

**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORKER IN  
PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH-BASED COMMUNITY  
EMPOWERMENT PROCESS IN INDONESIA**

**OMAN SUKMANA**

Department of Social Welfare, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,  
University of Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia

<https://doi.org/10.37602/IJSSMR.2022.6118>

**ABSTRACT**

The research objective is focused on the function of empowering community social workers based on participatory action research in underdeveloped villages. Qualitative research uses the purposive sampling technique to collect data from social workers' communities and empowerment actors through participatory observation, interviews, and documentation. Community empowerment has succeeded in developing the independence and welfare of the Turen Village community, which is dominated by the role of the Community Social Worker from the aspect of social transformation and community empowerment actors as motivators, mediators, communicators, and facilitators in determining achievement of success but having abroad and sustainable impact.

**Keywords:** Community social worker, Community Empowerment, Participatory Action Research, Process.

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

One of the social problems in Indonesia is poverty, and the number of poor people recorded in September 2020 and 2021 was 27.55 million and 26.50 million, or 9.71% of the total population, respectively (<https://bps.go.id/>). In 2021, a decrease of 0.48% was reported compared to 2020, but the number of poor people in the country is still in the fairly high category. Poverty is the most basic social problem, specifically in developing nations, including Indonesia, where people are categorized as poor because they are unable to meet their daily needs. The poverty alleviation effort adopted is community-based empowerment (Manshor et al., 2020; Suzuki et al., 2017; Romich & Fentress, 2019; Muis et al., 2020; Annas et al., 2021).

The government strives to overcome poverty by initiating community empowerment programs. Empowerment, specifically community-based, is the right process to alleviate poverty. According to Urbina & Alvarez (2018), it is an important effort for improving the lives of the impoverished. Meanwhile, Adamson and Bromiley (2013) reported that community empowerment is a term that effectively describes participatory approaches related to local decision-making. Sumaryanta et al., (2020) stated that this refers to the ability of people, specifically vulnerable groups, to access productive resources that enable them to increase their incomes, acquire and obtain needed goods and services, and participate in the development process (Gupta et al., 2015; Trust, 2017).

Social workers and empowerment actors play an important role in this process. Some of the failed cases were due to the non-optimal role of these facilitators. For example, the failure of the national community empowerment program in alleviating poverty was caused by the non-optimal roles, duties, and functions of these individuals or groups (Cristina, 2020; Setianingsih & Aalin, 2020; Hukom et al., 2021). Several research reported that social workers play an important role in community empowerment. For example, the functions in poverty alleviation programs in the Philippines (Seth & Tutor, 2021; Hung & Lau, 2019). It was reported that social workers play various roles in implementing these initiatives, such as referring clients to appropriate services and offering some assistance while setting goals and developing skills. However, their major function is administrative or ensuring proper targeting and monitoring of changes in the beneficiaries' lives. Furthermore, Busaspathumrong (2006) studied the role of social workers and social service delivery during crisis intervention for Tsunami survivors in Thailand. It was reported that the social workers collaborated with various professions during the tsunami disaster, and urgently respond to the survivors' needs (Mrhalek & Kajanova, 2018; Lévesque & Negura, 2021; Berggren et al., 2020).

Community empowerment efforts are carried out by members of Turen Village with implemented programs for the development of Freshwater Fish Cultivation in efforts to improve social welfare. This initiative involves the social worker's community (SWC) and empowerment actors to apply the active participation model, including its preparatory, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation stages (Weiss-Gal & Gal, 2020; Itzhaki-Braun, 2021). Therefore, this research aims to describe and analyze the participation-based local community empowerment process. It also includes the role of social workers and actors in the participatory action research (PAR)-based community empowerment process.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Community empowerment is a process where people work together to make a change in society. It also helps these individuals be more powerful and influential over matters concerning them. This supports people to do certain things and enables them to take control of decisions and factors that affect their lives and communities (Sharp, 2019). Several research showed that the implementation of the PAR model is relevant to this process (Sadabadi & Rad, 2021; Dudgeon et al., 2017; Ruechakul et al., 2015; Bacon et al., 2013; Trisnowati et al., 2021; Below et al., 2021; Sulaiman, et al., 2021). According Wood (2019) stated that participatory activity inquiry is an approach or introduction to information planned to enable the community to control certain investigative forms and results. Participatory activity inquires about prioritizing analysts and members shaping associations to recognize issues of neighborhood significance, as well as deciding ways to get these issues and techniques (Chevalier & Buckles, 2019). Participatory activities inquire forms that are broadly recognized as a compelling way for locks in marginalized bunches, counting numerous inborn people groups and communities.

