

Former Beggar's Survival Strategy during Covid-19 Pandemic in Kampung Topeng, Malang City, Indonesia

Atik Rahmawati¹, Zaki Mubarak², Azlinda Azman³, Syazwani Drani⁴
{rahmawati.atik@student.usm.my¹}

Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia^{1,2,3,4}

Abstract. The COVID-19 pandemic brought rapid change and adversely affected the economy. The vulnerable poor are among the most affected communities. Kampung Topeng is a portrait of economically vulnerable people. As a community-based social rehabilitation area for beggars, its implementation is from November 2016 to the present. The program was designated as a successful national empowerment pilot project because they turned beggars into no longer doing begging activities. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the direction of government social policy to focus on health. This reality changes the life activities of the beneficiaries. On the other hand, it is still economically dependent on the program. This condition certainly requires extraordinary effort, and a strategy is needed to meet the needs of family life. The results are based on in-depth interviews with 30 family heads. The survival strategies are by the informant's mindset about income in meeting the needs of family life. This strategy is also back grounded experience before occupying a social rehabilitation zone. The study's findings could provide a valuable basis for formulating the implementation of social services for the vulnerable poor, particularly beggars during pandemic times.

Keyword: Survival Strategies, Covid-19 Pandemic, Vulnerable Poor, Beggars, Kampung Topeng

1 Introduction

Kampung Topeng is located in the hamlet of Baran, Tlogowaru Subdistrict, Kedung Kandang Regency, Malang City, East Java Province. This area is a social rehabilitation zone for social tuna (beggars) from the Ministry of Social Affairs (Kemensos) RI. Social services are carried out in synergy with the Social Service (Dinsos) of the Malang City Government, as well as the Social Welfare Institute (LKS) of The Prosperous People of Malang City [1]. This area has initially been uninhabited land with an area of 9,000 m².

Through the program "Desaku Menanti" and "Kampung Topeng tourist destination". The government transformed the region into an empowerment zone and a malangan mask tourist destination. The government builds houses, road infrastructure, places of worship, school buildings, and the development of small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Beneficiaries get a livable home, social assistance for life security, skills training, and social guidance.

Social Rehabilitation in Kampung Topeng is a success of empowerment efforts and national pilot projects empowerment programs for the vulnerable poor, or in the Ministry of Social Affairs terminology referred to as the Social Welfare Service (PPKS) Government. In the

previous nomenclature, the nomenclature of PPKS refers to as People with Social Welfare Problems (PMKS). The success program is by changes in the lifestyle of beneficiaries who previously did begging activities to meet the needs of life turned into more productive activities [1][2][3]. The program began in August 2016 with the replacement of 40 Family Heads in the rehabilitation zone.

The COVID-19 outbreak infects millions of people around the world. COVID-19 has a harmful economic impact on the world that can cause a global recession. This pandemic can make millions of people poor. For Indonesia, COVID-19 can cause financial instability and contribute to an increase in poverty [4].

The Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) noted that economic growth slowed in the second quarter of 2020 and contracted to minus 5.32% on an annual basis. The deepest contraction by the household consumption sector. This condition is affected by job cuts, salary reductions, and decreased operating profit during the pandemic, in addition to restrictions on people's mobility [5][6]. Poor, vulnerable poor (in the perspective of social services referred to as PPKS), and those working in the informal sector are the most affected by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Residents in The Kampung Topeng are experiencing the same conditions. As a tourist destination, citizens' income depends on tourists [7]. The pandemic caused restrictions on community movement, including activities in Kampung Topeng. Thus resulting in the cessation of all supporting activities, including tourist visit activities, souvenir production, and art activities.

Community empowerment programs conducted by the Malang city Social Service and LKS Insan Sejahtera Malang city have not been able to anticipate and provide solutions in the fulfillment of the welfare of citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. The implementation of social services by the State has its main limitations in terms of funding. The COVID-19 pandemic has led the government to change the focus of budget allocation—this condition by the Social Service of Malang city. The Head of The Social Service of Malang city revealed that after five years of empowerment program in Kampung Topeng, the citizens would be independent. People are no longer dependent on social assistance from the government. Social service financing can burden the Regional Revenue and Spending Budget (APBD) of Malang city [8].

