

# 8. Empowerment Communication in the Corporate Social Responsibility Program in Rural Areas

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## **Empowerment Communication in the Corporate Social Responsibility Program in Rural Areas**

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**Abstract.** Empowerment communication in the Corporate Social Responsibility program in rural areas is important for designing and implementing community empowerment with the support of its program. The research uses a case study method with data collection through in-depth interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), documentation, and participant observation. The selection of research informants through purposive sampling, namely the village government, members and administrators of the Farmer Women's Group (FWG), facilitators and extension workers of CSR program, activists, and community empowerment activists. The research location is in the sub-District of Maos, Cilacap Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia. Data analysis using triangulation and data verification. The results show (1) Community empowerment requires support and participation from various parties such as the woman farmers group, extension workers and facilitators as the main actors, the government with its policies and budgets, then the private sector or companies with their CSR programs. (2) Participatory communication is the key to success in designing and implementing empowerment with CSR programs. (3) Facilitators, extension workers, and village heads carry out harmonious dialogical communication that needs to be maintained for cooperation and to maintain cohesiveness in implementing the program

**Keywords:** Community empowerment, farmer groups, participatory communication, social responsibility, village development

## Introduction

Indonesia as an agrarian country places the agricultural sector as a buffer <sup>37</sup> for meeting the needs of the community, considering the increasing need for food caused by the increasing population. To reduce poverty it is important to study and implement the empowerment of farming communities to increase awareness, enthusiasm, and community participation that the agricultural sector is the most important need for the economy and the welfare of society.

Community empowerment is an effort to utilize and manage resources in a participatory manner from rural communities based on human resources, capital, equipment, facilities, plans, and technology. Community empowerment requires support, cooperation, and collaboration from other parties such as the government, private sector, companies, and academics or educational institutions to achieve the final result in the form of social and economic independence of rural communities (Ani et al., 2017; McVittie, Goodall, & O'May, 2015; Nugroho & Fimmastuti, 2020; Sugito et al., 2019; Sulaiman, Chusmeru & Kuncoro, 2019; Wallerstein & Bernstein, 1994; Wiber et al., 2009).

The government in community empowerment acts as a policy and budget facilitator to support empowerment programs. The active participation of the village community is the main key to empowerment starting from the planning, implementation and evaluation process due to the awareness of the community of the potential, conditions, problems, and needs of their village as stated in Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages in Article 1 Paragraph (12) that village community empowerment is an effort to develop community independence and welfare by increasing knowledge, attitudes, skills, behavior, ability, awareness, and utilizing resources through the establishment of policies, programs, activities, and assistance under the essence of the problem and priority needs of the Village community. Then Article 18 states that village authority includes authority in the field of village administration, implementation of village development, village community development, and empowerment of Village communities based on community initiatives, original rights, and village customs. Article 83 Paragraph (3) empowers village communities to improve access to services and economic activities. Then Article 100 that at least 70% of the total village budget is used to fund the implementation of village government, implementation of village development, village community development, and village community empowerment.

Village development by designing and implementing community empowerment can also be supported by private stakeholders or companies with the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, which is a form of collaborative socio-economic empowerment for the community around the company which is supported and required by the government (Fatmah, Wahyuni, & Tamrin, 2022; Huda et al., 2018; Lauwo, Otusanya, & Bakre, 2016; Mogaji et al., 2021; Wolf, Issa & Thiel, 2015). CSR programs and implementation are carried out in a participatory manner by involving the surrounding community to suit the needs, problems that are still being faced, and the potential of local resources owned by the community itself. Based on the formal legal juridical reconstruction regarding CSR as a suborder of rural development programs through village community empowerment, it has been regulated in Law Number 40 of 2007 concerning Limited Liability Companies and Government Regulation Number 47 of 2012 concerning Social and Environmental Responsibility of Limited Liability Companies, Article 1 point 3 namely social and environmental responsibility is the company's commitment to participate in sustainable economic development to improve the quality of life and the environment that is beneficial, both for the company itself, the local community, and society

in general. Furthermore, it is explained in Article 4 of Government Regulation number 47 of 2012.

Article 4 of Law Number 25 of 2007 concerning investment and investment, firms that if you do not carry out Social and Environmental Responsibility, then: (1) A written warning; (2) Restrictions on business activities; (3) Freezing of business activities and/or investment facilities; or (4) Revocation of business activities and/or investment facilities.

