

The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in Poverty Resolution in Bandung City with a Sustainable Development Goals Approach: NGO Case Study Bantu Teman Id

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Abstract

This research analyzes the role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in dealing with poverty in Bandung City by applying the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) approach. The research was conducted using a qualitative research approach, involving in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The focus of this research is to understand the concrete contributions and impacts produced by various programs and initiatives carried out by NGOs in the city of Bandung. The results of the research show that NGOs play a crucial role in poverty alleviation efforts. Community economic empowerment, inclusive education, access to health, and improving urban infrastructure are at the core of NGO contributions. Economic empowerment programs have proven effective in increasing the economic capacity of low-income communities. Inclusive education programs provide better access and improve the quality of education, while public health efforts have succeeded in increasing the level of health and welfare of the community. This research concludes that through the SDGs approach, NGOs in Bandung City not only function as development actors but also as catalysts for social change. Research findings provide concrete evidence that various programs and initiatives carried out by NGOs have a measurable positive impact in overcoming poverty at the local level. NGOs' active involvement with local communities, regional governments and the private sector also proves the importance of cross-sector collaboration to achieve sustainable development goals. The success of NGOs in helping overcome poverty in Bandung City highlights their potential role in continuing the sustainable development agenda. This research contributes to our understanding of how implementing the SDGs through concrete NGO actions can have a positive and sustainable impact at the local level. The policy and practical implications of these findings are the importance of supporting and strengthening the role of NGOs as strategic partners in achieving sustainable development goals, especially in the context of overcoming poverty in developing cities such as Bandung City.

Keywords: *Non-Government Organization, Poverty, Empowerment.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

Poverty, as a complex and troubling issue, continues to be a major challenge in many cities around the world, including Bandung City, Indonesia. In this context, the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) has become increasingly important as policy makers who can bring about positive change in efforts to alleviate poverty. This introduction discusses the background of the poverty problem in Bandung City and highlights the significance of the role of NGOs in tackling the challenge. Poverty is a complex and multidimensional problem that affects the lives of millions of people around the world. In Indonesia, poverty is still a serious problem, especially in big

cities like Bandung. According to BPS data in March 2019, around 11.22 per cent or 28.59 million people still live in poverty. The government has implemented various poverty reduction programmes since the early 1970s, but the problem of poverty is still not fully resolved (Ariestia, 2019).

Poverty remains a complex and persistent challenge in various cities worldwide, including Bandung City. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a crucial role in addressing this issue, acting as catalysts for change and aligning their strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to promote sustainable development. Bandung City, being a rapidly expanding urban hub in Indonesia, hosts numerous NGOs that implement diverse programs and initiatives aimed at alleviating poverty (Dewi Sucitawathi, 2022).

NGOs are instrumental in creating innovative and effective programs to address poverty, fostering self-reliance, and forming partnerships with the government and communities. They tailor programs to meet the specific needs of impoverished individuals, such as economic empowerment initiatives like micro-retail businesses (Rasyidah, 2021). Through these innovative approaches, NGOs contribute significantly to enhancing the quality of life for people living in poverty. Additionally, their collaborations with the government and communities promote self-sufficiency and facilitate access to essential resources like education and healthcare services, further improving overall living conditions in Bandung City.

Poverty reduction is not only the responsibility of the government, but also requires active participation and contribution from various parties, including civil society and the private sector. Bandung City, as the centre of economic and educational activities, has a strategic role in demonstrating that effective poverty reduction efforts require cross-sectoral cooperation. One of the main advantages of NGOs in dealing with poverty is their flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of the community. Compared to government agencies that may be bound by bureaucratic procedures, NGOs have the ability to move quickly and adjust their programmes according to the dynamics on the ground. While governments have an important role to play in service delivery and economic development, they often face limitations in reaching all levels of society, especially those at the lower levels. NGOs, with a focus on specific needs and a broader range of work, can spearhead reaching groups that may otherwise be overlooked (Auliarini, 2022).

