

## REALIZING AN INDEPENDENT VILLAGE: THE ROLE OF LOCAL LEADERS IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING Arwanto Harimas Ginting<sup>\*1</sup> and Dewi Rahmi Wahyuningsih<sup>2</sup>

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**Abstract:** *Development planning is to prepare a development plan that serves as a guide or reference. Regional governments carry out the development based on the capabilities and potential of resources (natural and human) as well as existing economic opportunities. Thus, the development planning can be realized. Local leaders, particularly Village Heads, play a crucial role as they engage directly with the community, possessing authority given by the regent, mayor, or district head. This research used qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach. The results of this research indicate that the role of the Village Head in administering the government of the development planning process in Limpung Village is generally going quite well, although the results have not yet reached optimal outcomes. Optimizing the role of the village head is crucial so that the unexecuted development can be completed in accordance with the plannings and objectives.*

**Keywords:** *Role, Local Leaders, Development Planning.*

**Abstrak:** Perencanaan Pembangunan adalah menyusun suatu rencana pembangunan yang merupakan pegangan atau acuan. Pemerintah daerah melaksanakan pembangunan yang didasarkan pada kemampuan dan potensi sumber daya (alam dan manusia) serta peluang-peluang ekonomi yang ada, sehingga perencanaan pembangunan bisa terealisasi. Pemimpin lokal terutama Kepala Desa memiliki peran sangat penting, yakni sebagai pihak yang langsung turun dan berhubungan langsung dengan masyarakat yang mempunyai kewenangan yang diberikan oleh bupati/walikota/camat. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa secara umum peranan Kepala Desa dalam penyelenggaraan pemerintahan dari proses perencanaan pembangunan di Desa Limpung berjalan cukup baik walaupun hasilnya belum mencapai hasil yang optimal. Optimalisasi peran kepala desa sangat penting agar pembangunan yang belum terlaksana dapat terselesaikan sesuai dengan perencanaan dan tujuannya.

**Kata Kunci:** Peran, Pemimpin Lokal, Perencanaan Pembangunan.

### I. Introduction

Development in Indonesia has undergone changes over time, especially village development (Hidayat, 2024.; Tjahyadi et al., 2019). Village development has shown various progress with the change from building villages to developing villages (Eko et al., 2014;

Suharyani & Tamba, 2020). The paradigm of building villages is a perspective that positions villages as entities built directly by central ministries such as Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Villages and other ministries. Development villages that prioritize community involvement (Fikri et al., 2020; Hakim, 2017) is active in the development process. It starts from planning to accountability reporting (St Sunarto, 2016).

In order to measure the development of progress and village independence in development, the government established the Developing Village Index (IDM) (Muhtarom & Purwanti, 2018). This IDM is the implementation of Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages (2014) with the support of the Village Funds and village assistants (Suswanto et al., 2019). Moreover, this IDM is stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, as well as Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 2016 Article 1 paragraph 8, which is a composite index that includes the Social Resilience Index, Economic Resilience Index and Village Ecological Resilience Index.

Based on the IDM status of villages in Batang Regency, the number has increased and decreased, as shown in the following table:

**Table 1. Village Status as a Result of IDM Updates in 2018 - 2023**

No	Village Status	Total Result (per year)				
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
1	Independent	0	1	0	0	0
2	Advanced	20	32	41	49	63
3	Developing	162	192	190	184	172
4	Backward	56	14	8	6	4
5	Very Backward	1	0	0	0	0

Source: IDM of Batang Regency, 2022

As shown in the table 1, there are 239 villages with different statuses in Batang Regency. Based on the data from 2018 to 2022, there is only 1 village that is categorized as Independent village, namely Subah Village. Meanwhile, the number of villages with Advanced village status in Batang Regency has increased significantly from 2018 to 2022. Later in 2018 and 2019, villages with Developing village status experience an increase, starting from 162 to 192. However, these villages experience a decrease in 2018 up to 2022. The decreasing number

is due to several villages whose status as a Developing village has changed to the status of Advanced village. As for the status of Backward villages, the number has decreased from 2018 up to 2022. Among these villages, there is only 1 Very Backward village status in 2018, which is Posong village.