Stoecker & Falcon (2022) stated that PAR offers an opportunity to boost critical consciousness and empower marginalized communities. It employs a participatory inquiry and active approach to engage members in identifying and addressing issues, designing and studying them, critically analyzing their findings, working to resolve social problems that affect these individuals, their peers, and the institutions that serve them, addressing certain policies that affect them, and their communities, as well as reflecting on these results and process iteratively.

PAR aims to bring individuals together in executing certain actions, reflections, and theoretical practices, in the pursuit of solutions to pressing issues and generally the flourishing of the individual persons and their communities.

Schubotz (2019) stated that PAR is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants to improve the rationality, justice, coherence, and satisfactoriness of (a) social practices, (b) their understanding of these activities, and (c) the institutions, programs and ultimately the society in which these are executed. Meanwhile, Burns et al., (2021) defined it as a strategy that attempts to fulfill several requirements to link theory and practice, work towards achieving social science goals, tackle the practical concerns of people in difficult situations, and ensure genuine participation.

Referring to the view of Kirst-Ashman & Hull (2018), the empowerment process tends to be analyzed under three levels, namely individual, organizational, and community. At the individual level, this approach is directed towards the learning aspects of improving decision-making abilities, resource management, and the capability to cooperate with others. Interestingly, it is directed towards creating opportunities for participation in decision-making and sharing leadership responsibilities at the organizational level. Meanwhile, it is directed at 3 aspects at the community level, namely increasing access to resources, opening up government structures, and tolerance for diversity. The process of community empowerment is closely related to the practice of social work. According to Zastrow (2017), it is categorized into 3 practical settings or levels, namely (1) Micro, where they directly deal with individuals, (2) Mezzo, where they deal with families and other small groups, and (3) Macro, where they deal with organizations and communities or make changes to social status and policies.

Netting et al. (2017) stated that "Macro practice is a professionally guided intervention(s) designed to bring about changes in organizational, community, or policy arenas." In line with this view, Kirst-Ashman & Hull (2018) and Zastrow (2017) stated that it is an intervention process involving organizations and communities or macrosystems. Furthermore, it is often associated with community development terminology. Hill & Ferguson (2014), stated that macro practice is an intrinsic component of a generalist social work activity that focuses on administrative, community, and policy dimensions. The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) defined it as an engagement in social and political activities to influence certain policies and economic development. Fritz and Rheaume (2014) and Austin et al., (2016) referred to this term as community intervention and stated that there are 3 forms, namely (a) Planning and Policy Practice, (b) Community Capacity Development, and (c) Social Advocacy.

Paulin (2019) stated there are two general elements in macro practice, first, it involves intervening reactions with organizations, communities, and groups of people, and second, it aims to bring about planned changes. In other words, it is the collective and collaborative effort of social workers who seek to create change. Furthermore, Zastrow (2017) stated that the related concepts are social and community planning, locality development, community, and social actions, macro practice, community organization, and development. There are three models in community practice (development), namely (1) the Locality Development Model, (2) Social Planning Model, and (3) the Social Action Model.