NGOs tend to be a forum for experimentation and innovation in addressing poverty. They have the freedom to design and implement programmes that may be more relevant to the needs of local communities. The success of some of these innovative initiatives can serve as models for the government and other organisations. NGOs often apply a community empowerment approach that focuses on involving local people in the decision-making process and programme implementation. This ensures that the solutions implemented are not only technically effective, but also in line with the needs and aspirations of the communities being served (Angraeni & Kaslam, 2021).

This research aims to detail the crucial role played by NGOs in poverty reduction in Bandung City. By exploring the positive impacts and challenges faced by NGOs, it is hoped that this research will provide a better understanding of the dynamics involved in poverty alleviation efforts at the local level. One of the NGOs in the city of Bandung called Bantu Teman Id has implemented several programmes and empowerments in the city of Bandung to overcome the social problems of poverty in the city of Bandung (Novianti, 2008) This paper examines the social activism played by Bantu Teman Id Bandung Regency in community empowerment in several villages. In the city of Bandung. In order to properly map the role that non-state actors like NGOs play in empowering the underprivileged or impoverished, this study is crucial. As required by the relevant constitution of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the government is ultimately fully responsible for the mission of community empowerment, including poverty reduction. But in order to expedite the realization of social welfare as a whole, the role of players and organizations outside the government sector, such NGOs, is equally crucial in carrying out such a duty.

The Bandung City Government, in its administration, is still experiencing fundamental problems with the increasing number of poor people from year to year. Poverty is a daily reality faced by most people. Poverty is characterised by food shortages, inadequate housing, or the inability to access standard education and health services. This is a condition that has persisted for a long time. The decline in poverty from year to year has been slow due to various reasons, both economic and other reasons that make it difficult for people to move out of poverty, or even become poorer due to natural disasters or other unexpected events. To get out of this state of underdevelopment (Saskia, 2022)

The SDGs are global guidelines set by the United Nations (UN) to achieve sustainable development until 2030. The SDGs consist of 17 interrelated goals that cover various aspects of development, from poverty alleviation to environmental protection. This approach provides a structured and comprehensive framework for organisations, including NGOs, to design and implement their programs (Kuswardini & Auliyah, 2021). The Bandung City Government has implemented various strategic efforts in order to alleviate poverty experienced by the community. In order to achieve the effectiveness of the interventions carried out, the Bandung City Government often partners with the private sector and existing elements of civil society in the implementation of a number of programmes oriented towards poverty alleviation or social empowerment. The civil society elements that are always partnered by local authorities in social empowerment work are NGOs. Local governments are well aware that NGOs are able to prove their competence as an integral part of the institutional structure that always seeks to address issues of poverty, rural development, gender equality, environmental conservation, disaster management, human rights, and other social issues.

NGOs can be simply defined as non-governmental institutions, non-profit organisations, and collective action structures that provide a means of articulating interests and providing services to the community as beneficiaries of their programs

and actions. This study intends to further examine the role of NGOs helping Teman id in the realm of community empowerment, especially rural communities to overcome Poverty. The NGO in question is the Institute. Bantu Teman Id as an NGO engaged in the realm of community empowerment.

B. METHODS

government (NGO) in resolving poverty in Bandung City. This approach will allow the researcher to explore the nuances, contexts, and subjective understandings underlying the interactions between NGOs, communities, and other relevant parties. By combining in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis, this research aims to detail the dynamics involved in poverty reduction efforts at the local level. This qualitative research method is designed to generate an in-depth understanding of the role and impact of NGOs in addressing poverty in Bandung City. A qualitative approach provides the flexibility to explore the complexity of social reality and understand the perspectives of the diverse parties involved (Agus et al., 2020). This study is designed as qualitative research, using a case study approach to examine the role of NGOs in empowering rural communities. A case study examines a problem that is demonstrated by one or more instances in a small system. Researchers use comprehensive data collection methods, incorporating various sources like observations, interviews, audio-visual materials, documents, and reports, to investigate either a single bounded system or multiple ones across time. They subsequently present a detailed case description and identify themes based on the cases (Creswell, 2007: 73). A number of beneficiaries and members of the leadership and implementation team of the community empowerment program "Bantu Teman id. Kota Bandung" are the subjects positioned as informants in this study. The author expects that by engaging them as informants, comprehensive details regarding the social and economic life conditions of the residents of Bandung City and the dynamics of the implementation of the programme by Bantu Teman Id can be obtained and can be used later to further strengthen the validity of the research findings (Nabila, 2021).

