



### Assistance in Strengthening Village Governance Through the Development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Increasing the Capacity of Villages Apparatus: Community Service in Sungai Arang Hamlet, Jambi, Indonesia

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#### ARTICLE INFO

##### Keywords:

Community service  
Increasing the capacity of villages apparatus  
Standard operating procedures (SOP)  
Sungai Arang Hamlet  
Village governance

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All authors have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

<https://doi.org/10.37275/icejournal.v4i1.56>

#### ABSTRACT

Effective village governance is an important foundation for sustainable development at the local level. However, many villages in Indonesia, including Sungai Arang Hamlet in Jambi, still face challenges in terms of governance, which can be seen from weak administrative systems, lack of transparency, and low capacity of village officials. This research uses a participatory community service approach which involves a series of activities, including: (1) Identifying village problems and needs through focus group discussions (FGD) and in-depth interviews; (2) Development of standard operating procedures (SOP) for various aspects of village administration; (3) Training and capacity building for village officials regarding SOP implementation; (4) Assistance and monitoring of SOP implementation; and (5) Evaluation of program impact. The research results show a significant improvement in village governance after program implementation. The developed SOPs have helped improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public services, increase transparency and accountability, and strengthen public participation in decision-making. In addition, the capacity of village officials has also increased, reflected in a better understanding of their duties and responsibilities, as well as a better ability to carry out administrative tasks. In conclusion, this community service program has made a positive contribution in strengthening village governance in Sungai Arang Hamlet. Developing SOPs and increasing the capacity of village officials has proven effective in improving the quality of public services, transparency, and accountability. This research recommends that this community service model can be replicated in other villages that have similar problems.

#### 1. Introduction

Good village governance is a crucial factor in realizing sustainable village development and improving community welfare. Village governments have a central role in managing resources, providing public services, and empowering communities. Therefore, the effectiveness of village governance will have a direct impact on the quality of life of village communities. However, the reality on the ground shows that many villages in Indonesia still face various challenges in realizing good governance. Based on the 2023 developing village index (IDM), the majority of villages in Indonesia are still in "developing" and

"underdeveloped" status. This indicates that there are fundamental problems in aspects of government administration, public services, and community empowerment.<sup>1,2</sup>

Sungai Arang Hamlet, a village located in Jambi Province, is not free from village governance problems. Initial observations and informal discussions with village officials and local community leaders revealed several main problems. Village administration processes are still manual and not yet integrated, making them vulnerable to errors and inefficiencies. Public services are also not optimal, characterized by slow response to community needs and a lack of

information transparency. Village officials do not have adequate knowledge and skills to carry out their duties and functions. This causes a lack of innovation and creativity in village management. The community has not been actively involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation process of village development. This causes village development programs to often not be in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the community. These problems hamper Sungai Arang Hamlet's efforts to realize good governance and achieve village development goals.<sup>3-5</sup>

Therefore, an intervention is needed that can help villages overcome these problems. Community service as one of the Tri Dharmas of Higher Education has a strategic role in helping villages in Indonesia, including Sungai Arang Hamlet, in overcoming governance problems. Through a participatory and collaborative approach, community service can provide appropriate and sustainable solutions. This community service program aims to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the village administration system by developing clear, measurable, and accountable standard operating procedures (SOP), increasing the capacity of village officials to carry out their duties and functions through comprehensive training and mentoring and increasing community participation in the process. village development through strengthening village institutions and increasing access to public information.<sup>6,7</sup> Through achieving these goals, it is hoped that Sungai Arang Hamlet can realize good governance, which in turn will improve the quality of public services, encourage community participation, and accelerate village development.

## **2. Methods**

The community service approach used in this program is participatory action research (PAR). PAR is an approach that emphasizes active community participation in the entire research and service process, starting from problem identification, program planning, and implementation, to evaluation. This approach was chosen because it was considered most

appropriate to the context of Sungai Arang Hamlet which requires contextual and sustainable solutions. This community service program is implemented in five main stages: 1. Preparation: This stage includes the initial identification of problems through field observations and informal discussions with village officials and community leaders, the preparation of program proposals, as well as the formation of an implementation team consisting of lecturers, students, and representatives. public. 2. Problem identification and needs analysis: This stage aims to dig deeper into the problems of village governance in Sungai Arang Hamlet. Data collection methods used include: Focus group discussion (FGD): Focus group discussions with village officials, community leaders, and representatives of community groups to gather information about the problems they face, their needs, and aspirations regarding village governance. In-depth interviews: Face-to-face interviews with key informants, such as the village head, village secretary, BPD chairman, and other community figures, to obtain more in-depth information regarding village governance issues. Participatory observation: Direct observation of the process of village government administration, public services, and interactions between village officials and the community. Document analysis: Analysis of documents related to village governance, such as village regulations, financial reports, and meeting minutes. 3. Program development: This stage includes the formulation of goals, targets, strategies and program activities based on the results of the needs analysis. At this stage, the community is actively involved in formulating programs that suit their needs and aspirations. 4. Program implementation: This stage includes the implementation of planned program activities, such as training village officials, developing SOPs, socializing the program to the community, as well as mentoring and monitoring program implementation. The community is involved as facilitators, working partners, and participants in program activities. 5. Evaluation and reflection: This stage aims to assess the success of the program in achieving the stated