The locality development model, also known as the community development model, emphasizes that change is realized by increasing the participation of people in the locality. The community practitioner acts as an enabler, catalyst, coordinator, and teacher in improving problem-solving skills and ethical values. Social work is a professional activity to help individuals, groups, or communities to enhance their abilities in carrying out certain societal functions, thereby creating conducive conditions that allow them to achieve set goals. This practice involves the professional application of values, principles, and techniques with the aim of (1) helping people obtain basic services, such as the provision of food, housing, or income, (2) counseling and psychotherapy for individuals, families, and groups, (3) aiding communities or groups to provide or improve social and health services, and (4) participating in relevant legislative processes (Kirst-Ashman, 2018).

In the perspective of social work, a change agent system is an individual who takes the initiative in a macro process executed in institutions, organizations, or communities (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2018). Furthermore, it was stated that they also act as enablers, mediators, coordinators, general managers, educators, evaluators, brokers, facilitators, initiators, negotiators, mobilizers, and advocates. Social workers tend to play various roles in terms of supporting these individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Zastrow (2017) stated that these include acting as an enabler, broker, advocate, activist, mediator, negotiator, educator, initiator, empowered, coordinator, researcher, group facilitator, and public speaker.

### 3.0 METHODS

This research was conducted using the qualitative case method, which provides a detailed description and analysis of the quality, or substance, of human experience (McMullin, 2021; Munn, 2016; Padgett, 2017). The research location is in Turen Village, where there is a community empowerment initiative, namely the freshwater fish cultivation development program. The subject was determined by purposive or judgmental sampling technique (Gill, 2020), which is a procedure is adopted in situations where certain considerations with respect to specific objectives are made, namely CSW and empowerment actors involved in the initiative process, such as community leaders, heads of women's groups, and Neighborhood associations.

The data collection process was realized using in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation methods. Its validity and credibility involve conformability criteria and referential adequacy, respectively. The qualitative data analysis technique is associated with various processing stages developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014). This includes data collection, display, condensation, and conclusion or verification stages, where these four are simultaneous and interactive processes.

1) Data collection, at this stage, the data collection process was centered on the subject, namely CSW and empowerment actors, and obtained through the following methods, interview, observation, and documentation analysis. These were carried out during the community empowerment program, starting from the initial implementation and evaluation phases.

2) Data condensation, at this stage, the process of selecting, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming information is carried out in written field notes, interview transcripts, documents,

and other empirical materials. Meanwhile, those that are considered less relevant to the purpose of this research are further sorted.

3) Data display, at this stage, the process of presenting the results, both in narrative and tabular forms, is carried out to support the concluding aspect. Besides, it is intended for the easy understanding of the acquired data.

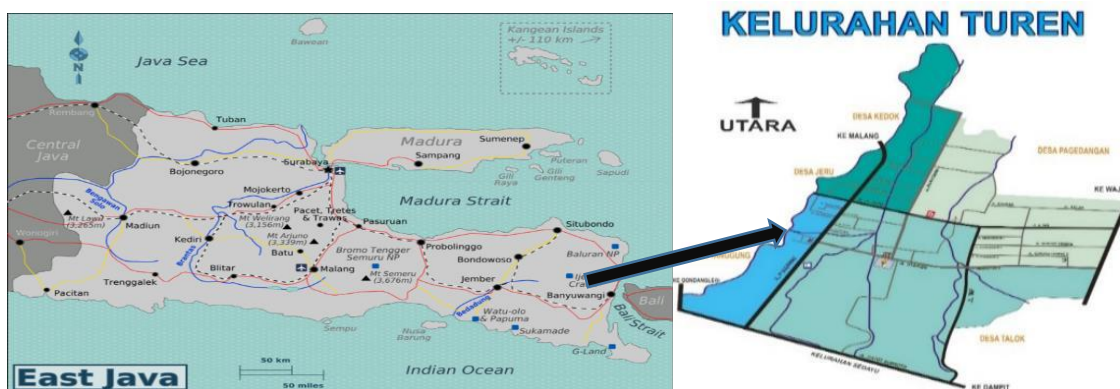
4) Conclusion or verification, at this stage, the results are formulated and verified by comparing them with the theoretical concept of the empowerment process, which serves as a reference, as well as the research findings.