This study employs a qualitative method using a descriptive study design. The choice of qualitative research stems from its focus on investigating natural objects, where the researcher acts as the primary instrument (Sugiyono, 2009, p. 1). Qualitative research was chosen specifically to gain insights into social phenomena from the participants' perspectives. Additionally, the descriptive design was chosen because it allows researchers to capture a detailed description of a group of people, an object, a condition, a system of thought, or a current situation (Nazir, 2019). Data collection was conducted through a number of observations (observations), interviews, and study of various literature or documents. Observations were made of institutional activities in running the programme. Interviews were conducted with several participants whom the researchers chose purposively, namely the management of the global humanitarian agency Bantu teman id and social and humanitarian activists Bantu teman. id. The document analysis was carried out on institutional documents, annual

programme accountability reports, other relevant literature to support data acquisition. The data collected was then analysed using data reduction techniques, data display, and verification / conclusion drawing as described by Miles and Huberman (1992). Data were tested through data validity in the form of triangulation, both source triangulation and technique triangulation (Rindi Yuliyanti, 2022).

Participants A number of representatives from various NGOs active in Bandung City will be interviewed. This includes programme managers, volunteers, and field staff who have direct experience in implementing poverty reduction activities. Interviews will also be conducted with community members who benefit from the NGOs' programmes. This includes residents living in areas with high poverty rates. Interviews with relevant parties, such as local government representatives, academics, and private sector representatives, will be conducted to get a more holistic perspective. In-depth interviews will be conducted with selected respondents to gain insight into their experiences, perceptions, and understanding of the role of NGOs in poverty reduction. Structured and open-ended questions will be used to facilitate in-depth discussions (Alfadh, 2020).

Participatory observation will be conducted to understand the dynamics in the field. The researcher will spend time with communities engaged by the NGO to gain first-hand insights into programme implementation, community responses, and interactions between actors. Documents such as NGO activity reports, project documents, and related literature will be analysed to gain further context and historical perspective of poverty reduction efforts in Bandung City. Interview results will be triangulated with data from participatory observation and document analysis to ensure the validity of the findings. The researcher will conduct continuous reflection on personal roles and influences in the research to minimise bias. The research results will be provided to key respondents to provide an opportunity for them to verify and provide responses to the interpretation of the findings (Fikri, 2021).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Non-Governmental Organisation Identification

All governments around the world now use the SDG's (Sustainable Development Goals) programme as a reference to see the progress they have made. Some of the issues in the programme include poverty, hunger, health, and unemployment. And each issue is interrelated with one another (Wijaya Mulya, 2019). For example, an individual will not be able to work well if their health condition is poor. And a person's health condition depends on the nutrition, nutrition they get from childhood to adulthood. It is impossible for a country to produce superior human resources if the quality of growth obtained is not good. In addition, the issue of women is also a major focus in the SDG's programme. The world government is invited to 'care' more about the conditions of women in social, political, cultural, and education. Socio-economic justice (decent income) will not be realised if there is still gender inequality. The government cannot address these intricate community challenges independently. In such instances, the involvement of NGOs becomes

crucial to alleviate the government's responsibilities towards its citizens. NGOs, functioning as third sector entities, play a vital role in assisting the government in addressing development issues. Common poverty-related challenges in developing nations include child labor, illiteracy, limited financial resources, low skill levels, debt entrapment, high birth rates, struggles in meeting basic necessities (such as clothing, food, shelter), and agricultural degradation. NGOs fulfill various roles in tackling poverty issues, as outlined by Rakhman and Haryadi (2020).