The implementation of CSR as part of a rural development program through empowerment has been successful and successful, namely in Mernek Village, Maos District, Cilacap Regency, Central Java Province in Indonesia by utilizing CSR from Pertamina Company which has many CSR Management Unit IV programs in Cilacap Regency in collaboration with local government, village government, and universities, through the Farmer Women's Group "Bunga Desa". The Farmer's Group focuses on the economic sector which includes agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries by utilizing the yard and gardens around the house. The main fields of the Farmer Women's Group assisted by Pertamina's CSR in Cilacap are hydroponic vegetable product cultivation, catfish cultivation, maggot cultivation for catfish feed, and laying hens.

CSR programs ideally need to pay attention to the potential of resources, problems, and community needs, especially the preservation of the natural environment so that it remains productive, beautiful, maintained, and protected from waste, pollution, and industrial waste as a result. CSR is a concept that companies have a responsibility to consumers, employees, shareholders, communities, and the environment in all aspects of the company's operations. A company in carrying out its activities must base its decisions not only based on mere financial factors such as profits or dividends, but also must be based on current and long-term social-environmental consequences (Amo-Mensah & Trench, 2018; Bhatia, Gupta, & Tripathy, 2020; Masdar & Basiruddin, 2020; Senay & Landrigan, 2018; Stoica, Petrariu, & Chivu, 2019; Wang, & Cooper, 2022; Yadava & Sinha, 2022).

Based on the above background the research on empowerment communication in CSR programs in rural areas is important to be used as a model or strategy for rural development, in this case, the research location is in Maos District, Cilacap Regency, Central Java Province, and which can be a model for other regions in carrying out CSR programs for village development.

Empowerment communication is participatory development communication as a process of formulating and implementing participatory development programs based on problems, potential resources, and needs involving the community and their groups, local government, facilitators, extension workers, and assistants to create motivation, knowledge, skills, partnerships, and welfare together towards independence.

Research on the empowerment of Women Farmers Groups (FWG) with productive food security is very unique and important in academic development and activities such as study materials, assignment locations, internship programs, and student practice, including reference sources on productive institutional empowerment and implementation of CSR programs based on local wisdom as a study theme. social engineering, rural development, and community empowerment. Research on the empowerment of Women Farmers Groups with productive food security in the CSR program is following the vision of the Institute for Research and Community Service in 2022, namely "Being a reference for the development of prosperous independent villages" with various activities including developing human resources, especially lecturers and students who have competitive competencies that support learning targets. The



realization of an independent and prosperous village by developing research, social engineering, and technology based on the potential of the area around the campus, then developing information dissemination and technology transfer for the community. The research aims to analyze of empowerment communication of the Farmer Women's Group in productive food security at Pertamina's CSR program in Cilacap Regency.

### Research Methods

The research uses two methods, namely the qualitative case study method to deepen the reality which is carefully identified, analyzed, and categorized. Because qualitative research case studies study deeply the phenomena of reality with the background of interaction with the environment of a social unit such as individuals, institutions, communities, or society (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). Collecting data through in-depth interviews, discussions, direct observation, participating in Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and analysis of documentation. Research informants using purposive sampling are the Mernek Village government, the Farmer Women's Group (FWG) "Bunga Desa" as subjects or actors of CSR program empowerment, extension workers and facilitators of CSR program village development, activists or observers of village community empowerment and academics.

Qualitative data analysis with triangulation and data verification (Snape & Spencer 2003) has a process, based on analytical method that construct an explanation of the complexity, details, and context of the data. Identify emerging categories and themes from the data found, not categories on the a priori basis of ideas. Taking into account the uniqueness of each case and conducting cross-case analysis, as shown in Figure 1.