Since the budget from the central government was issued to the village government, the use of this budget in the development is very beneficial for its sustainability. However, according to the IDM of Batang Regency, observations indicate that certain villages have maintained Advanced status since 2016, yet the allocation for village funds has not been issued. For this reason, the researcher tried to analyze several villages with Advanced status in Batang Regency.

**Table 2. The Village IDM in Batang Regency**

Villages	IDM SCORE 2016	IDM 2016	IDM SCORE 2018	IDM 2018	IDM SCORE 2019	IDM 2019	IDM SCORE 2020	IDM 2020	IDM SCORE 2021	IDM 2021	IDM SCORE 2022	IDM 2022
Bandar	0,7351	Advanced	0,7595	Advanced	0,7948	Advanced	0,7992	Advanced	0,8011	Advanced	0,8011	Maju
Bawang	0,7618	Advanced	0,786	Advanced	0,7413	Advanced	0,7279	Advanced	0,7448	Advanced	0,7524	Maju
Limpung	0,7543	Advanced	0,7406	Advanced	0,7502	Advanced	0,7746	Advanced	0,786	Advanced	0,8141	Maju
Sempu	0,7399	Advanced	0,7252	Advanced	0,7124	Advanced	0,7851	Advanced	0,7851	Advanced	0,7851	Maju
Tersono	0,7340	Advanced	0,7598	Advanced	0,7976	Advanced	0,81	Advanced	0,7865	Advanced	0,7973	Maju

Source: The IDM of Batang Regency, 2022

According to Table 2, among the 239 villages in Batang Regency, the researcher noted that 5 villages acquired the status of Advanced villages from 2016 to 2022, namely Bandar, Bawang, Limpung, Sempu, and Tersono. However, among the five villages with the Advanced village indicator, Limpung Village has the highest IDM. The IDM of Limpung Village from 2016 up to 2018 has decreased insignificantly. During this time period, the IDM of Limpung Village continues to increase and it gets the highest village IDM in 2022, more than the other 4 villages, reaching 0.8141.

**Table 3. IKS, IKE, IKL Limpung Village**

<b>Limpung</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>IKS</b>	0,8873	0,7886	0,8171	0,8571	0,8914	0,9257
<b>IKE</b>	0,7089	0,8333	0,7667	0,8000	0,8000	0,8500
<b>IKL</b>	0,6667	0,6000	0,6667	0,6667	0,6667	0,6667
<b>IDM Score</b>	<b>0,7543</b>	<b>0,7406</b>	<b>0,7502</b>	<b>0,7746</b>	<b>0,7860</b>	<b>0,8141</b>

Source: Processed by the researcher from the IDM of Batang Regency

Based on the table 3, the IDM of each village consists of 3 indicators, namely IKS, IKE, and IKL. The Social Resilience Index (IKS) includes education, health, social capital, and settlements. The value of IKS in Limpung Village from 2018 up to 2022 tends to increase. The Economic Resilience Index (IKE) includes the diversity of community production, access to trade centers and markets, access to logistics, access to banking and credit, and regional openness. The IKE value of Limpung Village starting from 2016 until 2022 varies. However, it achieves the highest IKE value in 2022, compared to the previous year. The Ecology/Environmental Resilience Index (IKL) includes environmental quality, natural disasters, and disaster response. The IKL value of Limpung Village tends to remain unchanged with a decrease only in 2018.

The IDM indicator consists of IKS, IKE and IKL. Limpung Village has a low IKL value among other IDM indicators (IKS and IKE). From the data on the value of IDM, especially IKL, it can be seen that from 2016 up to 2022, it still has the same value, which is 0.6667.