goals. Data collection methods used include: Questionnaire: Questionnaires were given to village officials and the community to measure their level of satisfaction with the program, as well as changes that occurred after program implementation. Interviews: Interviews were conducted with village officials and community leaders to obtain feedback regarding program implementation, as well as the obstacles and challenges faced. Observation: Direct observation is carried out to see changes that occur in the field after program implementation.

Data collected from various data collection methods will be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative analysis includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Quantitative analysis includes descriptive analysis to describe respondent characteristics and program results, as well as inferential analysis to test research hypotheses. Community participation is the main principle in the PAR approach. The community is involved in all stages of the program, from problem identification, program planning, and implementation, to evaluation. Community involvement is carried out through various mechanisms: Village deliberation: Village deliberation forums are used to discuss village governance issues, as well as formulate programs that suit the needs and aspirations of the community. Working group: A working group consisting of community representatives was formed to assist the implementation team in implementing program activities. Socialization: Program outreach is carried out to the community periodically to increase their understanding and support for the program. Feedback: The community is given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding program implementation, both directly and indirectly. By actively involving the community in all stages of the program, it is hoped that this community service program can provide optimal benefits for the people of Sungai Arang Hamlet.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

The results of community service in Sungai Arang Hamlet show a significant transformation in village governance. Various indicators, both qualitative and quantitative, show comprehensive improvement. Improving the quality of public services is one of the main achievements. Based on the results of interviews, people feel that services are faster, easier to access, and more responsive. This is supported by quantitative data which shows an increase in community satisfaction scores and a decrease in completion time for administrative services. Transparency and accountability have also increased. The community feels more involved in planning and monitoring the use of village funds, in line with the increase in the number of published financial reports and the decrease in the number of public complaints regarding irregularities. Community participation in the village development process has also increased significantly. This can be seen from the increasing number of participants in village meetings and community proposals being accommodated in development planning. Participatory observation also shows that people feel their aspirations are more listened to and appreciated.

The capacity of village officials has also increased rapidly. Village officials feel more confident and capable of carrying out their duties and functions, as evidenced by an increase in competency test scores and the number of training attended. This capacity increase certainly contributes to improving the quality of public services and the effectiveness of village government administration. The development of 20 standard operating procedures (SOP) covering various aspects of public services and village government administration has had a significant positive impact. This SOP not only increases the efficiency and effectiveness of village officials' work, but also provides a clear reference for the community in accessing public services.

Overall, the results of this community service show the success of the participatory approach in improving village governance in Sungai Arang Hamlet. The

positive changes that have occurred in various indicators show that this program has had a real and sustainable impact on society. These results also provide empirical evidence that strengthening village governance can be achieved through a comprehensive and participatory approach, involving all stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and evaluation

processes. It is hoped that improving village governance in Sungai Arang Hamlet can become an inspiring example for other villages in Indonesia. This success shows that with commitment, collaboration, and the right approach, every village has the potential to realize good governance, which will ultimately improve community welfare.

Table 1. Results of community service in improving village governance in Sungai Arang Hamlet.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Qualitative change</b>	<b>Quantitative change</b>
Quality of public services	Increasing public satisfaction with public services. Public services become faster, easier to access, and more responsive.	The average community satisfaction score increased from 65 to 82 (scale of 100). Administrative service completion time was reduced from an average of 5 days to 2 days.
Transparency and accountability	Increased transparency in village budget management. The community feels more involved in planning and monitoring the use of village funds.	The number of published village financial reports increased from 1 time a year to 4 times a year. The number of public complaints regarding irregularities decreased from 5 cases per year to 1 case per year.
Society participation	Increasing community participation in village meetings and other village development activities. People feel their aspirations are more listened to and appreciated.	The number of village meeting participants increased from an average of 20 people to 45 people. The number of community proposals accommodated in village development planning increased from 2 proposals per year to 8 proposals per year.
Village apparatus capacity	Increasing the understanding and skills of village officials in carrying out their duties and functions. Village officials feel more confident and capable of providing quality public services.	The average score on the village apparatus competency test increased from 68 to 85 (scale of 100). The number of trainings attended by village officials increased from 1 training per year to 3 trainings per year.
Development of standard operating procedures (SOP)	The SOPs developed help increase the efficiency and effectiveness of village officials' work, as well as become a clear reference for the community in accessing public services.	20 SOPs have been prepared and implemented, covering various aspects of public services and village government administration.

