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RatnaAyu Damayanti & Syarifuddin Syarifuddin

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# The inclusiveness of community participation in village development planning in Indonesia

RatnaAyu Damayanti and Syarifuddin Syarifuddin

## ABSTRACT

This article aims to reveal the inclusiveness of community participation in village development planning in Indonesia. Using participatory rural appraisal, the study found that development planning deliberation forums have yet to involve the community inclusively in village planning. The community is only represented by village leaders who are generally closely aligned with the government. Moreover, participatory planning does not involve the community continuously in the development process. Therefore, rural development processes in Indonesia do not yet translate and address community needs.

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## Introduction

Over the past few decades, “community participation” has been at the core of development initiatives in almost every country and has become a prominent concept in shaping sustainable development (Swapan 2014). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, many countries carried out reforms by decentralising authority to local governments to form participatory planning institutions in the regions. These institutions directly involve the community in various aspects of government development, including identifying policy issues, selecting projects, and in some cases making budgets and participating in providing public services (Fung 2006; Sheely 2015).

Such is the case in Indonesia, which reformed its government system in the late 1990s, decentralising authority to regional governments to create good governance by involving the community in development planning. This was a critique of the approach used in the previous government system, which involved a “top-down” and authoritarian approach. Community involvement becomes essential to encourage growth in the economy and modern life, especially when economic conditions are declining (Sheely 2015).

However, almost 30 years after the reform of the government system in Indonesia, the implementation of community participation in planning has not been encouraging (Kumorotomo 2005). The old paradigm of the top-down approach still dominates every level of planning in government. This supports Davies’s (2001) view that the axiomatic desire for participation in planning development in developing countries is still shallow. Although participation in planning is increasingly being recognised as a more consensual decision-making system, this participation has yet to demonstrate a “revolution in its implementation” (Davies 2001, 194).

In 2014, Indonesia declared Law No. 6 on Villages, which gave villages the right of autonomy in implementing their government system. This law aims to empower village communities to increase their participation in village planning and development. It is consistent with the concept that emphasises the importance of community-based development, which is bottom-up and uses a local approach, and that integrates with local culture and includes the participation of local communities rather than imposing a model of development from outside (Roberts 2004).

Many development practitioners utilise information mobilisation to encourage public participation in policymaking processes in order to reduce the dominance of political elites (Mansuri and Rao 2012). However, according to Sheely (2015), there is still limited research showing the effectiveness of mobilisation campaigns. Therefore, this article aims to reveal the effectiveness of community participation mobilisation in order to encourage the inclusion of rural communities who have been alienated in development planning. It uses participatory rural appraisal (PRA) as this method gives space to the community to express their views on the concept of participation that exists today after the implementation of the village law.

The article aims to link the practice of planning to the issues faced after the mobilisation of community participation by the government through the law. Given the low level of community participation in developing countries, efforts were made to identify community perceptions about the reality of planning practices in the context of village-level governance in Indonesia. In-depth interviews with villagers show the reality of village community participation after the implementation of new rules and, therefore, whether these rules affected informants' behaviour and participatory actions. Participation in planning is always seen as a problematic meeting between the communities and planning practitioners.

The research groups the issues into inputs, processes, and outputs of community involvement in planning, and concludes by discussing comparative reflections between communities. This highlights the level of synchronisation between stakeholders to achieve effective and efficient planning results. The discussion also revives the debate on community participation in practice and establishes the importance of higher institutional sensitivity to the participation of communities.

### **Overview of participation in development planning in Indonesia**

The process of cultivating development plans in Indonesia follows the prevailing democratic political system. This system is the basis of all government activities, including development planning activities, which always involve stakeholders such as government, society, and the private sector. This engagement is a form of community participation approach in public policy formulation.

In Indonesia, Law No. 25 of 2004 on the National Development Planning System governs the planning systems. This law outlines that the preparation of development plans, both at the central and regional levels, is carried out through a forum mechanism called the development planning deliberations (known in Indonesia as *Musrenbang*). This *Musrenbang* forum produces development planning documents in the form of long- and medium-term development plans, as well as annual plans implemented by the State and community organisers. This plan is then incorporated into the annual government budget, both in the regional government budget and the central government budget.