## 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Description of Turen Village

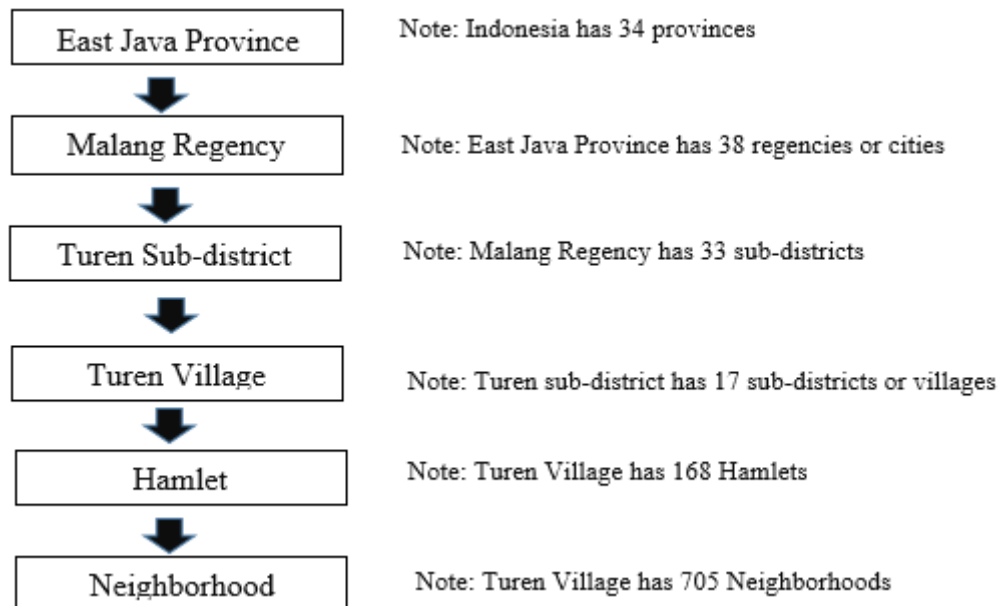
This research was carried out in Turen Village, which is located in Malang Regency, East Java Province, Indonesia. Geographically, it is located in the easternmost part of Java Island. Furthermore, the total area of the Turen Sub-district is 382.50 hectares, including 105.30 hectares and 531.07 hectares of rice fields and drylands, respectively. Currently, it has a population of 14,025 people with 3,013 families. This sub-district is situated in the traffic lane towards the coastal tourism area in Malang Regency.

**Figure 1: Location of Turen Village, Malang Regency, Indonesia**



The administrative unit under Turen Sub-district is the village government, besides, it has 17 villages, namely Kemulan, Tawangrejeni, Sawahan, Undaan, Gedokulon, Gedogwetan, Talok, Sedayu, Tanggung, Jeru, Turen, Pagedangan, Sanankerto, Sananrejo, Kedok, Palangsuko, and Tumpukrenteng. Each of them is divided into Hamlets (RW), further subdivided into Neighborhoods (RT). Currently, this Sub-district has 17 villages, 167 hamlets, and 712 Neighborhoods, while administratively, the government structure consists of the following stages Provinces, Regency or City, Sub-district, Village, Hamlet, and Neighborhood.

**Chart:** Government Administration Structure in Indonesia



One of the resources possessed by Wolulas Village is an irrigation channel whose water emanates from the Wuni river, and it passes through Hamlet 18, situated 200 meters along with Malang Regency, in Turen Sub-district. In addition, its width and water level are 3 meters, and 1 meter, which means it has the potential to be used in freshwater fish farming.