This reality requires extraordinary efforts from citizens, and it takes strategies on how to survive to meet the needs of family life. Based on the above phenomenon, the purpose of this study is to describe coping strategies through family and community as an effort to survive former beggars during the COVID-19 pandemic in Kampung Topeng, Malang City.

2 Method

This research has as qualitative research [9][10] following the purpose of the study, namely describing social phenomena in detail about a social situation, social setting, or social relationship. This study aims to describe the survival strategies of former beggars in Kampung Topeng, Malang City. Informants are selected using nonprobability techniques with purposive or judgmental sampling types. To get complete and in-depth information, conducted in-depth interviews with 30 Family Heads willing to work the interview process. Primary data is obtained by interview techniques using face-to-face conversations based on established guidelines. In-depth interviews will encourage informants to be actively involved in sharing information by

giving informants the freedom to state their knowledge and experience of survival strategies in the time of the covid-19 pandemic.

Qualitative data analysis is used to give the meaning of a true description of the study question. Analyze the qualitative study data done with three analytical measures namely; data condensation, data presentation (data display), and conclusion drawing/ verification. The results of data analysis using the help of the NVivo 12plus software. The NVivo device will separate data from informants, researchers, and secondary data. The research results can be considered to reach high validity [11].

3 Result and discussion

Kampung Topeng tourist village is developing a community-based social rehabilitation zone in the form of a beneficiary resettlement program through the “Desaku Menanti” program from the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs in synergy with the Malang City Government through the Malang City Government Social Service. Malang as a dense city of Indonesians. The population of Malang city in 2019 was 927,285 people, with a population density of 8,718 people/km² and population growth of 1.23 percent/year. The main contributor to the development and population density in Malang town is migration compared to population growth from birth factor. The consequences of a city's progress are increasing its leading investment in the city center and the natural shift of residents from the center to the suburbs. A large population of limited occupancy and a weak economy pose social problems: beggars. They strive to survive with limited living conditions.

The beggar population in Malang shows that in 2017 the number of beggars rose to 56.45% or 186. Whereas in 2018, the number of beggars remains as it was in 2017. And in 2019, the number of beggars dropped by 81.18%, or to 35 beggars. Despite the number of beggars in Malang in 2019, efforts to resolve the problem still need to be made. Since this group is difficult to record due to their high mobility, the data has not shown the exact number of beggars.

The village-based integrated social program, as stated in the social rehabilitation "Desaku Menanti" from the social ministry that social rehabilitation includes a series of activities handling homeless and beggars is preventive, rehabilitative, empowerment, security, and social protection in the handling of homeless and beggars. By making communities and villages potential and sources of social welfare. The activities of citizens in earning income before occupying the empowerment zone can show the characteristics of the citizens.

Activities carried out by informants to earn family income before living in Kampung Topeng are as beggars. Data supported from the report on the implementation of social rehabilitation programs from the Institute of Social Welfare as the implementation of the program, shows that 100% of families depend on income as beggars. Other activities undertaken to earn income are carried out by; Washing workers (1.89%), Cleaning service (1.89%), Selling drinks wedang ronde (1.89%), Stone worker (5.66%), Making furniture (1.89%), Selling bread (5.66%), Heavy equipment operator (1.89%), Scavenger (30.19%), Busker (41.62%), Tailor (1.89%), Singer (1.89%), Scales Service (1.89%), Masseur (1.89%).

The data showed that informants worked in informal sectors with uncertain incomes and no guarantees for the future. Begging becomes an option to earn income that informants do before settling in Kampung Topeng. This activity tends to be done because it does not require special skills and level of education. One head of the family can do three work activities to meet the needs of family life. The data also showed that beneficiaries had skills including making

traditional drinks, bread, furniture, tailors, and masseurs. The decision to do begging activities is due to limited capital, sales, and opinions that cannot be enough to meet the basic needs of the family (food, home, education, health). As revealed by the informant; “Is not certain of begging, scavenging”. Another informant also said “Stone porter, begging. Not necessarily the important thing to be able to support the family, scavenging and busking”.

Kampung Topeng is a successful empowerment effort as well as a national pilot project of empowerment program for PPKS (beggars). This service was started in 2015 by the Malang city government through the Malang City Social Service, namely by planning an empowerment program for PPKS. In 2016, the Malang city government in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs planned a program for beggars in the form of the "Desaku Menanti" program. This location was later known as "Kampung Kesetiakawanan Sosial Margo Mulyo" or "Kampung Topeng" or "1000 Topeng Rural Tourism Destination".