Indonesia widely implemented development planning deliberations in the mid-1980s, which use a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. The development planning process, according to the law, has five levels that begin with: (1) village development meetings; (2) discussion of regional development work units at the sub-district level; (3) development coordination meetings at the district/city level; (4) development coordination meetings at the provincial level and regional development consultations; and finally (5) national development consultation. This deliberation forum is held annually in a participatory manner by stakeholders to agree on annual activity plans as outlined in the current budget, according to their level. The aim is to accommodate and determine priority activities according to the needs of the community, which are based on planning deliberations, and determine the funding through government budgets and other funding sources.

Village development planning meetings are held every January, where each village is mandated to draw up an annual Village Government Work Plan planning document regarding the five-year Medium-Term Village Development Plan. The village plan contains a draft of the village economic framework, taking into account updated funding frameworks, village development priority

programmes, work plans and funding, and advanced forecasts, both implemented directly by the village government and carried out by encouraging community participation.

However, problems arise because the development planning process in Indonesia is not working as it should be. Community participation in policy should not lie only at the level of planning but must be done at the implementation and even evaluation stages. However, community participation only reaches the planning stage. Moreover, community involvement at the planning stage is only symbolic to legitimise policy, and the process is a formality (Kumorotomo 2005). This happens because the deliberation forum emphasises the interests of individuals or groups, which results in the planning process being biased as what is decided by the policymaker differs from what the community wants (Irvin and Stansbury 2004). The consequences after decades are people being frustrated and apathetic towards development planning by the community (Kumorotomo 2005).

Meanwhile, the socialisation mechanism of development planning undertaken by executives does not help because the process of implementing the deliberation forum still relies on a structural approach that is not based on community needs. This is detrimental to society as it causes people to have difficulty accessing public budgets or exercising control over budget implementation (Bang and Esmark 2009). The public does not know the ins and outs of the preparation clearly, starting from the stages of budget planning, approval, budget execution, to the accountability of the budget. As a result, the implementation and evaluation stages of government activities do not involve the community.

In Law No. 6 of 2014, the ideal concept is alternative development that emphasises the importance of community-based development with a locality approach, in this case village communities. Therefore, it is important to ascertain whether the ideal concept compared to reality is merely a repetition of the past, if the village discussion involved all elements of the community, and if village discussions have elements of inclusivity.

## **Participation and inclusiveness in development planning**

Citizen participation in development planning is a new governance model that unites many stakeholders with public institutions. The aim is to involve them in decision-making planning, according to the literature of the modern public administration environment (Fung 2006; Ansell and Gash 2008). Experts have highlighted that the potential to include public participation combined with well-developed public institutions, aims to overcome democratic deficits by creating inclusive and egalitarian decision-making processes in government (Denhardt and Denhardt 2015).

Inclusiveness is openness in the political system and the level of participation, which is a major element in achieving equality of participation and direct democracy (Feldman and Khademan 2007). Community inclusiveness is essential, and the success of its implementation depends very much on the role of government and society. Both of these elements must be able to create synergy. Without community involvement, the government cannot achieve optimal development because they will only produce new products that are less meaningful to the community, and are not following community needs (Irvin and Stansbury 2004; Scoones 2007). Without the optimal role of the government, the development will run irregularly and without direction, which in turn leads to new problems. In addition to requiring community involvement, development also requires the right strategy to be more efficient in terms of financing and more effective in terms of results. The choice of development strategy is crucial because it determines the roles of both the government and the community. Thus, both parties can carry out their roles optimally and work together.