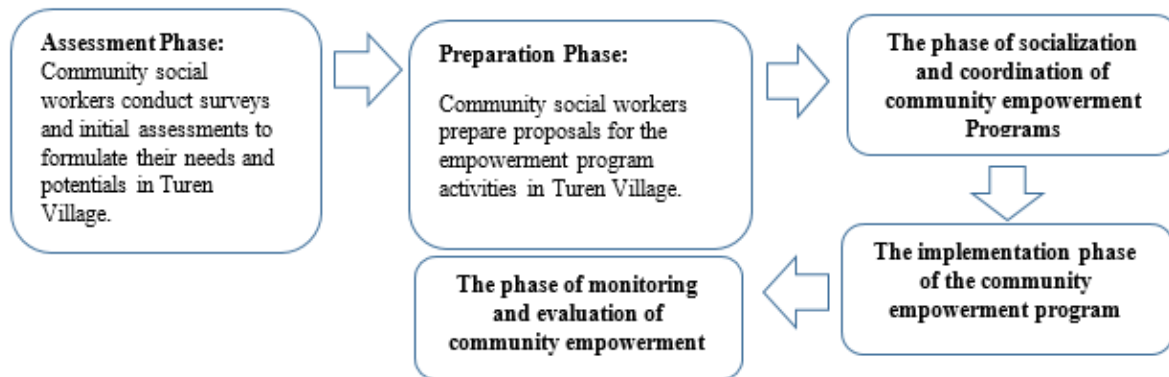
## 4.2 KUBE Program in Turen Village

The community empowerment program implemented in Turen Village is a freshwater fish cultivation development program that receives financial support from the government. It was initiated by CSW and assisted by empowerment actors from the community. This program aims to improve people's social welfare, specifically those in Hamlet 18. The implementation of the Fish Cultivation Group (Pokdakan) and the Women's Joint Business Group (KUBE) in this village involves partnering with the community. This is in the form of developing freshwater fish farming using the PAR method, which its process is carried out starting from assessing and identifying needs to the planning, implementation, organization, monitoring, and evaluator activities.

“The community empowerment program is in the form of developing freshwater fish farming designed to improve the people’s welfare in Turen Village. The outcome of the discussion held with the community members agreed that the irrigation water canals in this village, especially in the Hamlet 18 environment, need to be used for the development of freshwater fish farming” (Interview with Community Social Worker, March 2022)

Meanwhile, this empowerment program is carried out in 5 stages, namely (1) the assessment, (2) preparatory, (3) initial, in the form of socialization and coordination activities, (4) implementation, in the form of training, land preparation, assistance, and facility assistance, and (5) The final phases, in the form of monitoring and evaluation processes. A flow chart of the community empowerment process in Turen Village is as follows:

Figure 1: Flow, Community Empowerment Process in Turen Village



Furthermore, a description of the implementation of the community empowerment program in Turen Village is as follows:

1) First is the assessment phase where social workers are assisted by empowerment actors while carrying out surveys, observations, and holding discussions with community members to determine the problems, needs, and potentials in society. Second is the preparation phase where social workers prepare proposals for community empowerment programs, and this is based on suggestions and input from members. Furthermore, it was submitted by CSW to various parties, specifically the government, for assistance and financial support. The third is the initial phase with the activities carried out in the form of socialization and coordination with all stakeholders concerning the initiatives, objectives, and types of plans for the implemented program Wolulas Village. In addition to the community, this phase was also carried out by the Turen Village government, the Turen Sub-district, the Malang Regency Fisheries Service, and the Deputy Regent of Malang.

2) Based on the socialization and coordination phase results, it was agreed that this activity needs to be supported by the participation of partner groups, namely Pokdakan and KUBE. This program partner group agreed to cooperate in providing places and participants for training in freshwater fish farming, submitting a notification of activity permits to related parties, such as the village, sub-district, and others, as well as coordinating women and youth groups in training activities. Meanwhile, this principle refers to the concept of empowerment processes, "From, By, and For the Community", therefore, the PAR approach was employed.