IKL is the value of environmental quality, disaster-prone indicators and disaster response indicators. It is expected that the existence of the IDM data will be an indicator for village heads to formulate development in the village, seeing the same IKL value from 2016 up to 2022. This value shows that IKL has not become one of the development priorities of the elected village heads.

This study aims to find out how the role of local leaders (Avessina, 2016; Hutasoit et al., 2024) in realizing the existing development in Limpung Village and to evaluate the consistency of the IDM indicators, particularly the IKL indicator, on an annual basis. For this reason, the researcher examined the role of local leaders (Carm, 2012) particularly the village

heads who are appointed through direct elections (Alam, 2012) in improving the quality of the Limpung Village development planning.

## **II. Literature Review**

A thinking framework is a general outline that the researcher made. With the existence of thinking framework, it is made to be able to identify important variables in accordance with the research problem and be able to explain the relationship between variables. This study used role theory (Biddle, 1986) that local leaders should behave like behaviours (Fitriyah, 2017). One of the examples is to be able to provide peace in the administration of government, especially in political development (Almond dkk, 1990) for realizing their goals, according to their roles, namely:

1. Expectation. Expectations are a crucial indicator for fulfilling the role in executing current development. Expectations are directed at someone who is able to play a role in behaving appropriately. In the expectations of society itself, it gives expectations to someone as a role holder.
2. Norm. Norms are a form of expectation. The types of expectations according to Secord & Backman are as follows:
  - a) Anticipatory expectations are expectations about a behaviour that will occur
  - b) Normative expectations (prescribed role expectation) refer to responsibilities associated with a certain role (Awang, 2004). Normative expectations are divided into two types. Firstly, covert expectations are expectations that exist without having to be spoken. For example, doctors must heal their patients, teachers must educate their students. These expectations are the so-called norm. Overt expectations are the expectations that are spoken. For example, fathers ask their children to be responsible and diligent in learning. These expectations are called role demand.
3. Performances. Performances are forms of behaviour in certain roles. The role is realizing in real behaviour, not just expectations. There is evidence of an action in accordance with what is expected.
4. Evaluation and Sanction. Role assessment involves forming positive or negative impression based on societal expectations of the particular role. Meanwhile, Sanctions

are people' attempts to uphold a positive value or to alter the expression of a role such that what was once deemed negative is changed into positive.

### **III. Research Methodologies**

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach (Bhairawa et al., 2022). Qualitative research (Leeming, 2018) produces results that are descriptive in nature, including written words, behaviours, or remarks from individuals associated with the subject of study. The approach taken by the researcher in writing this study is qualitative descriptive by finding and collecting, analyzing, as well as interpreting data visually and narratively in a comprehensive manner in order to obtain a phenomenon or problem that attracts attention (Cresswell et al., 2019; Harahap, 2020). The data collection technique used interviews, documentation and observation. Interviews were conducted with village heads, village officials and village communities involved in development planning and implementation (Majunya Desa Wujud Keberhasilan Pembangunan, n.d.). In carrying out qualitative data analysis, it involves several steps, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation and drawing of previous conclusions to ensure validity with triangulation (Rahardjo, 2010).

### **IV. Result and Discussion**

This study observed the role of local leaders in Limpung Village. Local leaders in the implementation of development have a role as development agents. Local leaders can generally be categorized into formal local leaders and informal local leaders. Formal local leaders are village heads and BPD chairmen while informal local leaders are traditional leaders, community leaders and other local elites. The local leader intended in this study is the village head. Meanwhile, the intended role is the social relationship between a local leader, namely the village head, and their communities in achieving development goals.

The village head has the authority to regulate the implementation of village governance in alignment with his visions and missions for advancing development within the village. The head of Limpung village has duties and responsibilities as a driving force in creating the development that has been planned in the musrenbang and also in accordance with his visions and missions. The IDM Limpung Village itself has the status of Advanced village. Thus, the status of this indicator is high. The value of IDM Limpung Village also increases every year.

