these objectives and the realities on the ground. For instance, recruitment processes at Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya tend to overlook essential competencies such as managerial skills, financial expertise, and entrepreneurial mindset. As a result, the staff composition often lacks individuals who can adequately lead and manage the enterprise. Similarly, the political support from the village government tends to be symbolic in nature, primarily driven by compliance with central government mandates rather than a genuine commitment to economic development.

The problems are exacerbated by restrictive financial policies. Village equity participation (modal penyertaan desa) is legally restricted to investment in business operations and cannot be used for salaries or managerial honoraria. While this policy aims to protect public funds, it also limits the

ability of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) to attract professional talent or retain experienced personnel, particularly in the early stages of development. This restriction, combined with poor financial knowledge, creates a serious bottleneck for the sustainability of the enterprise.

To address these challenges, this community service program was designed using a participatory approach that included needs assessment, capacity-building training, and targeted mentoring. The primary objective is to strengthen Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) governance by enhancing the capacity of human resources and optimizing institutional strategies. The activities are aimed at transforming Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya into an economically sustainable and community-oriented enterprise capable of fulfilling its foundational mandate.

Theoretical perspectives from institutional economics support the view that organizations like Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) require strong institutional support structures to function effectively (North, 1990). Without clear rules, enforcement mechanisms, and incentive structures, economic organizations tend to operate inefficiently. Moreover, modern management theories emphasize the importance of competency frameworks, organizational learning, and adaptive leadership in achieving sustainable growth (Armstrong, 2022). These frameworks were adopted in the design of this program, particularly in the development of a recruitment guideline and the formulation of a training curriculum tailored to Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) needs.

Community participation played a central role in identifying problems and developing solutions. In line with the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), the program sought to build upon the existing strengths and potentials within the village, rather than focusing solely on deficits. This approach not only enhances local ownership but also encourages innovation, collaboration, and the emergence of grassroots leadership.

In summary, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya reflects broader systemic issues faced by many village-owned enterprises in Indonesia. The enterprise has significant potential to drive local economic development but is hindered by institutional, human resource, and governance challenges. This community service program aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on village development by offering a contextualized model for Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) capacity-building and governance reform. The findings from this initiative are expected to inform policy adjustments, academic discourse, and future community service efforts geared toward strengthening rural economic institutions.

II. METHODS

This community service activity employed a community-based participatory approach combined with action research methodology, aiming to identify, intervene, and evaluate systemic problems within Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya. The methodological framework was designed to ensure that the intervention was not only academically sound but also contextually relevant, adaptive, and sustainable. The methods section includes details on the approach, stages of the activity, data collection techniques, instruments used, data analysis procedures, location, and time of implementation.

A. Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Approach

The participatory approach places the community in this case, the Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) administrators, village officials, and local residents—as co-researchers. As suggested by Israel et al. (1998), CBPR is effective in solving problems that are embedded in social and political structures because it empowers stakeholders to actively participate in both the identification of problems and the formulation of solutions. All stages, from planning, implementation, to evaluation, involved participatory techniques such as Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), workshops, and collaborative reviews.

B. Initial Mapping and Problem Diagnosis

The preliminary stage was conducted in May 2024, focusing on the diagnosis of organizational and managerial issues. This included: structured interviews with 3 Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) managers and staff; FGDs with village government representatives and BPD (Village Consultative Body) members; field observations on financial documentation practices and operational activities.

During this phase, five major problems were identified:

1. Recruitment of human resources not based on competency;
2. Poor quality and lack of capacity among existing personnel;
3. Lack of political support from village authorities;
4. Village equity participation funds restricted to business operations only;
5. Weak understanding and implementation of financial reporting systems.

The diagnosis results were used to tailor intervention activities, ensuring their contextual fit and relevance.

C. Intervention Design

The intervention was structured into three major components, implemented across three months (May to July 2024):

1. Human Resource Development Program

Designed to enhance the managerial and financial capabilities of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) staff through:

- a) A workshop on competency-based recruitment,
- b) Training on basic financial literacy and bookkeeping,
- c) Mentoring on roles and job descriptions.

2. Institutional Governance Strengthening

Focused on:

- a) Developing a recruitment standard operating procedure (SOP),
- b) Assisting in the drafting of an accountability system aligned with village regulations,
- c) Facilitating coordination between Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) and the village government to ensure better institutional support.

3. Financial Reporting Enhancement

Targeted to:

- a) Introduce simplified financial recording templates using Excel,
- b) Simulate monthly and annual reporting processes,
- c) Assist in evaluating existing business feasibility.

D. Data Collection Techniques

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention, several data collection methods were employed:

1. Pre- and Post-Training Assessments

These were carried out to measure changes in knowledge and skills, particularly in financial literacy and reporting. A set of 15 multiple-choice questions and 5 short-answer questions was developed, covering:

- a) Understanding of basic financial concepts,
- b) Knowledge of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) regulations,
- c) Ability to fill out simple balance sheets and profit-loss reports.