The results of the socialization and coordination phases were also analyzed by the government, namely the Turen Village, Turen Sub-district, the Head of the Malang Regency Fisheries Service, and the Deputy Regent of Malang. The implementation was supported because it was in line with the Vice Regent's program on the "One Hamlet, One Biofloc Catfish Cultivation".

Table 1: Implementation of socialization and coordination activities by social workers and empowerment actors

No.	Activity	Description of Activities	Result
-----	----------	---------------------------	--------

---

1.	Socialization and Coordination with the Community	CSW and empowerment actors carry out socialization and coordination processes with members regarding the preparation and planning of these activities.	Reach an agreement with the community regarding to implemented plan of the empowerment program.
2.	Socialization and Coordination with the Turen Village and Sub-District Government	CSW and empowerment actors carry out socialization and coordination activity plans.	The Turen Village and Sub-district government appreciate and support implementing this community empowerment program.
3.	Socialization and Coordination with the Department of Fisheries and Waters of Malang Regency	CSW and empowerment actors carry out socialization and coordination activity plans related to the description and implementation of the freshwater fish farming system.	The Fisheries and the Water Service support assist in implementing the freshwater fish cultivation development program in the Turen Village community.
4.	Socialization and Coordination with the Deputy Regent of Malang	CSW and empowerment actors organized outreach and coordination processes with the Deputy Regent of Malang regarding implementing empowerment activities.	The Deputy Regent of Malang strongly supports this community empowerment program because it is in line with the Malang Regency government policy, namely each hamlet needs to have one catfish pond.

---

**Source:** data processing results, 2022

The fourth is the implementation phase, with community empowerment, activities carried out through three processes, namely: counseling and training, construction of ponds, mentoring, as well as support for facilities and goods. In addition, these are explained as follows:

1) Extension and Training Activities: were organized by community members of the Wolulas Village Fish Cultivation Group (Pokdakan) and the Women's Joint Business Group (KUBE). The materials utilized include (1) training sessions on how to cultivate freshwater fish, (2) its breeding process, (3) how to maintain the entire farming procedure, (3) pond preparation techniques, (4) maintenance, and (5) Women's Joint Business Group (KUBE) management which includes post-harvest and shredded fish processing.

2) Construction activities of facilities and land preparation for freshwater fish farming include concretely preparing as many as 6 pounds, making biofloc in the form of tarpaulin fish cola, and building reservoirs to supply water to the fishes.



3) Mentoring activities regularly provide guidance and assistance, thereby enabling the applied fish farming program to be carried out sustainably. It is carried out by social workers and empowerment actors, and this includes assistance in pond preparation, the building of reservoirs, seed distribution, maintenance, etc. This mentoring activity also involves other related parties such as the Malang Regency Fisheries Service, the Turen Village, and the Sub-district government.

Furthermore, the next activity supports the smoothness and sustainability of community empowerment programs. The assistance offered to KUBE was in the form of ovens, a gas stove, 3 kg LPG gas, and a fish steamer, while those provided to Pokdakan were water reservoirs and pumps, tarpaulins, fish seeds, etc.

The fifth is the final stage, Monitoring, and Evaluation Phase Activities. Evaluation is intended to determine the results obtained by partner group members after the given treatment, specifically in the socialization and coordination, and implementation phases. The outcome of this stage shows that in the socialization and coordination phase, the partner, as well as stakeholder groups, support the objectives of the various empowerment programs and tend to participate actively. In the implementation phase, it was reported that these activities have been running smoothly and were even used to achieve the set target.