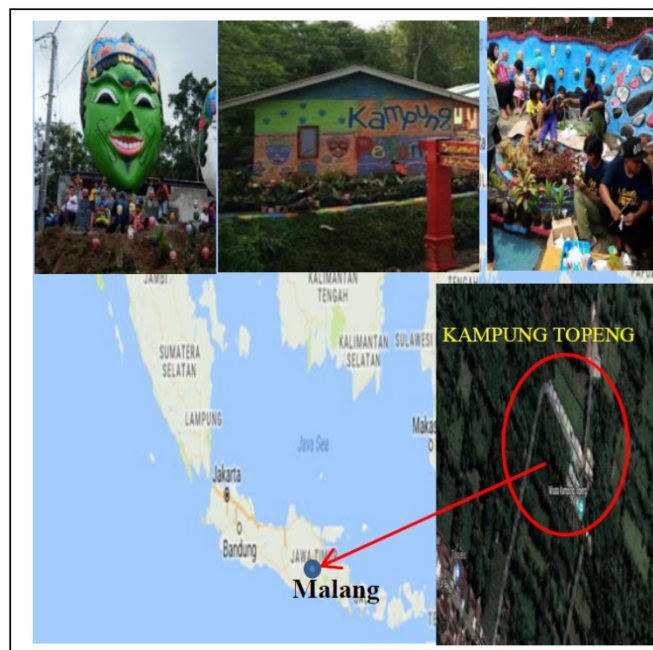


Fig 1. Location of Kampung Topeng [3][12][13].

The results of study showed that the strategy carried out by former beggars during the pandemic was influenced by three things, namely; Personal and family assets, access, and accumulation of assets. Personal and family assets are the ability of individuals and family members to earn income. Access Refers to aspects of social services that can be utilized in improving family welfare. The accumulation of assets in this study means that the collected resources become beneficiaries of the social rehabilitation program in Kampung Topeng.

Every person has some skill, ability or experience at doing something productive. Family units almost always serve as one of the most important networks in a community. This informal network represents potential energy as an important energy source for improving family well-being. Family units almost always serve as one of the most important networks in a community. This informal network represents potential energy as an important energy source for improving family well-being [14]. Informants who had skills before they lived in Kampung Topeng's social

rehabilitation zone were less likely to do begging activities and would retain the skills they had as a source of income when the pandemic hit.

The involvement of family members during the Covid-19 pandemic became a support system that strengthened families to survive the pandemic. Strong bonding between family members to jointly compete shoulder to shoulder together becomes a strategy that can be done to improve family welfare [15]. As the Informant revealed: "Always grateful to God for sewing cleverness, being able to live in a pandemic like now". "I'm only good at making traditional drinks, if begging is no longer because there is shame." "I'm not good at making bread, I'm just good at selling. From before I was here I bought bread in the factory and sold it. Now I sell bread made by my son who works in a bakery. Because of the pandemic, he had a lot of time at home."

Social service programs by the government in Kampung Topeng positively impact citizens' access to employment opportunities. This social service is evident from citizens who get the chance to work in the government. Three citizens work in the government, namely; one citizen working as an employee in the Cooperative, Trade, and Industry Office of Malang City, and two residents working as employees in the Social Service of the Malang City Government. The social services program also provides space for citizens to open new jobs by providing capital, skills training.

Skills training provided by the government to beneficiaries namely; making meatballs, making batik crafts, making cardboard crafts for wedding proposals, making chips, making cakes, making crafts paying out of bamboo, making snacks, making tofu, making salty egg, making mask crafts, breeding worms, and salons. Information provided by informants in line with data from program implementers. beneficiaries will get social assistance including; Training and provision of Productive Economic Business in the form of business capital to each family amounting to Rp. 5 million, Guarantee of life for four months to individuals amounting to Rp. 20,000 domestic assistance, building materials of Rp. 30 million each, food assistance for three months, guest seat, and bed assistance.