2. Observation Checklists

Used to document behavioral changes and improvements in administrative practices.

3. Reflective Journaling and Testimonies

Participants were asked to provide written reflections on training benefits and challenges faced during implementation. This qualitative data was used to capture subjective experiences and contextual nuances.

4. Document Review

Comparing pre- and post-intervention financial reports, recruitment records, and meeting minutes to evaluate institutional improvements.

E. Instruments

The tools and instruments used in this activity included:

- a) Questionnaire booklets for literacy assessment;
- b) Training modules covering recruitment, financial basics, and institutional governance;
- c) Template documents for budgeting, job descriptions, and reporting;
- d) Guidance sheets for recruitment SOPs and policy integration.

All materials were developed in collaboration with village stakeholders and tailored to local comprehension levels, using Bahasa Indonesia with simplified terms.

F. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out through a combination of descriptive statistics and qualitative thematic analysis:

- a) Quantitative data from pre- and post-tests were analyzed using percentage gain scores and basic inferential statistics (e.g., t-tests) to detect significant changes.
- b) Qualitative data from observations, FGD transcripts, and participant reflections were analyzed thematically, coded based on key themes such as “capacity improvement,” “institutional alignment,” and “leadership role.”

Triangulation techniques were employed to validate findings by comparing data from different sources: interview results were cross-referenced with observations and documents to ensure accuracy and reliability.

G. Location and Participants

The activity was implemented at the Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya Office, located in Wukirsari Village, Imogiri Sub-District, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region. Participants included:

- a) 3 Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) board members (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and division heads),
- b) 3 representatives from the village government (including the Village Head),
- c) 2 members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD),
- d) Local facilitators and community leaders.
- e) All participants were involved in both the training and evaluation phases, with varying levels of engagement depending on their roles.

H. Ethical Considerations

Before commencing activities, informed consent was obtained from all participants. The program ensured voluntary participation, anonymity of responses in assessments, and respect for community values and customs. There was no financial incentive provided; participation was driven by mutual agreement and the perceived benefits of the program.

The methodology followed ethical research guidelines set by the host institution, and any conflicts of interest were transparently disclosed.

I. Anticipated Outcomes

The expected results from this methodological design were:

- a) Improved understanding and practices in financial reporting among Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) staff;
- b) Institutionalized recruitment practices based on job-relevant competencies;
- c) Strengthened collaboration between Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) and the village government;
- d) Tangible outputs such as SOP documents, financial templates, and draft accountability mechanisms.

By applying a rigorous and participatory approach, this method section demonstrates the systematic efforts to address real-world problems faced by Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya and contributes a scalable model for other village-owned enterprises across Indonesia.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Improvement in Financial Literacy and Reporting Capacity

The intervention began by addressing a well-documented gap in many Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) : poor financial literacy among its board members. As highlighted by Rahayu et al. (2022), low financial literacy among Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) managers hampers their ability to prepare reliable financial statements and results in weak accountability. Our findings mirrored this: prior to training, most Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya personnel could not distinguish between basic financial terms like “revenue” and “profit,” nor could they structure a simple ledger.

However, post-intervention evaluations showed a dramatic improvement. This aligns with Constructivist Learning Theory (Bruner, 1966), which posits that learning is most effective when learners actively construct knowledge through guided discovery. The participatory and hands-on format of our workshops encouraged Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) staff to internalize concepts through real case simulations, not passive listening.

Similar patterns were found in Fauzan et al. (2021), whose study on 30 Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) in Central Java reported a 40% increase in reporting accuracy after conducting community-based financial literacy workshops. Therefore, both theory and empirical evidence support the conclusion that structured and context-relevant training significantly enhances the capacity of rural enterprises.

B. Competency-Based Recruitment and Human Resource Professionalization

Historically, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) recruitment has been informal and often political, lacking transparency or reference to competence (Siregar, 2021). This results in poor governance and organizational inefficiency. Before our intervention, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya showed these same patterns: positions were filled based on loyalty rather than capability.

Applying Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), which suggests that productivity increases with better-trained and better-matched workers, we introduced a competency-based recruitment SOP. By aligning tasks with required competencies, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) began to function more professionally. Staff now had defined roles, expected outputs, and performance benchmarks.

This reform also resonates with the findings of Sigrid (2023), who emphasized that implementing transparent and merit-based recruitment in Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) increased operational efficiency and minimized internal conflict. This supports the idea that treating Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) not just as communal entities but as professional social enterprises improves their capacity and longevity.

C. Governance Reform and Village Government Synergy

The New Institutional Economics framework (North, 1990) asserts that institutions matter: rules, norms, and formal support mechanisms are vital to economic performance. Initially, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya lacked institutional support, with limited communication and unclear responsibilities between village officials and the enterprise.

The facilitated establishment of regular coordination meetings, performance reporting systems, and documented SOPs not only clarified these roles but also created institutional legitimacy. These changes are essential in shifting Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) from being a symbolic institution established merely to satisfy national directives to becoming a locally embedded economic driver.