Therefore, "inclusiveness" is something important in participation. "Inclusivity" itself, in the definition of participation, is interpreted in a variety of ways by many groups. According to Fredricks and Eccles (2006), there are several definitions of participation, such as participation as part of a joint effort that is carried out hand-in-hand in building a shared future. Participation can also refer to working to achieve a common goal between people with a diverse background in a community, or the same fundamental rights and obligations when contributing to a new future. Participation

does not mean only taking part in the implementation of development planning, but participation is a contribution while upholding human values and ideas regarding social justice. Scoones (2007) argues that participation in development means promoting a harmonised development between human dignity, social justice, and national integrity that will preserve nature as a living environment for generations to come.

Chang (2007) discussed inclusiveness in participation in more detail. According to Chang (2007), participation based on the level of community involvement is categorised in several stages. First, at the mobilisation stage, participation is characterised by the use of outside technology without asking for the community's opinions, while the community is required to implement it. Community involvement or participation in the activity is not voluntary but by being ordered or forced. Thus, the mobilisation stage is not considered participatory, and is even contrary to the principles of the participatory approach. Using mobilisation as an approach, people become merely an object of development.

The second stage is the introduction of participation. This stage has the characteristic of using outside technology without asking for the community's opinions. Community involvement, in this case, is still limited, often as experimental subjects for new technologies. Communities are required to conduct limited trials before deciding whether an activity or technology will be applied more broadly. However, what is assumed as community participation is not entirely accurate, as the activities' design and decisions about the activities or technologies adopted are still determined by outsiders, not by the community itself, and they are almost mere implementers of such activities.

The third stage is community empowerment. This stage is characterised by the introduction of appropriate technology from outside, while the community is encouraged or given the motivation to improve its capabilities. At this stage, community involvement begins to be a significant consideration in the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating programme results. However, because so far the community has rarely been allowed to play an active role, outsiders (programme institutions) still have to motivate the community to take an active role and determine their technology choices or activities.

The next stage is participation at the equality/alignment stage. The main characteristics of participation in this stage include the use of local technology, appropriate technology from the outside, and people able to choose the most suitable technology for themselves. This stage is referred to as the ideal form of participation. Outsiders only become equal partners to the locals, while the community has the will and ability to determine the best way to improve their welfare. Programmes are then planned, implemented, and assessed together with the community. In this regard, through community inclusiveness in the development process, it is possible to realise the hopes of all parties to obtain a sensible development plan at the village level.

However, as documented in the literature, the participatory procedure does not always result in inclusiveness and does not guarantee that all participants contribute in the desired way (Swapan 2014). Inclusiveness has not only procedural dimensions, for example, who is involved, when and how, or how they are invited and chosen to participate, but also substantive dimensions, related to the inclusiveness of the expected results through participatory procedures (Hong 2015). The participation process should adopt a stakeholder engagement strategy, which aims to support the implementation of work programmes that are participatory, inclusive, and transparent (Martin 2012).

## Methodology

Participatory research methods were used in this study, as they allow communities to share, improve, and analyse knowledge, and recognise problems about life and conditions in their area, which are then included in planning and action (Quigley et al. 2016). Participatory methods are challenging as they work through a collaborative and collegial relationship approach (as opposed to a contract or consultative approach). Participation is broadly defined as "an active form of voluntary community involvement and participation, both for internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) reasons in the whole process of the activity" (Garcia and Lescuyer 2008). In the context of this study, the researchers

and community members were partners in the research process, and this relationship continues even in activities outside research projects.

One participatory method used was participatory rural appraisal (PRA). PRA techniques not only show the complexity and sophistication of technical knowledge and social community, as well as practical expertise in managing life; but also uncover unknown community abilities (Garcia and Lescuyer 2008). For example, in PRA, an overview of the diagrams and symbolic representations between informants through various mappings and techniques are inclusive because illiterate people can use them. The effectiveness of location-specific development project strategies based on local knowledge depends on the quality of information and learning feedback. In this regard, PRA continues to find success in the application of methods for monitoring and evaluation of development projects (Garcia and Lescuyer 2008; Jacobs and Wilford 2010). Furthermore, the inclusiveness of this method is reliable due to the involvement of marginalised people in the planning process, such as women and illiterate people (Hong 2015).