- a. **Creating Innovations:** NGOs play a crucial role in innovation by developing programs that address the basic needs of impoverished populations. This involves creating and implementing innovative designs and activities. For instance, NGOs lead initiatives such as non-formal education programs, literacy campaigns in communities, village movie screenings to promote solidarity, and computer training to empower the underprivileged (Qisthiarini, 2018). One key aspect is program flexibility: as independent entities, NGOs operate without interference from government interventions at local or national levels. Moreover, they are less bound by the requirements of public policies set by local governments, allowing them the freedom to define their vision and mission (Utama et al., 2022).
- b. **Specialised Technical Knowledge:** NGOs usually have experts who specialise in certain fields. Their expertise sometimes exceeds that of government employees. Their knowledge is very helpful in solving the real problems of the community. Specialisation is useful for creating unique programmes that improve the quality of life of the poor, for example the NGO Bantu Teman Id in Bandung City.
- c. **Targeting Local Public Needs:** in this case, NGOs play a role in providing access to health facilities, non-formal education, cooperation to improve village community infrastructure, and providing access to information technology.
- d. **Design of Common Resource Ownership Arrangements:** in this case NGOs play a role in making people aware of the ownership of natural resources such as food and protection, as a right that they deserve. NGOs in this activity can conduct training, collaborate with other non-governmental organisations, in order to achieve the common good. training, collaborate with other non-governmental organisations, in order to achieve the common good.

NGO community empowerment programmes are conducted by giving 'fishing rods' not 'fish' to the community. This means that their programmes must be matched with the active participation of the community to work hard, learn, and strive for success. The NGO will recruit local volunteers as teachers to teach the children. The educational assistance should ideally be matched by the children themselves, so that the goal of the empowerment programme is fruitful. Another example of the important role of NGOs in poverty alleviation with reference to the element of education is that NGOs are able to provide advocacy to eliminate school fees, uniform fees, and other expenses for poor children in Bandung City. An NGO called Bantu Teman id created a unique programme in the form of tutoring services and accelerated

learning programmes for poor children so that they can catch up with the knowledge of well-off children in the city. Bandung (Pratiwi, 2019).

2. Theory

One of the most widely cited definitions of civic engagement is that of Carpini and Keeter (1996) who define it as "civic engagement is individual and collective Bantu Teman Idions designed to identify and address issues of public concern" (in Pancer, 2015, p. 3). Civic engagement is explicitly defined as involvement in addressing public issues. However, Ehrlich's definition in "Civic Responsibility and Higher Education" goes beyond this simplicity, defining civic engagement as efforts aimed at transforming societal civic life through the development of specific knowledge, skills, values, and motivations (Nursansiwati & Hidayat, 2022). This engagement aims to enhance community life in various aspects, both political and non-political (2000, p. vi). Unlike Carpini's narrower focus on social problems, Ehrlich's definition encompasses a broader range of activities, including participation in cultural and artistic endeavors, all geared towards enhancing community well-being rather than solely addressing public concerns. The definition of civic engagement varies depending on the perspective and interests of those defining it, as noted by Jacoby (2009) and Adler & Goggin (2005).

Ramaley further elaborates on these perspectives, categorizing civic engagement into four distinct viewpoints: (1) Civic engagement as community service, where individuals fulfill civic responsibility through active participation in voluntary service to strengthen local communities; (2) Civic engagement as collective action, where citizens unite to influence civil society through joint efforts; (3) Civic engagement as political involvement, involving individual and collective action to address problems through political processes and public leadership (Maani, 2019).

3. Concept of NGO Empowerment to overcome poverty

Empowerment stems from two core principles: recognizing failures and embracing hope. Failure refers to the inadequacy of the economic development model in addressing issues like poverty and environmental sustainability. Concurrently, there's optimism for alternative development approaches that integrate democratic values, gender equality, intergenerational equity, and economic progress. These failures and aspirations aren't merely metrics for social science but reflect normative and moral beliefs deeply rooted at the individual and community levels. Armatya Sen contends that economic development should enhance people's freedom to choose, viewing the primary challenge in developing countries as a lack of opportunities rather than solely low income. Thus, the key strategy to tackle these challenges lies in augmenting people's "freedom" and "capabilities" to pursue their values. Building on Sen's perspective, Kartasasmita emphasizes the need for proactive and innovative human resources to sustain economic growth (Dewi Sucitawathi, 2022).