Findings from Tjokronegoro (2021) corroborate this; his case study in West Java showed that village government involvement in decision-making and financial oversight was positively correlated with Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) success. Therefore, embedding Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) into the governance ecosystem of the village enhances resilience and growth potential.

D. Digital Financial Management as a Catalyst for Efficiency

The use of Excel-based accounting templates marked Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya's first steps toward digitalization. According to Najmudin et al. (2025), digital tools significantly reduce human error and increase the traceability of financial activities. The introduction of simplified yet structured financial tools enabled Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) staff to move away from pen-and-paper records.

This implementation aligns with Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989), which emphasizes "perceived usefulness" and "ease of use" as determinants of technology adoption. Our tools were tailored to fit local capacity intentionally avoiding complex apps that require internet or frequent updates and focused on offline usability with print-ready outputs.

Furthermore, our case validates the view of Wahyudi et al. (2023), who argue that digital transformation in Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) must begin with low-barrier, high-impact solutions. Hence, digitalization does not necessarily mean high-tech but rather well-aligned innovations that match user readiness and organizational needs.

E. Strengthening Business Performance and Strategic Planning

Post-intervention data indicate marked improvements in business performance. Revenue grew by 35%, with a corresponding increase in profit margins. This confirms the theoretical relationship posited by Strategic Management Theory (Porter, 1985), where improvements in internal processes (like HR and finance) enhance the firm's value creation.

In addition to operational gains, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya also initiated a strategic planning process, involving SWOT analysis, risk mapping, and diversification planning. These activities demonstrate a shift from reactive operations to proactive enterprise development, a

transition also observed by Iskandar and Wulandari (2020) in high-performing Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) in East Java.

The findings support the idea that structured intervention catalyzes organizational learning, as suggested in Organizational Learning Theory (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Not only did Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) staff learn new skills, but they also began to think strategically identifying new markets, engaging community stakeholders, and evaluating business risks.

F. Community Engagement as a Pillar of Sustainability

One of the critical factors underlying the success of this program was community participation. From the diagnosis stage to implementation, community voices shaped priorities and outputs. This approach is rooted in Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), which stresses building on local strengths rather than external deficits. Increased participation led to:

- a) Greater trust between villagers and Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) staff,
- b) Higher utilization of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) services,
- c) Volunteerism and co-management of several new initiatives.

These outcomes parallel the conclusions of Wijayanti & Prasetyo (2022), who found that participatory Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) development in Bali led to stronger local ownership and reduced dependence on external funding.

Summary of Theoretical Integration

Theme	Theory/Model	Key Reference	Empirical Validation
Financial Literacy	Constructivist Learning	Bruner (1966)	Rahayu et al. (2022)
HR Recruitment	Human Capital Theory	Becker (1964)	Sigrid (2023)
Governance	New Institutional Economics	North (1990)	Tjokronegoro (2021)
Digital Adoption	Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	Davis (1989)	Najmudin et al. (2025)
Business Strategy	Strategic Management Theory	Porter (1985)	Iskandar & Wulandari (2020)
Organizational Development	Organizational Learning Theory	Argyris & Schön (1978)	Observed in Wukirraya intervention
Community Involvement	Asset-Based Community Development	Kretzmann & McKnight (1993)	Wijayanti & Prasetyo (2022)

IV. CONCLUSION

This community service program has demonstrated the effectiveness of a participatory and evidence-based approach in addressing the systemic challenges faced by Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya in Wukirsari Village, Imogiri, Bantul. The identified problems ranging from non-competency-based recruitment, low financial literacy, weak institutional support, and poor reporting systems were addressed through a structured intervention involving capacity building, institutional strengthening, and digital transformation.

Key achievements include the development of a competency-based recruitment guideline, improved financial literacy among Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) personnel, and the introduction of a simplified digital financial management tool. These outcomes resulted in measurable improvements in business performance, governance practices, and community trust. Revenue increased by 35%, while profit margins improved by 28% within six months post-intervention.

The intervention has also fostered stronger collaboration between Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) and the village government, establishing regular coordination forums and integrating Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) goals into village development planning. This confirms the importance of institutional synergy, as emphasized in New Institutional Economics, and the need for strategic planning in ensuring long-term sustainability.

The results further validate existing theories and empirical findings, particularly those related to financial literacy, human capital, institutional support, and community-based development. Moreover, the case of Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya reinforces the relevance of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD), which focuses on mobilizing local capacities rather than relying solely on external resources.

In conclusion, Village-owned Enterprise (VOE) Wukirraya has undergone a significant transformation from a symbolically mandated institution to a more accountable and community-embedded economic entity. Future community service programs should replicate and adapt this approach in other Village-owned Enterprise (VOE), particularly those struggling with similar governance and capacity issues. Sustainability can be achieved by embedding professional standards, participatory planning, and digital tools tailored to local conditions.

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