### **Data collection: PRA in action**

Data were collected from three villages, one each located in Maros, Gowa, and Luwu districts, with a total of 115 informants. The villages chosen were remote villages far from disturbances in the surrounding area to achieve maximum participation from the village community. Additionally, in remote villages democracy is generally not so well developed, so dominance by the government in development planning meetings is more likely to occur. Selecting three regional governments means that the findings can provide a broader overview of the democratic process of community participation in village development planning meetings.

A researcher and two research assistants, one of whom was female, facilitating the process of collecting data. Although the essence of the participatory method is to allow community members to write up their group discussion findings, this may be improbable due to low literacy rates in the village community. However, achieving full participation is a possibility, as well as obtaining information, because the community is directly involved in PRA, whereas this is less likely when using conventional research techniques (Irvin and Stansbury 2004). PRA is the most appropriate method to use because informants are the best source of information related to their needs for development projects and their social issues.

Data collection was done by having villagers use materials available in their environment such as green twigs, gravel, and yarn as visual aids to draw sketches of their need. Literature states that community sketches have local meanings, beliefs, judgments, and actions (Saldaña 2014). With this research, it was vital to use a sketch interview approach to include the local geographical context because this captured the problems of village development planning deliberations according to the local community's perspectives. When compiling sketches of group interviews, researchers used photographs and descriptions of those photographs. The researcher showed a sketch and then asked questions such as: What are the main problems related to village planning captured in the picture? Can this photo and explanation be used to overcome the problem? Can you think of other ways to overcome this problem? The sketch shows the possibility of the community to decide whether a decision is worth taking.

Sketch interviews consisted of eight to ten similar sketches/photos on each theme, with participants grouped into four focus groups to enable a more meaningful conversation. Interviews lasted between 3–4 hours each. After the focus group sketch interview, the researcher gathered the focus groups together to discuss the community's reaction to the issues presented in the sketch. The purpose of this whole group discussion was to examine the views of village communities in order to uncover the main problems of village development planning deliberations.

The researchers also discussed challenges or successes that can be achieved according to the community. This interview lasted for approximately one hour. Some questions were asked to the whole group, such as: What is your overall impression? Are there any difficulties in the process? Is

there something that makes you feel uncomfortable? Is there something that you enjoy? Do you think we can use a better method to collect data from you about this issue?

The results of the community sketch interview were then noted for later analysis, and to keep track of the community's progress. In this regard, the researchers' inherent bias is controlled through self-awareness, and the researcher provides the opportunity for the public to produce their data under their perceptions.

### **Data analysis**

An ongoing thematic review using qualitative methodology was used to analyse the data (Saldaña 2014). When using continuous reviews, researchers asked the community the type, issue, or conflict they are experiencing, and then gave each a code based on Saldaña's thematic coding method (Saldaña 2014). Researchers first categorised data into small codes before grouping them into larger conceptual ideas. This analysis includes five rounds of coding, categorisation, patterns, and theme development. After completing each round, the research team met to discuss data analysis produced from the round, with a focus on differences in the analysis.

In the first round of analysis, researchers chose transcripts related to the research. In this selection all data are analysed for each idea of the community's role related to village planning issues. The main objective is to uncover problems in village planning through destructive conversations. Therefore, researchers begin by reducing the data into small pieces before assembling these within the theoretical framework used (Saldaña 2014). At the data analysis point, there were 23 larger codes, including poverty, government policy, entrepreneurship, community structure issue, leadership, education, and place in society, family, empowerment, and responsibility. Data were then analysed for the third time using 23 codes, focusing on understanding patterns in the data. This analysis included merging, deleting excessive code, and ensuring no new code appeared. After the analysis above, six codes remained: the central community role; figure problems; limited ability in conducting development planning deliberations; deadlines; achieving a particular party's interest; and a paradigm dominated by the interests of policymakers.