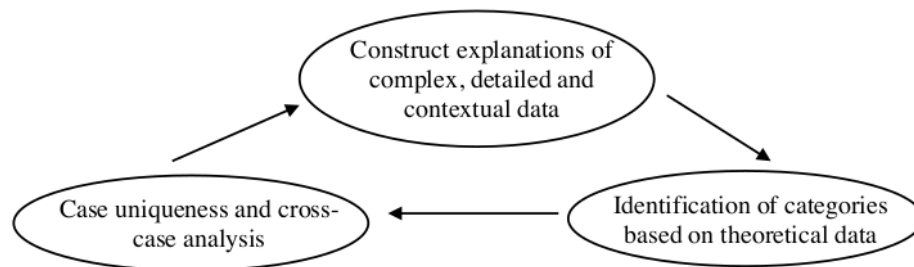


Figure 1. Data analysis  
 Source: Snape & Spencer 2003

### Results and Discussion

Research begins with the identification and analysis of previous research results and pre-survey studies to determine similarities or differences as a research design or called State of the art, the results will determine the novelty of the research (novelty). Then the next stage is processing secondary data in the mass media, then the results of the pre-survey stage, reviewing the results of previous research in scientific journals and mass media studies, and then reviewing them in Focus Group Discussion (FGD) activities about empowering Women Farmers Groups (FWG), food security, CSR programs, and participatory communication model and productive agricultural cultivation.

The research team has the experience and researched the identification, analysis, and design of models as well as the implementation of community socio-economic empowerment models in entrepreneurial institutions, Small and Medium Enterprises, Cooperatives, and

**Village-Owned Enterprises.** The research roadmap in 2022-2023 has a research contribution to produce and improve lecturers in basic research findings in the form of the invention of new methods and theories to support the development of applied research. Improving the quality and quantity of lecturers' scientific publications. Can integrate research results by revising the substance of course learning materials to be more innovative and actual.

Researchers in the process of preparing superior proposals for higher education, conduct preliminary studies, namely by; (1) Conducting literature studies and documentation analysis of several academic research results such as in theses, dissertations, and scientific journals, as well as textbooks. Then to the mass media, both written such as newspapers and electronic media such as journals and online newspapers. (2) Observing and seeking information (informal interviews) as well as opening access to research locations; (3) The results of the literature study and observation as well as information seeking with informal interviews which are then discussed with colleagues or colleagues and practitioners or experts.

### Implementation of CSR Program Empowerment

The research team conducted a study in 2022 on the role of the Farmer Women's Group in Pertamina's CSR program in Adipala, the sub-District of Maos, Cilacap Regency. members and other prospective members. The young generation of women in rural areas who have the potential to become creative, productive, and innovative human resources join as members and or administrators of FWG to become young entrepreneurs who are the successors of digital-based village development, especially in product promotion and marketing. Administrative and financial management is still manual with written records not yet managed digitally or computerized. Standardization of packaging quality, brand or label as well as product licensing has not been implemented. Likewise, research results such as The implementation of policies to increase local crop production have not been optimal so there is still a large gap between production and the potential of local food crops. Some basic problems that need attention are the problem of lack of involvement of implementers at the operational level, problems of coordination of implementation between units, and problems of adequate budgets for programs to increase local food crop production. Policies in the field of food security are only assessed as physical development, by providing material assistance that is only useful for a moment. It is necessary to examine the problems that always arise, namely socio-cultural factors, and pay attention to the local wisdom of the community as development capital.

The importance of food security-based development has been stipulated in Law No. 18 of 2012 concerning Food in article 1, that food security is a condition of fulfilling food for the state to individuals, which is reflected in the availability of sufficient food, both in quantity and quality, safe, diverse, nutritious, equitable, and affordable and does not conflict with the religion, beliefs, and culture of the community, to be able to live healthy, active, and productive in a sustainable manner. Article 3 explains that food administration is carried out to fulfill basic human needs that provide benefits in a fair, equitable, and sustainable manner based on Food Sovereignty, Food Independence, and Food Security.

The potential of the Farmer Women's Group in Mernek Village, Maos Subdistrict, and Cilacap Regency is not only due to food security in the yard and garden but there are other potentials, namely (1) High motivation and creativity from FWG administrators to carry out food security empowerment program by cultivating organic vegetables and post-harvest catfish. (2) FWG products have been able to meet the needs of groups, and rural communities

and can be redeveloped into superior commodities with the help of increasing standardization of quality and quantity of packaging, brand labels, and digital marketing promotions. (3) Pertamina's CSR Program Management Unit IV in Cilacap Regency is concerned and obligated to support and become partners and investors in food security and product development <sup>31</sup> FWG empowerment in Maos Cilacap.