Initiative only grows when there is full emancipation and opportunity to participate in the process of change. Therefore, there is a need for freedom and

opportunity to participate in decision-making that concerns individuals and society. In the absence of freedom and opportunity, initiative and creativity are limited. Empowerment as an alternative development concept thus emphasises the decision-making autonomy of a community based on personal resources, participation, democracy and social empowerment through direct experience. The focus is on locality, as people are better equipped to be empowered through local issues. However, Friedmann⁴ cautioned that it is unrealistic to ignore economic forces and structures outside the community. Therefore, community empowerment is not only limited to the economy, but also politics, so that people have a bargaining position nationally and internationally (Rachman & Syamsuddin, 2018)..

In Indonesia's community empowerment context, three goals are outlined through stakeholder theory. Firstly, development should trigger structural transformations. Secondly, it must tackle inequality by offering more avenues for participation, addressing issues like unemployment, poverty, and disparities. Thirdly, there should be a focus on coordinating across sectors, both regionally and in specific development initiatives. These directions must be integrated, coherent, and well-structured in practice, not isolated from each other. The ultimate aim is to enhance access and opportunities for everyone to engage in development, synergizing with endeavors to combat unemployment, poverty, and disparities.

Efforts to strengthen communities can be identified as follows: First, creating an environment conducive to community development. Second, enhancing community development capacity through financial support, training, infrastructure and facility development, and local institutional development. Third, protecting or advocating for vulnerable parties to avoid unfair competition and build mutually beneficial partnerships. In this context, community empowerment is an appropriate strategy for advancing the common good. This belief must be reinforced and socialized through concrete initiatives.

4. Efforts of NGO Bantu Teman id in overcoming Poverty in Bandung City

In addressing the global humanitarian crisis, governmental actions through foreign policy and politics have been implemented. However, social movements are equally crucial and potentially more dependable. Rather than being seen as an add-on, social movements are viewed as the cornerstone of social development, indicating the established level of societal concern among citizens. Nonetheless, Indonesia still faces challenges in stimulating individual engagement due to low awareness, and even when present, it's challenging to catalyze significant change due to limited resources.

This article will report on findings related to the global engagement of citizens through volunteer programs by the Bantu Teman id institution. Social movements are expected to foster and enhance global engagement, particularly in addressing the challenges posed by the Fourth Industrial Revolution in community development. For instance, successful initiatives have leveraged social media and web 2.0 platforms to encourage community involvement.

Recognizing the Internet's prominence as a communication channel, surpassing traditional media like television and radio, the researcher suggests focusing on activities that promote citizen participation, such as developing charity and volunteer programs. Bantu Teman id, established as a foundation committed to social and humanitarian causes, has expanded its operations from emergency response to post-disaster recovery, development programs, and religious initiatives like Qurban, Zakat, and Waqf.

Bantu Teman id's vision is to become a professional global humanitarian organization relying on global community generosity and volunteerism to foster a better global civilization. Its missions encompass organizing and managing humanitarian issues in a sustainable manner on local, national, regional, and global scales, harnessing global community generosity and volunteerism as social capital to address humanitarian challenges effectively.

5. Strategy of NGO Bantu Teman Id in Community Empowerment

Actually, various concepts and community empowerment programmes to alleviate poverty have been carried out by previous governments. Among them, programmes aimed at alleviating poverty were elaborated through sectoral development programmes, regional development, and special development. These programmes were top-down, highly centralised, and did not involve the potential of the community to actively participate. The role of bureaucracy and government intervention is very dominant in their implementation, which has a negative impact on short-term interests. The negative realities that have developed in the community have encouraged the government to reorient development and "revitalise" the concept of development. Among the various recommendations offered are the need to create macro policies that are conducive to economic growth, adjust sectoral policies, create efficiency and sensitivity to markets and reduce bureaucratic rigidity and government intervention in economic interactions (Marino Filho, 2023).