Social services also focus on children's special access to children admitted to a village close to the empowerment zone. Some of the informant's activities during their stay in the empowerment zone include, namely; Workshop (5.80%), Farm workers (4.35%), Selling Clothes, Bags (2.90%), Selling Ice Cream (4.35%), Selling Drinks (5.80%), Selling Bread (4.35%), Selling groceries (2.90%), Selling Mask (1.45%), Selling Meatballs (2.90%), Selling Mobile Clothes (2.90%), Selling Food (2.90%), Factory Work (11.59%), Building Porters (7.25%), Making Curtains (8.70%), Making Furniture (1.45%), Making and Selling Salted Eggs (1.45%), Ojek online (4.35%), Employees at the Department of Cooperatives, Trade, and Industry of Malang City (1.45%), Employee at Malang City Government Social Service (2.40%), Scavenger (4.35%), Busker (5.80%), Tailor (1.45%), Schoolboy shuttle Driver (1.45%), Masseuse (1.45%).

Access to work has an impact on changing the main set of citizens to no longer do accrual on the streets. As the informant said; "Yes, there is a lot of income in Kampung Topeng, there is a monthly salary (government officials) right now. If we don't get out, we don't get money. The important thing is not to go down the road anymore."

Residents who have not been able to take advantage and create access from job opportunities provided by program implementers are more likely to do their original activities before resettlement in Kampung Topeng. Income that cannot be ascertained provides a different perspective related to how to survive in the Covid-19 pandemic.

The accumulation of assets is closely related to the social services received by beneficiaries during the implementation of social rehabilitation programs. Strategy is best identified as the

means used by social actors to transform into accumulated assets. The accumulation of assets derived from home social assistance, health insurance, educational social assistance, cash direct assistance, skills training, business capital assistance becomes capital that strengthens beneficiaries in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In general, physical capital assets associated with land and housing as well as health-related human capital assets can be considered "protective" or "preventive" social services, protecting against shocks that cause households to fall into poverty. In contrast, financial capital, educational human capital, and even political capital can be identified as social services "promotional assets" that actively provide opportunities to escape poverty sustainably. Lastly, social capital acts as the "glue" that holds it all together [16].

The strategies carried out by residents during a pandemic can be described in the fig. 2:

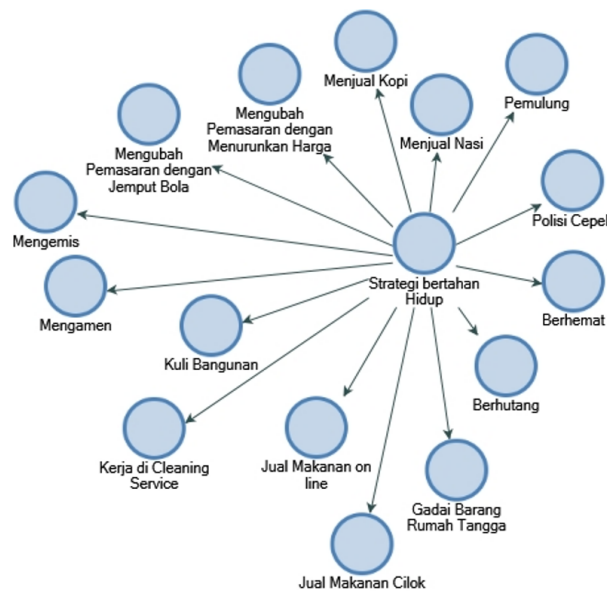


Fig. 2. Former Beggar's Survival Strategy During Covid-19 Pandemic

The strategies used tend to be businesses that do not require skills, knowledge, and level of education—this strategy is based on experience before occupying the social rehabilitation zone. As stated by the informant; “The pandemic has caused me to sing again because my income is only 70 percent left. Busking is I cannot eliminate the only one activity in this situation. My parents say that singing is a versatile science. When we migrate to other areas, we can use it if our conditions are neglect there. For example, the project leader foreman runs away, we have no money. busking is the main way to find Food, make a living.”

Scavengers, buskers, beggars, and the Cepek Police have become activities that residents mostly carry out during the Covid-19 pandemic. What the informants did during the pandemic as their survival strategy were as follows; Save Money (7.14%), Owe (5.36%), Pawn of Goods (5.36%), Selling Food (3.57%), Selling Drinks Online (1.79%) , Work in Cleaning Service (1.79%), Building Porters (5.36 %), Busking (19.64%), Beggar (12.50%), Changing Marketing with a Consumer Pick-Up (5.36%), Changing Marketing by Lowering Prices (1.79%), Selling coffee (1.79%), Selling rice (1.79%), Scavenger (12.50%), Cepek Police (14.29%).