Some efforts to improve food security and family nutrition can be done through the use of available and available resources in the environment. These efforts can be made through the use of yards managed by households to realize food self-sufficiency. One of the ways to build family food security can be done by utilizing available resources, including through the use of yard land. The use of yard land has the potential to provide family food, reduce household spending on food purchases and increase farmer household income. One of the ways to build family food security can be done by utilizing available resources, including through the use of yard land. The use of yard land has the potential to provide family food, reduce household spending on food purchases and increase farmer household income. One of the ways to build family food security can be done by utilizing available resources, including through the use of yard land. The use of yard land has the potential to provide family food, reduce household spending on food purchases and increase farmer household income.

FWG Bunga Desa as a group that produces various fresh vegetables, eggs, catfish, and liquid organic fertilizer is growing. This is reinforced by the continued attention to FWG Bunga Desa as Pertamina Maos' CSR partner in the following years until 2020. FWG Bunga Desa seems to get a breath of fresh air with Pertamina coming to this area. Not without reason, with the presence of Pertamina in this region, the potential of FWG seems to have found a place of appreciation. The following is a concrete manifestation of Pertamina's partnership with FWG Bunga Desa:

(1) In October 2018, Pertamina Maos held socialization with the community, especially FWG Bunga Desa about the programs that will be provided as a continuation of the partnership.

(2) Pertamina in cooperation with the Mernek Village Government organizes pieces of training including training on making liquid organic fertilizer, training on making solid organic fertilizer, training on hydroponic vegetable cultivation, and training on catfish cultivation and maggot cultivation. FWG Bunga Desa is very positive about the programs delivered by Pertamina. This is indicated by the number of training participants who attend more than the quota that has been set.

(3) Training Pertamina assists in the form of laying hens, catfish seeds, a package of hydroponic vegetable cultivation equipment, and other facilities to support the activities that have been programmed. The hope is that after the FWG training they can practice with assistance from the local Agricultural Extension Officer. The greater hope is that FWG members can use the vacant land in their respective homes, the results of which can meet their daily kitchen needs, meaning that the needs for shopping for vegetables and spices do not have to be bought but can be met from these activities.

(4) Pertamina Maos continues to build activities with the community in Mernek Village, in the same month Pertamina Maos through the Mernek Village Government also builds partnerships with Gapoktan and Mernek Village farmer groups for seed breeding activities engaged in rice seed production as well as licensing facilities. The partnership was named Merlita (Mernek Our Brand) which is still ongoing.



Pertamina's CSR targets are not only FWG Bunga Desa and Farmer Group Associations through a cultivation activity called "Jangkrik Bos" and also to facilitate the construction of Agro Edu Tourism facilities in Mernek Village, namely tourism based on agricultural education which covers an area of approximately 2 hectares, where the land used is The agricultural tourism area is the village's prosperity land. The location of the Agro Edu Wisata is still running and continues to be developed, plus facilities from the Ministry of Agriculture. The location of Agro Tourism has a lot of visitors, both local to the Cilacap Regency or outside the Cilacap Regency, including from the Regional and Provincial Government Agencies and even the Ministry of Agriculture as a government party that has facilitated the development of Agro Edu Tourism.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the commitment of the company or the business world to contribute to sustainable economic development by paying attention to corporate social responsibility and focusing on the balance between attention to economic, social, and environmental aspects. CSR is a form of corporate responsibility towards the environment for social and environmental concerns without neglecting the capabilities of the company. The implementation of this obligation must pay attention to and respect the cultural traditions of the community around the location of the business activity. (Damayanti, 2022; Kurniawan, 2020; Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2021; Meliawati, Fadillah, & Gerald, 2021; McCarthy, 2017; Nurwulan & Mariane, 2018; Putera et al., 2020; Utomo et al., 2021; Wibowo, Prastika, & Wahyu, 2021).

Vegetable commodities that are the mainstay of FWG are cesium, kale, pakcoy, watercress, eggplant, and spinach, besides that there are also chilies, tomatoes, bitter melon, and cucumber. Members admit that the price of vegetable commodities which often fluctuates does not reduce their intention to always be creative in making various cultivations and processed plans that can increase the selling value.