This increase means that the implementation of development in Limpung Village is going well. According to the IDM, there exists only one indicator, the IKL, which maintains an unchanged value of 0.667 every year. Certainly, the village head's role is essential in the implementation of government initiatives inside the village, particularly with issues that affect development. There are two choices to be made. The first one relates to the village head's involvement in village development planning, while the second one concerns the village head's role in implementing development and supporting empowerment.

### ***The Role of the Village Head in the Village Development Planning***

In order to realize the village development program, it goes through several stages. The stages start with compiling and determining what programs will be carried out and what efforts are made to overcome existing problems. Development planning in the village begins with the preparation of the Village Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMDes) prepared for the next six years. Meanwhile, the Village Government Work Plan (RKPDDes) is prepared for a period of 1 year. Each preparation of the RPJMDes and RKPDDes is carried out by a community discussion first, followed by a development planning meeting at the village level. The discussions are always attended by the Village Head, BPD and the community. This village development planning discussion is carried out so that in the planning and implementation of development. All elements of the village government are involved in the discussions so that there is no misunderstanding in the development goals.

The foundation of this study is employed Biddle and Thomas theories. Thus, there are several terms about behaviours caused by roles.

#### **a) Expectation**

Expectations are a crucial indicator for fulfilling the role in executing current development. Expectations are directed at someone who is able to play a role in behaving appropriately. The community's own expectations for the village head as one of the local leaders who play a role in the development. Moreover, the community expects the village head will handle existing development problems such as repairing damaged roads, building waterways to prevent flooding, opening jobs and building other infrastructures. The Head of Limpung Village also expects the community can convey their aspirations to build village development. Especially in the development planning, there is an expectation that issues within

the village's governance in the community can be fully resolved. Therefore, this development planning determines the implementation of development in the village.

b) Norms

The presence of norms in governmental implementation, particularly in realizing village development, creates control over the conduct of local leaders in fulfilling their roles. Compliance with norms issued by the government, local governments to the village government itself, and even unwritten norms are the keeper in every behavior of local leaders in carrying out their duties and functions.

The norms that apply start from Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs, Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, Transmigration Number 6 of 2023 concerning Amendments to the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, Transmigration Number 21 of 2020 concerning General Guidelines for Village Development and Empowerment of Village Communities, Regional Regulations, as well as Village Head Decree Number 141.1/06/2021 of 2021 concerning the Establishment of Implementers of Financial Assistance Activities, until the Village Government for the Improvement of Rural Infrastructure Facilities in 2021, Village Regulation Number 16 of 2020 concerning the Work Plan of the Donorejo Village Government, Limpung District in 2021 and other regulations. These regulations are legal norms that are used as guidelines in the implementation of development, especially in maintaining the quality of planning.

In addition, there are customary norms and religious norms in maintaining the behavior of local leaders to be able to think more appropriately to harmonize development planning in Limpung Village.

The presence of legal, customary, and religious norms has increased expectations regarding the role of a village head, who is given the authority to create village development planning, as these indicators serve as a foundation for evaluating the values and norms of the village head as a leader. This norm is a form of expectation. Predictive expectations are behaviors anticipated to occur, while normative expectations refer to the imperatives associated with a given role.

Expectations to predict upcoming behavior, such as those held by the head of Limpung village, instill a sense of hope among the villagers to enhance the community's economy and



transform the village into an independent prosperous village. Obviously, this hope can be realized if the village head and the community help each other and participate as well as work together in the village development.