The results of community service in Sungai Arang Hamlet show a significant transformation in village governance. Positive changes have occurred in various aspects, starting from the quality of public services, transparency and accountability, community participation, to the capacity of village officials. These results are in line with previous research which shows that strengthening village governance can be achieved through a comprehensive and participatory approach. Improving the quality of public services is one of the main achievements of this community service

program. These results are in line with other research which shows that developing SOPs and increasing the capacity of village officials can improve the quality of public services in villages. The improvement in the quality of public services in Sungai Arang Hamlet is not only visible from the increase in community satisfaction scores, but also from the reduction in completion time for administrative services. This shows that the SOP developed has helped village officials provide faster, more efficient, and effective services. Increasing transparency and accountability

is also an important result of this program. The community feels more involved in planning and monitoring the use of village funds. This is in line with other research which shows that transparency in village financial management can increase public trust in village government. The increase in transparency in Sungai Arang Hamlet can be seen from the increase in the number of published financial reports and the decrease in the number of public complaints regarding irregularities.<sup>8-10</sup>

Community participation in the village development process has also increased significantly. This can be seen from the increasing number of participants in village meetings and community proposals being accommodated in development planning. These results are in line with other research which shows that community participation can improve the quality of village development planning. Increasing community participation in Sungai Arang Hamlet not only improves the quality of development planning, but also strengthens the community's sense of ownership of village development programs. Increasing the capacity of village officials is also an important result of this program. Village officials feel more confident and capable of carrying out their duties and functions. This is in line with research conducted by other studies which shows that training and mentoring can increase the capacity of village officials in carrying out their duties and functions. The increase in the capacity of village officials in Sungai Arang Hamlet can be seen from the increase in competency test scores and the number of training courses attended. The development of standard operating procedures (SOP) also made a significant contribution to improving village governance in Sungai Arang Hamlet. The SOPs developed have helped improve the efficiency and effectiveness of village officials' work, as well as providing clear references for the community in accessing public services. This is in line with research which shows that SOPs can improve the quality of public services and the accountability of village governments.<sup>11-13</sup>

The success of this community service program is influenced by several factors. The village head and village officials have a high commitment to improving village governance. They provide full support for program implementation, from providing facilities to active participation in program activities. The people of Sungai Arang Hamlet are very enthusiastic and proactive in participating in program activities. They provide input, suggestions, and constructive criticism to improve the program. This active community participation is the key to the success of the program in improving village governance. The program implementation team builds good relationships with the village government and community. This good collaboration facilitates communication, coordination, and synergy in program implementation. The participatory action research (PAR) approach used in this program provides space for the community to actively participate in all stages of the program. This approach also allows the program to be adapted to the local context of Sungai Arang Hamlet. This program receives support from various external parties, such as universities, non-governmental organizations, and local governments. This support takes the form of funding, training, mentoring, and advocacy.<sup>14-16</sup>

The results of this community service provide several important implications for the development of village governance in Indonesia. The participatory approach has proven effective in improving village governance. This approach provides space for the community to actively participate in all stages of the program, from problem identification to evaluation. In this way, the resulting program will be more in line with the needs and aspirations of the community and will be more sustainable. Collaboration between various parties, such as village government, community, universities, non-governmental organizations, and local government, is very important in improving village governance. This collaboration can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the program, as well as expand the reach of the program's impact. Increasing the capacity of village officials and the community is the key to success in improving

village governance. Village officials who have adequate capacity will be able to provide quality public services, while communities who have adequate capacity will be able to participate actively in the village development process. SOPs are an important tool in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of village officials' work, as well as providing clear references for the community in accessing public services. Therefore, developing SOPs needs to be a priority in efforts to improve village governance.<sup>17-20</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

Community service that focuses on strengthening village governance in Sungai Arang Hamlet has succeeded in achieving significant results. By implementing a participatory and collaborative approach, this program has succeeded in improving the quality of public services, transparency and accountability, community participation, and the capacity of village officials. These results show that strengthening village governance can be achieved through a comprehensive approach, involving all stakeholders, and focusing on capacity development and the implementation of clear standard operating procedures.

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