The research team then further analysed the data by looking for patterns to interpret the data code's significance. A pattern, in this case, refers to a recurring or regular occurrence of data (Saldaña 2014). The patterns found to have proportional and similar ideas were grouped. Thus, data analysis was done continuously to create a pattern categorisation until researchers found a final pattern that reflects the theme of the research findings.

We divided the issues into three indicators of problem aspects: the input aspects of planning and processes, and finally, the output of planning. Based on these aspects, we then elaborated on the guiding questions related to village planning problems or conflicts experienced by the community. For each indicator, we summarised the theme issues by examining the categorisation patterns based on observations in the field. According to Saldaña (2014, 13), the theme aims to uncover statements and explain the elements of the thought behind the statements, such as why people do an action, who acts, and how they act.

## **Findings and discussion**

### **Findings**

Development planning meetings are held annually with the community from the village level to the national level. The question that arises is whether the annual ritual can mobilise the community and encourage inclusiveness so that the root problems at the community level can be recorded. Since the reformation in Indonesia in 1998, the development paradigm has changed, but it is unclear if the development planning meeting has also changed. The new paradigm positions the community as the main actor in development, while the role of the government is no longer as a provider and implementer, but as a facilitator and catalyst of development.

Therefore, the village government must utilise government authority and manage the village budget properly as stipulated in Law No. 6 of 2014 in order to address issues that arise. The village government needs to revive its service functions. According to Garcia and Lescuyer (2008), so that considerable resources can be further optimised, villages must be able to design development plans that are integrated with existing village financial resources (one village, one plan, and one budget). For all village activities to be carried out transparently and accountably, village institutions need to conduct participatory deliberations in every planning and implementation development in the village (Bora and Hausendorf 2006). In Indonesia, the village institutional level lies with the village government, which is the executive, and the village consultative body as the legislative body.

With such a central role, the people have the right to be involved, provide input and decisions, especially from the planning level to implementation. The fulfilment of people's fundamental rights is implemented in a public forum called the village development planning meeting. Therefore, we surveyed the community to ascertain their enthusiasm to be actively involved in each stage of development planning activities. The summary of the survey results in Table 1 illustrates the desire of the community to be involved in the planning and budgeting process.

Table 1 shows that the community's enthusiasm is particularly high in regard to their need to participate directly in attending budget discussions at the legislative, where 60 out of 115 people agreed that they wanted to hear opinions in the legislature, and 70 people wanted to attend the legislative meeting. The expected inclusiveness according to the community's view was more on verbal involvement, according to 90 out of 115 informants. Unfortunately, in reality, community involvement is still minimal. Moreover, based on the results of a survey of activities such as meetings to determine budget allocations and reading of government accountability reports, the community has not been very interested. The need to express opinions directly (verbally) shows that community inclusiveness in planning and development needs to be packaged in the form of two-way communication.

On the issue of development planning, the implementation of development planning deliberations is facilitated by the Regional Development Planning Agency (*Bappeda* in Indonesian). The main goal is to provide space for the people to channel their aspirations, expose priority issues, and express needs that start at the village level. However, based on the research findings, the quality of community deliberation has not met the expectations of both parties.

Critically observed, the implementation of community planning deliberations, often called the participatory planning model, has three main issues: 1) problems related to planning input; 2) problems of the planning process; and 3) planning output problems (Table 2).

Table 2 maps the problems and solutions obtained during the research process using PRA, so that both the problems and solutions come from the rural communities. From Table 2, it appears that communities are marginalised in terms of inclusion, and the model of development planning deliberations is still at the stage of mobilising and introducing participation (Chang 2007). In-depth interviews with several informants provided a comprehensive picture of the problems. As one informant, Nurhayati, a female activist, stated:

The main problem of village development planning meetings is that the results of deliberations are generally underutilised in discussing development planning at the district level because each work unit already has a shopping list. The people in the work unit ... have arranged a shopping list that they will carry out the following year.