The strategy chosen by the residents is also influenced by the attitude of the residents' dependence on social service programs and implementers in Kampung Topeng. As revealed by the informant, as follows: "Developing tourism here will not work. It can't. Depending on the community, if the residents are willing to be involved, it will be effortless for changes to occur. But it seems that the people have not been able to change. Previously, given any amount of capital. Hard to be empowered because they already felt that they could have much money from the streets was earned without needing capital, no need to go into debt," Discussions if you only come, but there is no money will be a waste of time. If there is social assistance, it helps the family finances. The pandemic has made activities in the Kampung Topeng stop; there is no income if the government does not help."

Restrictions on the mobility of residents during the pandemic have been one of the reasons tourism in the Kampung Topeng has stopped. This condition has also resulted in a decrease in income for those who rely on tourism objects. In addition, the home school learning model requires children to use mobile devices as a learning tool, so there is an additional expense to buy mobile phones.

Programs tend to be incidental or one-shot programs so that the impact of the training cannot be felt, especially in the effort to fulfill the needs of daily life. Skills training had not based on an assessment based on the beneficiaries' skills, talents, knowledge, and activities before they lived in Kampung Topeng. The training program followed because there tended to be monetary rewards. This condition was conveyed by the informant as follows; "Just training continues the term there is no order. There is only an order that there is Mrs. Nurul. Make the box good. Only Mrs. Nurul can. But that was then, and now there's no more." Yes, ever, meatball training program, chips, that I do not sell meatballs, wong usually I sell bread, so given capital yes not for the bread of sale, right people selling it suitable. If it doesn't fit the stuff." Yes, it's been training, make it only one day and two days. That's nothing." Who is training cakes? I am not talented make a cake, and I just participated, so I cannot if you make cakes."

Another social service from the government is in the form of social assistance. Social assistance can ease the burden on residents, one of which is free social housing. The house is crucial for the family to be able to improve their quality of life. The data shows that the informants did not have a place to live before occupying the rehabilitation Zone so that the cost of renting a house became a heavy burden. As disclosed by the informant as follows; "Yes, it used to be less. At most, we are 50 or 70,000 a day. That makes the children, at least a day 20 thousand, continue to buy rice to buy this. Yes, it is enough, but to save or buy what we want, it is still not able to eat is enough. If I think we thank God I occupy the house in Kampung Topeng; it's like a blessing. From the age of 1 year to 5 years, my son was sickly; every year must be in the hospital. Since living there until now, Alhamdulillah is not in the piece, but it has been pneumonia never relapsed again small. Even now fat, living here two years that fat healthy son. It is possible because the weather or the air is also good if here if there is the environment, now fat my son, even though it used to be poor nutrition, I am a cadre, but my son is malnourished." In the past in Muharto village, where the previous residence was a lot of debt, the house did not have. So the work is paying debts, eating sometimes eating, sometimes not."

Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) and PKH (Hope Family Program) are social assistance from the government that can ease the burden on citizens in fulfilling their daily needs, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. BLT is a priority for government programs during the Covid-19 pandemic based on Government Regulation instead of Law (Perpu) No. 1 of 2020 concerning the use of Village Funds in the 2020 fiscal year for the poor and efforts to deal with the pandemic. PKH is a program that providing conditional social assistance to low-income families as beneficiary families. This program is specifically for pregnant women and children to take

advantage of health care facilities and educational services, including access to complementary social protection programs in a sustainable manner.

4 Conclusion

Covid-19 has made it increasingly difficult for economically vulnerable groups of people to meet their daily needs. Working in the informal sector with precarious work before the pandemic occurred was the cause of this condition. Social policies that take sides and give special rights (privilege) to them are needed to provide a social safety net for them in meeting the necessities of life.

“Kampung Topeng” or “Kampung Desaku Menanti” or “Kampung Kesetiakawanan Margo Mulyo” or “Kampung 1000 Topeng” is a social rehabilitation zone for beggars. It is a synergy of the Ministry of Social Affairs, East Java Province through the East Java Provincial Social Services, Malang City Government through the Malang City Social Services, and the Social Welfare Institution (LKS) “Mutiara Insani” or currently named “LKS Insan Sejahtera”. The program has succeeded in placing beneficiaries in social rehabilitation zones and transforming the activities of citizens who were previously beggars to more productive activities, stop begging activities. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the implementation of the program to change some social services and stop tourism activities in the rehabilitation zone. This condition affects the lives of beneficiaries in the zone.