Currently, 30 FWG members are increasingly active in carrying out activities. Some of the activities that are managed include hydroponic vegetable cultivation. Vegetables that are planted alternately include caesium, kalle, pagoda mustard, lettuce, and pokcoy. These vegetables are grown hydroponically and in polybags. The pond water used to maintain catfish is used as hydroponic growing media water so that technically the fertilizer is sufficient from the pond. Another activity is catfish farming. Based on interviews with group leaders, the catfish that are kept are still not able to meet all the demands from consumers. The number of pools owned has not been able to meet consumer demand. However, specifically for catfish, FWG collaborates with members who have a tarpaulin pool at home to collaborate on sales so that every request can be fulfilled from the member pool. The catfish itself is still cultivated. Our group is directed towards processing catfish so that the selling value and profits received by FWG can be greater than sales in the form of fresh fish. Some of the preparations that we direct and plan include making catfish nuggets, catfish meatballs, catfish floss, and catfish chips.

Farmer group development strategy can be implemented with the following principles: (1) Freedom, ie every farmer has the freedom to choose, determine, form, and develop farmer groups with mutual respect for farmer members according to their wishes and interests. (2) Openness, the implementation of extension is carried out with openness between farmers or farmer groups and extension workers or facilitators (3) Participatory, that all members of farmer groups can participate directly and have the same rights as well as obligations to manage and develop their groups starting from planning, implementing, monitoring and



evaluation of farmer groups.

Farmer groups have a very important and strategic role as a medium for interaction, cooperation, and mutual assistance as well as building economic business partnerships with other institutions for the transfer of information. Factors that affect group resilience and strength are (1) Dissemination and absorption of information (2) Planning process, (3) Ability to cooperate in implementing activity plans, (4) Ability to develop facilities, (5) Ability in capital, (6) Ability to comply with agreements, (7) Ability to deal with emergency matters, (8) Development of cadres, (9) Relationships with supporting institutions and (10) Level of productivity.

Factors affecting farmer groups' resilience are determining farming patterns, preparing farming plans, applying appropriate technology, growing partnership patterns, obedience to group agreements, farming assessments, increasing natural resource sustainability, group business management, and individual group members having a very significant positive effect on production.

### **Empowerment Communication in CSR Program**

Designing an empowerment communication model in the CSR program that has an academic contribution can add references to lecture or teaching materials, internships, and practicums, especially for gender communication, rural development communication, entrepreneurship, and community empowerment communication, then for the development of science and technology development, become the subject of study and scientific publications as well as further research. Practical research contributions, namely providing recommendations on empowering Women Farmers Groups (FWG) in productive food security in CSR programs, especially for Pertamina Management Unit IV Cilacap, village and regional governments in setting policies and implementing community economic empowerment.

The program model or design is the construction of the results of the study, identification, and analysis made by categorizing solutions to answer the problems and potential resources found as well as analyzing the needs aspirated by the community or community as research subjects. The research results model becomes important and strategic to be socialized, disseminated and discussed with the community until it becomes an agreement, program, and joint work in this case a CSR program to be implemented by the community and company (Adamson & Bromiley, 2013; Braithwaite & Drahos, 2020; Farchi, & Shahr, 2011; Knudsen & Moon, 2022; Krichewsky, 2017; Lee, 2003; Lodges, 2010; Uduji & Okolo-Obasi, 2021; Umanailo, 2018)

The Empowerment communication model in CSR programs is also important for involvement and benefits for partners such as The Women Farmers Group, the village government, and Pertamina Cilacap were involved in the process and implementation of the participatory use of research. Community empowerment activists and experts, especially on food security empowerment and CSR programs, collaborate with the research team as facilitators, instructors, and companions. Pertamina company in Cilacap Regency as a private stakeholder and mass media will be partner in the process and implementation of research results. the whole Mitra is always involved in all stages of the research process starting from the pre-survey, identifying and analyzing the problems, needs, and potential of FWG resources for the development of MSME entrepreneurship in BUMDes. FWG partners Adipala Maos and Pertamina Cilacap CSR can be used as a target group, a place for Real Work Lectures, Internships, and Practicums for universities, local governments, and private parties.