Afterwards, expectations are necessary in a role. The expectations here are divided into two, namely hidden expectations and transparency expectations. Hidden expectations are expectations that exist but are not spoken. Such as the expectations given to the village head by the community to improve development such as roads and bridges that are no longer feasible. Meanwhile, the expectations of transparency are the expectation that are spoken. For example, the community conveyed the aspirations during the implementation of the village discussions led by the village head and BPD.

c) Forms of Behavior

In Thomas and Biddle theory, the third dimension is performance or a form of behavior. This indicator, associated with the status of the village head's contributions to development—both in planning and funding—serves as a basis for evaluating the correlation between development planning and its actual implementation in Limpung Village.

The behavior of the village head as a protector in the midst of the community increases the achievements realized by the village head as a local leader of the village, namely: (1) the health sector: counseling on polio pins, counseling on stunting problems so that no one in Limpung Village experiences stunting, spraying fogging in the village environment, (2) facilities and infrastructure: providing toilet assistance for people who do not have them and providing places to sell for street vendors, and (3) the economic sector: such as creating jobs for the community whereas in the implementation of village development, the village government takes the local community as its workers.

d) Evaluation and Sanction

In Biddle & Thomas' theory, the fourth dimension is evaluation. The role assessment is carried out by giving a positive or negative impression to the Village Head based on the community's expectations for the intended role of the Village Head. The assessment is carried out in order to find out whether the village head has been maximized or not in carrying out his role. If the results of the assessment produce a negative impression, sanctions will be given afterwards. In Limpung Village itself, the Village Head in terms of development planning has been quite good, judging from the role of the village head which is running well even though

there are still obstacles. For example, there is still a lack of control for street vendors who sell carelessly around the Limpung city square even though a food court has been built as a place to sell, thus damaging the meaning of the green open space of a square. However, this obstacle is also due to the lack of socialization from the village head about the construction of food courts and the lack of compliance from the community.

### ***Supporting and Inhibiting Factors***

The supporting factors for the success of development planning in Limpung Village are the realization of the management of funds from the village for the success of building effective development in the Limpung Village community. Environmental and economic development, as well as government support in the form of legislation, are being implemented to achieve the APBD in order to produce focused development and community benefits. These supporting factors are divided into two, namely:

- a) Internal factors are factors that exist from within an organization. Internal factors can have an impact on development planning to the implementation of development. Human resources (HR) are an internal factor that is very influential in the preparation of development planning in villages. Moreover, the village officials' human resources are good at their jobs, they have been able to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to help with task execution, allowing them to speed up work and make it more efficient. Afterwards, another internal factor is the human resource factor that is able to support performance, for example the Village Head when planning development by participating in budget management and directly reviewing the implementation of development. The village government also always holds an evaluation once a week to evaluate the problems faced by the village government. The purpose is to discuss development planning and the progress of ongoing development.
- a) External factors are derived from the encouragement of village community contributions. several forms of contribution from the people of Kedawung Village are by channeling aspirations at each stage of planning. During the community discussions of the village development planning, the community was active in channeling their aspirations, as evidenced by the community expressing their opinions about the

community's needs in various sectors, including education, economy, and health, all of which have an impact on the community's progress and welfare.

The inhibiting factor is from the development planning itself, including the qualifications of human resources in terms of competence, skills and initiatives described from the performance of the human resources themselves. Knowledge and ability to operate the use of ICT are still not enough to produce quality planning. There is still a shortage of quality human resources to formulate existing plans in Limpung Village to influence the development planning that will be implemented. Therefore, improving the qualifications of human resources in government officials is urgently needed so that the village can improve skills in each field in line with the cluster of knowledge that is relevant to various kinds of jobs in the village.

Based on an interview with the Head of Limpung Village, in addition, the problem also lies in the budget for the disbursement of village funds which is carried out in three stages. The phase I is the 20% disbursement of funds as soon as January and no later than the third week of June. The phase II is 40% disbursement as soon as March and no later than the fourth week of June. Lastly, the phase III is 40% disbursement as soon as July. For this reason, in the implementation of development in the current year, problems will be faced, namely at the beginning of the disbursement of only 20% of the total budget obtained. The impact of the staged funds disbursement system is that development implementation has been delayed; for example, infrastructure or road repairs will be postponed while waiting for funds to be disbursed.