The strategy carried out by former beggars during the COVID-19 pandemic was influenced by three things, namely; Personal and family assets, access, and asset accumulation. Personal and family assets are the ability of individuals and family members to earn income. Access Refers to aspects of social services that can be utilized in improving family welfare. The accumulation of assets in this study means that the collected resources become beneficiaries of the social rehabilitation program in Kampung Topeng.

In addition, there need to be social services that lead to skills, knowledge, and talents owned by individuals. Social services that are incidental and are to complete the program will be more likely to cause beneficiaries to become dependent on social assistance. Therefore, active involvement of beneficiaries from planning process, assessment, implementation, evaluation, and termination is needed.

References

- [1] D. P. Malang, *Strategi Pemberdayaan Bagi Penyandang Masalah Kesejahteraan Sosial Kawasan Perkotaan*. Kota Malang: Dinas Sosial Kota Malang, 2017.
- [2] L. I. Sejahtera, *Laporan Data Perkembangan Usaha Ekonomi Peoduktif & Laporan Data Usaha dan Kegiatan Warga Binaan Sosial ‘Desaku Menanti’ Kota Malang, Tahun 2016-2018*. Kota Malang, 2018.
- [3] K. S. RI, “Laporan Tiga Tahun Pemerintahan Jokowi-Jusuf Kalla Tema Pemerataan Ekonomi Yang Berkelanjutan Tahun 2014 s.d. Oktober 2017.” Jakarta, 2018.
- [4] A. Suryahadi, R. Al Izzati, and D. Suryadarma, “The Impact of COVID-19 Outbreak on Poverty: An Estimation for Indonesia,” *SMERU Work*, vol. April, no. April, pp. 1–20, 2020, [Online]. Available: <http://smeru.or.id/en/content/impact-covid-19-outbreak-poverty-estimation-indonesia>.
- [5] LIPI, “Survei Dampak Pandemi COVID-19 terhadap Ekonomi Rumah Tangga Indonesia, Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia.” 2021.

- [6] Badan Pusat Statistika, *Analisis Hasil Survei Dampak COVID-19*. 2020.
- [7] S. Harsono, "The impact of Covid-19 on Marine ecotourism in Tegal City," in *E3s Web of conferences*, 2020, vol. 202, p. 7020.
- [8] Jatim Times, "Dinilai Cukup Beban APBD, Warga Desaku Menanti Terus Didorong Mandiri," *Jatim Times News*, 2020. https://batu.jatimtimes.com/baca/216455/2020_0611/173600/dinilai-cukup-bebani-apbd-warga-desaku-menanti-terus-didorong-mandiri.
- [9] J. W. Creswell and C. N. Poth, "Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4. baskı)." Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2018.
- [10] Y. S. L. Norman and K. Denzin, "Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials by Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln (z-lib.org)."
- [11] A. Bandur, "Penelitian Kualitatif studi multi disiplin keilmuan dengan NVivo 12 plus," 2019.
- [12] Ngalam.co, "Kampung Kesetiakawanan Sosial Margo Mulyo, Wujud Binaan Berantas Gepeng," 2017. <https://ngalam.co/2017/02/02/kampung-sosial-margo-mulyo/>.
- [13] G. M. Maps, "Peta Indonesia," 2017. <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1Q-uN3MQXPcuXV03tWaLlxfadCyc&msa=0&hl=id&ie=UTF8&t=m&source=embed&z=6&vpsrc=0&ll=-2.2894600152877937%2C112.2151361618225>.
- [14] J. McKnight and J. Kretzmann, "Building communities from the inside out," *A path Towar. Find. mobilizing a community's assets*, 1993.
- [15] S. D. W. Prajanti and I. Susilowati, "The Prospect of Integrated Farming System of Crops-fish-husbandary as the Survival Strategy to Secure the Farmers' Economy: Case Study in Magelang-Indonesia," *Int. J. Econ. Financ. Issues*, vol. 6, no. 6, pp. 84–87, 2016.
- [16] C. O. N. Moser, *Reducing global poverty: The case for asset accumulation*. Brookings Institution Press, 2008.