In addition, it requires a change in philosophy from centralisation to decentralisation, from top-down planning to bottom-up planning, from uniformity to local variation, from command system to learning process, from dependency to sustainability, from social exclusion to social inclusion, and from improvement to transformation. The implementation of this concept requires a reorientation of development, social movements, local institutions and capacity building. It is dedicated to the community to get more opportunities to participate in the development process is every citizen must be "capable" and "empowered". Because community empowerment is an effort to empower people through the realisation of their potential abilities (Nakidien et al., 2021). In reality, community empowerment can be pursued through people's economic development. Meanwhile, people's economic development must begin with efforts to eradicate poverty, which is still a problem for some community groups. Community poverty is one of the problems that needs to be addressed immediately. With such a trend, issues of community empowerment are still important and in accordance with the needs of community

development. Although community empowerment efforts are not easy to achieve optimal results, the atmosphere of regional autonomy and political openness will provide hope for efforts to increase the capacity of community empowerment. The concept of empowerment, when examined more deeply, has two basic contents consisting of the principles of positivism and interactive principles (Agus et al., 2020).

The positivist principle leads to quantitative analyses in several areas: Firstly, growth strategies prioritize development by assessing the country's success through gross national product (GNP) calculations. Secondly, employment programs emphasize job analysis. Thirdly, the basic needs strategy focuses on meeting people's fundamental needs. However, this study, grounded in engagement principles, centers on development vision through qualitative analysis, including: First, empowerment, examining ways to enhance community empowerment and improve quality of life. Second, sustainability, considering the preservation of nature and the environment for future generations. Third, technological problem-solving, utilizing technology in development opportunities (Putri, 2019).

Hulme and Turner outline three strategies for empowerment, including: First, the social approach, fostering community empowerment without making them responsible for political processes and poverty alleviation, emphasizing centralized power driven by local community potential. Second, the development approach, enhancing community capacity, independence, and autonomy through development projects. Third, the empowerment approach, addressing poverty as a result of political processes and empowering communities to overcome powerlessness. They also highlight the limitations of community empowerment due to the subject-object dichotomy, where power dynamics affect communities based on their proximity to the center of power (Damayanti, 2020).

6. Actor Theory in the Role of NGOs Bantu Teman Id

The "ACTORS" theory of empowerment, proposed by Sarah Cook and Steve Macaulay, views communities as agents capable of effecting change by liberating them from rigid control and empowering them to assume responsibility for their ideas, decisions, and actions. Cook and Macaulay's concept of empowerment focuses on social and ethical delegation, including: (a) promoting resilience; (b) delegating social authority; (c) managing performance; (d) developing organizations (both local and external); (e) fostering cooperation; (f) enhancing communication effectiveness; (g) encouraging innovation; and (h) addressing problems. The empowerment framework is encapsulated in the acronym "ACTORS," signifying:

A = Authority, by giving trust

C = Confidence and competence (self-confidence and ability)

T = Trust

O = Opportunities

R = Responsibilities

S = Support

Using the "ACTORS" framework is as follows:

- a. Authority, the group/community is given the authority to change their stance or spirit (work ethic) into something that is their own. Thus, they feel that the changes made are the product of their desire for better change.
- b. Confidence and competence, generating self-confidence by seeing their ability to change the situation.
- c. Trust, creating the belief that they have the potential to change and they must be able (capable) to change.
- d. Opportunities, providing opportunities for the community to choose what they want so that they can develop themselves according to the potential that exists within the community itself.
- e. Responsibility, in making changes must go through management so that it is carried out with full responsibility to change for the better
- f. Support, the need for support from various parties to make it better. In this case, the expected support is not only from the economic, social and cultural sides but also support from various stakeholders (government, community, and business) which is carried out simultaneously without being dominated by one party/factor.

Community empowerment can be approached through the ACTORS framework, which highlights the dynamic interaction within and between communities, involving governmental and non-governmental actors. In developing nations, the government plays a pivotal role in community empowerment through several key functions. Firstly, it explores, mobilizes, and combines available resources like labor, costs, equipment, participation, and legal rights, setting strategic policies for community development. Secondly, it provides guidance and technical support to communities, aiming for eventual community implementation. For instance, the government collaborates with communities in planning processes, progressing from planning for the community to planning with and ultimately by the community, as discussed by (David, 2021).

Additionally, the government can facilitate communication between community organizations and itself, enhancing development success. This approach is often characterized as "top-down," where the government exerts control and issues instructions swiftly and uniformly, a method favored for its efficiency, particularly in fast-tracking national development efforts (Suhadi, 2022). However, this top-down model can lead to a dependency mindset and diminish community capacity for independent development.