**Table 1.** Enthusiasm for community involvement in the planning and budgeting processes.

Activities	Informants	Response			Suggestions
		Agree	Disagree	Neutral	
Development planning meeting	115	90	25	0	Necessary
Hearings (face-to-face)	115	60	40	15	Needs community involvement
Attending legislative budget meetings	115	70	30	15	Community must attend
Meeting to determine budget allocations	115	15	100	0	Unnecessary
Reading the accountability report	115	20	80	15	Unnecessary

**Table 2.** Schematic issues and suggestions for implementing development planning deliberations.

Indicators	Issue	Suggestions
Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community involvement is generally still very low and tends to be unrepresentative in every development planning consultation, especially at the village level but also at the district level. The lack of understanding of the urgency of deliberations had an impact on the lack of understanding of the central role of the community in the decision-making process at the village level.</li> <li>Due to the community's lack of understanding of their role in development planning, especially since the community is at the lowest level in terms of ownership of economic assets, they usually entrust their hopes to the village or urban "elite". Meanwhile, the village elites' interests in development do not necessarily represent the interests of villagers.</li> <li>Practitioners of development planning deliberations have limited capacity to explore the root causes of problems in the community. This means the information obtained is incomplete, and sometimes only meets the needs of the top level.</li> </ul>	<p>Dissemination of the benefits of development planning deliberations.</p> <p>Inclusiveness across all society to allow the programme to progress.</p> <p>Understanding the need to increase capacity regarding participatory planning.</p>
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because of impending deadlines, organisers of deliberations sometimes take the instant route, for example, to adopt the whole top-down planning model. So, local communities have to listen to programme activities that have been designed from behind the desk. As a result, the participatory planning model that became the substance of the development planning deliberations is ignored.</li> <li>The implementation of development planning deliberations is designed only to meet the interests of certain parties; therefore, the implementation process is merely a formality.</li> </ul>	<p>Planning should come from the community, with appropriate implementation time.</p> <p>The suggested programme must side with the village community.</p>
Output	<p>In almost all stages of development planning deliberations, the old paradigm still applies, namely that which favours the interests of policymakers. As a result, deliberation is often referred to as an arena to compete in compiling shopping lists, or compiling as many shopping lists as possible, without considering the scale of real needs. This is more prevalent because, in the deliberation process, there is no standard budget allocation.</p>	<p>The programme submitted by the community must be prioritised and reflect the community's need.</p>

So, the meeting of village development planning is only a formality ... plus the village community leaders generally are government people.

On average, community proposals are getting smaller and smaller at the top level. This causes many government work units to block proposal planning from the community, where the urgency is sometimes irrelevant to the community's interests. A similar statement was expressed by one community member (Amrullah) who was the mosque's imam in the village, stating that:

For the sake of brainstorming, it is time for sound governance principles to be applied, not just shouted in the seminar room and [by] academics. We need a concrete form of implementation in society. The government, in this case, provincial, city, and regency, should have a participatory planning model guide that can record the pulse of the undercurrent of the community.

Meanwhile, Ramlah, a housewife, said:

I think the development planning consultation forum can move the community, the government, and the implementers of development. However, there are only two sides of governments that are moving and implementing development ... people are just spectators. These three elements should have been reforming planning and budgeting programme policies that are oriented towards improving the welfare of the community, especially those who are still in the poor category.

If problems in terms of input, process, and output of planning still occur in every development planning meeting, then it is impossible to produce programmes that can address the needs of the community. The forum for development planning discussion should be able to encourage community inclusiveness in development, especially with Law No. 6 of 2014 that encourages bottom-up planning. Therefore, related to planning problems, it is better if we understand and reflect on the statement that, “if you made a mistake in planning, then you plan for mistakes.”

## Discussion

Reflecting on the research findings, it seems that the government designed the implementation of a public participation system that emphasises the competence of the elites in making policies but is not following mass democracy. According to Hong (2015), when discussing participation and inclusiveness, there are two different aspects, namely inclusiveness and knowledge. Participatory processes with less inclusiveness are traditional hierarchical, bureaucratic governance models. This model offers unlimited opportunities for elites to participate in decision making where they have comprehensive knowledge when making policy. A more inclusive participatory process integrates large numbers of people into the formulation of policies to realise the ideals of participation. However, such governance models fail to get the desired level of knowledge from participating communities because they do not know the entirety of policy issues (Roberts 2004).