The role and function of empowerment communication exist in several stages of community empowerment, namely: (1) The preparation stage for community empowerment workers as community workers. (2) The assessment stage is an assessment process that can be carried out individually in groups within the community to identify potential resources, problems, and needs of the community. (3) The planning stage of alternative program activities by agents of change in a participatory manner by involving residents to think about the problems they face and how to overcome them to create a program. (4) Action plans from change agents to help the community formulate and determine priority program activities as a joint decision that will be formally ratified. (5) The implementation stage of the community empowerment activity program that collaborates the roles of facilitators, communities, extension workers, and facilitators of empowerment programs. (6) Evaluation stage by establishing a community monitoring system internally and externally with the principles of transparency, accountability, and participation. (7) The termination stage is the stage of formally severing relations with the target community with the requirements that they have entered the independent category or are no longer accompanied and facilitated by outsiders.

Independence is the last stage of the role and function of empowerment communication that can achieve business and institutional improvement indicators and business partner network development. Improve the knowledge, understanding, and skills of the community for a more advanced, successful, and improved economic business. Improving income of groups or communities, families, and communities. Improvement of the physical and social environment, because environmental damage is often caused by not having the power to protect and preserve the environment and limited economic conditions at the expense of potential environmental and social resources.

Empowerment communication is participatory development communication as a process of formulating and implementing participatory development programs based on problems, potential resources, and needs involving the community and their groups, local government, facilitators, extension workers, and assistants to create motivation, knowledge, skills, partnerships, and welfare together towards independence.

Participatory development communication as community empowerment aims to promote human development. Prioritizing development communication is an activity that educates and motivates the community, rather than providing unrealistic reports and statements of fact. The purpose of this communication is to uphold moral ideas and behavior to direct the capacities that developed countries need. Development communication can be likened to communication carried out to implement the concept of national formation.

Participatory development communication includes the role of the communication function (becoming a reciprocal message-changing activity including participating in development efforts; especially between the public and the government, from the beginning of the design, finally the execution, and evaluation of the formation. Development communication describes all power and style, along with ideas and skills of formation that start with the parties involved. which started the formation, it is specifically for the general public. Activities include meaningful so that the intended audience can, accept, understand and participate in carrying out the ideas conveyed (Bartels, 2015; Flinn et al., 2019; Handoko, Sulaiman, & Akbar, 2014; McIntyre, & Fuller, 2016; O'Connell, 2020; Rogiest, Segers, & van Witteloostuijn, 2015; Sulaiman et al., 2019; Sulaiman & Ahmadi, 2020; van Birgelen, Dellaert, & de Ruyter, 2012).

The empowerment communication model for empowering Women Farmers Groups can be designed as (1) The formulation of development programs as CSR implementation must be based on research using empowerment communication, participatory communication, and organizational communication that can be carried out by academics in collaboration with local governments, companies and empowerment communities. (2)