Moreover, (NGOs) at local or maybe national or even international levels also contribute significantly to community empowerment. These NGOs, encompassing non-profit and grassroots organizations, focus on growth, development, social change, and community empowerment processes. They play a vital role in complementing government efforts and fostering a more inclusive and participatory approach to community development.

7. The Role of Bantu Teman Id in Achieving SDG's 1: Poverty Alleviation

NGOs play a crucial role in community empowerment, particularly through autonomy education, assuming various functions such as community supporter, catalyst, trainer, educator, capital mobilizer, and project organizer. However, their relationship with the government is not always smooth, often leading to conflicts due to divergent interests. This dynamic interaction can be understood through three models of relationships between NGOs and the government: affiliation, parallel relationship, and conflict. In the affiliation model, NGOs are seen as an extension of the government, closely aligned with government programs and objectives. Conversely, in a parallel relationship, NGOs cooperate with the government as equal partners, maintaining autonomy while collaborating on shared goals. Conflicts may arise when NGOs distance themselves from the government, representing different stakeholder interests.

NGOs' roles are perceived differently based on individual perspectives: they can be seen as integral parts of the government, acting as partners or allies rather than adversaries; as intermediaries bridging the gap between the government and society; as advocates for the people, clearly siding with community interests over state interests; or as entities merging with grassroots organizations, deeply integrated into community dynamics. In Indonesia, three approaches are commonly employed in the process of community empowerment and strengthening community organizations (NGOs):

- a. The humanitarian approach, while not empowering the community as a target group, can empower the NGO itself;
- b. The community development approach, which aims to develop, empower, and self-reliant communities; and
- c. The people's empowerment approach, aimed at strengthening the bargaining position of the lower strata of society against suppressive forces in all fields and sectors of life. In this regard, the government does not need to be allergic or suspicious of the existence of the various

Different institutions and non-governmental actors, often contrary to traditional views, can serve as supportive elements in attaining empowerment objectives. The traditional trichotomy of government, private sector, and community/NGOs roles in empowerment is no longer rigidly defined, as their roles have become more intertwined. These three entities should collaborate, sharing a common interest and commitment to empowerment issues. No single force should dominate the others; instead, they should interact, interconnect, and have equal opportunities to contribute to enhancing community well-being (Agus et al., 2020).

Several NGOs in Bandung City are involved in economic empowerment programmes, such as skills training, providing small business capital, and support in developing micro-enterprises. This is in line with SDG 1 which targets general poverty alleviation and creating decent work. NGOs also put a focus on the education and health aspects as a way to address the long-term root causes of poverty. They support access to education and health services for the underprivileged, in line with SDG 4

and SDG 3. Most NGOs in Bandung City are involved in affordable housing programmes. They work to improve the housing conditions of low-income communities, creating a healthy and safe environment, in line with SDG 11 which emphasises on sustainable urban development. The concept of community empowerment is the focus of many NGO projects in Bandung City. This empowerment involves the active participation of the community in decision-making processes, infrastructure development, and local resource management, in accordance with the principles of (Marino Filho, 2023)

D. CONCLUSION

Various actors and institutions, both within and outside government structures, can play pivotal roles in advancing empowerment objectives. The traditional trichotomy of government, private sector, and community/NGOs in empowerment efforts is becoming increasingly blurred, emphasizing the need for a unified approach with shared interests and commitments. Rather than one force dominating the others, a collaborative and inclusive framework is advocated, where all actors have equal opportunities to contribute to community well-being (Agus et al., 2020).

In Bandung City, numerous NGOs are actively engaged in economic empowerment initiatives, including skills training, provision of small business capital, and support for micro-enterprise development. These efforts align with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1, focusing on poverty alleviation and decent work creation. Additionally, NGOs prioritize education and healthcare interventions to address underlying causes of poverty in the long term, aligning with SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 3 (good health and well-being).

Furthermore, many NGOs in Bandung City are involved in affordable housing projects, aiming to enhance living conditions for low-income individuals and promote sustainable urban development, in accordance with SDG 11. The concept of community empowerment is central to these NGO initiatives, emphasizing community involvement in decision-making, infrastructure development, and local resource management, aligning with the principles advocated by (Marino Filho, 2023).

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