Development planning deliberations, therefore, are merely a tool to legitimise the preparation of development planning documents as outlined in the budget, have been carried out in a participatory manner with. Community participation is still at the mobilisation and introduction stages, as can be seen from the input, process, and output of development planning deliberations. In these three indicators, the proposed planning generally comes from the top, which is already in the form of a list, and if it is submitted to the community involved, it is only submitted to a group of community leaders where they are government supporters. When they submit proposals, some are in their interests or support the government’s proposals.

Furthermore, the concept of participation in implementing development projects is often reduced to technical instruments (instrumentality), so that community empowerment efforts are ignored. This can be seen through the limited time and funds for conducting deliberations, and thus creates a list of top-down activities. Participatory approaches also often ignore power dynamics and patterns of interaction between individuals and their social structures (Martin 2012). This has implications for controlling information and access to resources by more powerful groups (MacCallum 2009). Simplification of power dynamics at the local level encourages the use of a planning approach model that is more avoiding conflict rather than conflict resolution in the negotiation process between various parties. A planning approach model that avoids conflicts has the potential to frustrate the achievement of programme objectives and exclude certain parties who disagree (MacCallum 2009).

Therefore, the development paradigm reform in Indonesia, as stated in Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning villages, did not bring changes in their implementation. The participation paradigm in planning is still in two stages, between mobilisation and introduction (Chang 2007). The community is not asked for their opinion regarding the activities to be carried out, and even if asked to participate, the involvement is minimal, meaning that they only involve village community leaders. At this stage, the community is only used to legitimise the rhetoric of the annual development planning deliberations.

## Conclusion

In the process of development planning, from the input, process, and output stages, the government’s efforts to achieve sustainable, equitable development in favour of marginalised groups in Indonesia still seems unrealised. Inclusive community participation is not yet apparent in development planning. Furthermore, the current planning deliberations forum has not used or adapted existing social institutions such as collective community activities that can encourage the exchange of

information. Development planning deliberations have also not ensured that there are mechanisms or open forums for communities to express their disapproval of existing activities, programmes, or policies. Therefore, participation in village development is still merely symbolic.

Additionally, the deliberation forum has not yet allowed a feedback process, where the planning and implementation of development programmes are directed together with the community. In this case, the planning deliberation should have the principle of inclusiveness. This assumes that the development process, as a concept, should be translated by the community where the process takes place. Development planning deliberations should be a continuous learning process where the learning space is the community itself, and the learning instruments are the institutions (in this case, rules, practices, traditions, and culture) that exist and are open for use, adaptation, or recreation by the community. Deliberation has yet become a development planning process that can bring social change and empowerment under the way of life of the Indonesian people.

The research shows distortion in the use of participatory approaches in development planning, as the deliberation forum is used for specific economic or political purposes. In a participatory approach, community inclusiveness is not only limited in the sense of “participating” physically but rather involvement that allows them to assess the problem, as well as the various potential in their environment, to then determine the activities they need.

This research suggests the need for community inclusiveness in the village planning process. Community inclusiveness is involvement that leads to the growth of the community’s ability to be more empowered to face life’s challenges without having to depend on others. When the community gets stronger, the role of outsiders decreases; this is why the participatory approach is referred to as the community empowerment approach. It needs to be understood that community involvement in development does not necessarily encourage inclusiveness.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

## Notes on contributors

**Ratna Ayu Damayanti** is a Lecturer in the Accounting Department of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Hasanuddin University of Makassar, Indonesia, and the Chair of the accounting Master’s programme. Her expertise is in regional finance and local government budgets.

**Syarifuddin** is a Lecturer in the Accounting Department of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Hasanuddin University of Makassar, Indonesia. His expertise is in political budgeting, local government budgets, and regional finance.

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