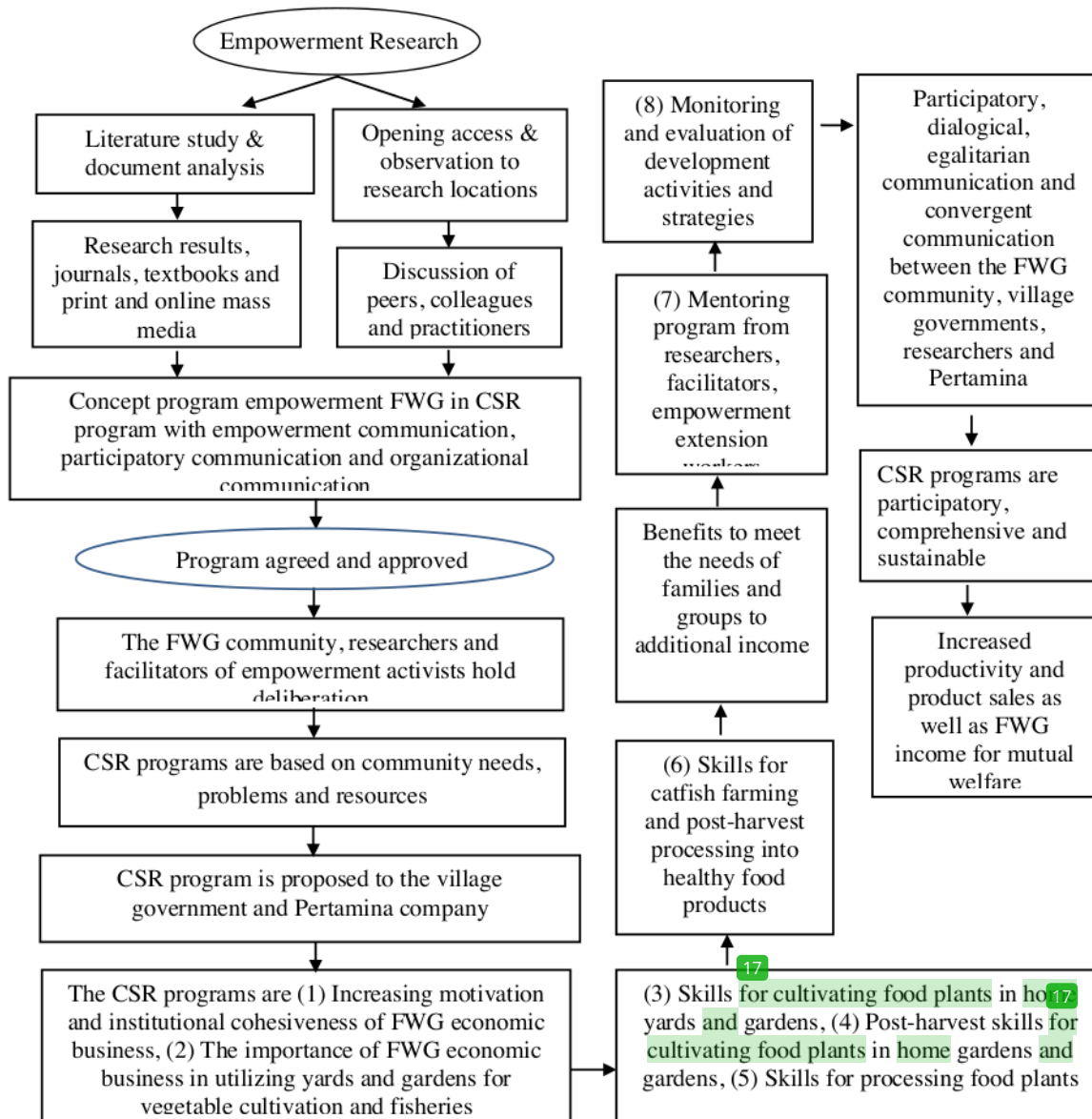


Figure 2. Empowerment Communication of FWG  
Source: Researcher's analysis results



The results of the research become material for deliberation with the empowerment community in the community by using participatory communication, group communication, and deliberative communication in formulating participatory and constructive CSR programs following the needs, problems, and potential resources of the community. (3)

The communication model for empowering the Farmer Women's Group in the CSR program is constructed in Figure 2.

The CSR program as a result of research and deliberation is continued with a mutual agreement and commitment to be implemented using convergence communication to be proposed as a CSR program to companies and village governments. (4) CSR programs can be participatory, comprehensive, and sustainable community empowerment to increase business, productivity, and community welfare with bottom-up participatory development communication.

### **Conclusion**

Community empowerment requires support and participation from stakeholders such as civil society parties such as the community, empowerment groups, in this case, FWG, facilitators and extension workers as actors of empowerment, then the government with policy and budget support, then the private sector or companies with CSR programs.

Empowerment communication is participatory development communication as a process of formulating and implementing participatory development programs based on problems, potential resources, and needs involving the community and their groups, local government, facilitators, extension workers, and assistants to create motivation, knowledge, skills, partnerships, and welfare together towards independence.

CSR program is designed based on participatory communication and dialogue between stakeholders so that it is following the needs, potential resources, and needs of the community. So that the empowerment program becomes a shared property and responsibility for the welfare of the community's economy.

CSR programs in empowering FWG that are successful in the fields of horticultural cultivation, post-harvest, animal husbandry, and fisheries must still maintain and preserve the natural environment so that air pollution, water and land pollution of the community does not occur.

Empowerment communicators such as extension workers, facilitators, FWG administrators, and village head leadership are the most decisive factors in building participatory and dialogical communication so that empowerment programs can be designed and implemented in a compact, cooperative, and shared responsibility.

Organizational and group communication for transparency and accountability needs to be continuously improved by monitoring and evaluating CSR programs in stages carried out by the company's internal parties and external parties such as academics to obtain objective, comprehensive and constructive results.

Participatory and harmonious communication in designing and implementing CSR programs needs to involve academics so that it can become educational activities such as internships, practical work, student practicums, research activities, and lecturer service to the community.



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