According to an interview with a Limpung Village resident, another issue is the change in function of the Limpung city square, which is now used to sell street vendors, so the square's meaning as a green open space no longer exists because it is filled with people selling. On the other hand, one of the indicators that affects IDM is IKL. IKL is an indicator of environmental resilience, in which the environment of Limpung Village, where there are still street vendors filling the Limpung square, and the existence of the market obviously makes the volume of waste in the village is increasing. The large volume of waste and the absence of waste management sites in Limpung Village certainly affects IKL. Therefore, the IKL in Limpung village has a fixed value every year. For this reason, it is necessary for the role of the Village Head to overcome this problem. In the future, it is expected that the program from the Village Head can increase the value of the IKL.

### ***The Efforts Made to Overcome the Obstacles***

The Village Head's efforts to address the inhibiting factors to development implementation in Limpung Village are related to a lack of human resource qualifications. Efforts to solve this problem must involve the regeneration of current human resources. In order to produce competent human resources of high quality, objective recruiting and selection are required, which are carried out using a variety of tests that may assess their competences and skills.

Furthermore, efforts might be made to limit development-related budget disbursement delays. The problem depends on the ability of the village head who should be able to synergize with the treasurer so that he can manage finances. In addition, the village head can find additional funds for the implementation of development by increasing budget income from Regional Original Revenue, Financial Assistance Funds or can build BUMDes and village cooperatives.

The implementation of development such as building irrigation canals, roads, food courts and other places also utilizes Human Resources (HR) from the local community in order to help the economy of the local community as well. By utilizing human resources, village communities can reduce unemployment and increase the income of unemployed village communities. In addition, to overcome the problem of street vendors in Limpung Square, a food court has been created so that only socialization and new entertainment venues such as playgrounds are needed so that street vendors are also willing to move to a new place that has been provided. The establishment of strict village regulations, as well as sanctions for street vendors who sell arbitrarily, is also required to prevent street vendors from doing it and to order the village's governance. Afterwards, for the waste problem, the effort itself is to be able to make a waste management site. Following that, recyclable waste such as plastics, bottles and other inorganic materials can be used as crafts and organic waste can be used as fertilizer.

### **V. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the discussion about the Role of the Village Head in Improving the Quality of Village Development Planning in Limpung Village, the researcher can draw a conclusion that the Development in Limpung Village has been planned in advance, but it is not fully in accordance with the needs of the community. Regarding public service programs and

basic service programs, they still follow the general provisions that have been outlined from the supra-village government. Development planning is carried out through community discussions, which are still a routine by presenting the Village Head, Village Officials, BPD, and representatives from the community. Development planning is carried out transparently starting from planning to the implementation of the development. The factors that support the role of the Village Head in planning to improve the quality of village development consist of internal and external factors. The internal factor is like the performance of the village head and village officials who are able to work by utilizing ICT. Meanwhile, the external factor of the supporting factor itself is the contribution of the village community in channeling village development aspirations. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factor of the role of the Village Head is the lack of quality of human resources in Limpung Village to affect the development planning that will be implemented as well as obstacles in the disbursement of the village funds, which is obtained gradually. Moreover, there is also a lack of socialization to the community about the function of the square, which is used as a trade so that the meaning of the square no longer exists. Efforts are made to solve the problems related to the village head's role in development planning, namely by regenerating human resources with recruitment and selection objectively based on a series of tests that are able to measure the abilities, competencies and skills of the prospective employees. For IKL problems, it could be solved by efforts to build food courts. Meanwhile, in the waste problem, waste management sites can be built so that the waste can be useful. In addition, one of the other efforts is to increase community involvement to participating in development planning by socializing the importance of development planning to determine the success of the goals of village development.

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