**Table 2: Summary of Community Empowerment Activities**

No.	Activity Phase	Description
1.	First Phase: Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>CSW and empowerment actors carry out an assessment process in the community regarding identifying their problems, needs, and potential.</li></ul>
2.	Second Phase: Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>CSW and empowerment actors prepare proposals to be submitted to related parties, specifically the government.</li></ul>
3.	Third Phase: Socialization and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>CSW and empowerment actors socialize and coordinate with partner groups and stakeholders with respect to the objectives of the various empowerment programs, namely efforts to improve the social welfare of the Turen Village community realized through the freshwater fish farming development.</li></ul>
4.	Fourth Phase: Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>CSW and empowerment actors, together with partners, implement certain activities ranging from outreach, training sessions, land preparation for the construction of ponds, fish hatcheries, and assistance to harvesting and cultivating fish from Biofloc.</li></ul>
5.	Final Phase: Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>CSW and empowerment actors carry out monitoring and evaluation activities in the socialization and coordination as well as implementation phases. In general, the objectives of this empowerment program were properly achieved.</li></ul>

**Source:** data processing results, 2022

## 4.3 Community Social Worker (CSW) in Turen Village

In Turen Village, there is one social worker and 3 community empowerment actors. The main partners of this initiative are those from Turen Village, Turen Sub-district, Malang Regency, specifically Pokdakan, and KUBE with adequate support and participation. Some of the support facilities provided include mobilization, preparation of concrete ponds, reservoirs, Biofloc, Pokdakan, KUBE extension, training, the licensing process, and coordination with the local government, etc.

**Table 3: Identity of social workers and community empowerment actors**

No.	Name (Initial)	Gender	Age	Education	Status
1.	OS	Male	55	Doctor	Community Social Worker
2.	Asy	Male	50	Bachelor	Empowerment Actor (Public figure)
3.	Tmn	Female	60	Spinster	Empowerment Actor (Head of Hamlet)
4.	AW	Female	50	Spinster	Empowerment Actor (Head of Women's Group)

**Source:** data processing results, 2022

The dominant role of social workers in Turen Village is described as follows:

“As a social worker, we usually carry out various activities, including initiating proposals for empowerment programs that are submitted to the government, planning certain activities, then carrying out socialization and coordinating initiatives both in the community and the local government” (Interview with Community Social Worker, March 2022)

First, CSWs acts as initiators of the empowerment process. This group seeks to provide opportunities for members to adopt corrective measures to improve their welfare. As the initiator, they make efforts to convince relevant stakeholders such as the government, private sector, and the community; Second, CSW plays a role in planning and determining set targets or goals to be achieved in the implemented empowerment program. Planning is one of the most important functions of management, which defines the objectives of activities, creates strategies, and develops organizational work plans. Third, CSW coordinates the activities of all related parties. It plays a role in regulating the implementation of community empowerment programs.

“Implementing empowerment programs, as a social worker, we also have to coordinate all resources that help carry out certain activities, especially actors in the community”

“Besides, as a social worker, I also play a role in protecting the interests of the community by creating various opportunities and possibilities. However, this enables members to have access and engage in a negotiation process to get support from various parties.” (Interview with Community Social Worker, March 2022)

Fourth, CSW acts as an advocate by protecting and fighting for the interests of the community members. Regarding the empowerment process, they seek to defend and help the people meet their needs and improve their social welfare; Fifth, CSW assists individuals, groups, and communities in accessing existing resource systems, identifying problems, and developing the capacity to address their needs; Sixth, CSW carries out negotiation processes with various parties, thereby enabling the implementation of empowerment programs. A negotiator is an individual, group, or organization that negotiates with other parties. Negotiation is a bargaining process carried out to reach a mutual agreement between one party and another; Seventh, CSW acts as a broker, a liaison between the community and various parties, such as the government, private sector, universities, and various other stakeholders.

**Table 4: Summary of the role of CSW in community empowerment**

No.	Form of Role	Description of Role
1.	Initiator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Act as initiators of the empowerment process.</li></ul>
2.	Planner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsible for planning and designing the programs.</li></ul>
3.	Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinate all activities.</li></ul>
4.	Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Defend and protect the interests of community members and empowerment programs to improve their welfare.</li></ul>
5.	Enabler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsible for creating possibilities and opportunities for community members to be involved in efforts related to fulfilling their needs.</li></ul>
6.	Negotiator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Play a role in the negotiating process with various parties to provide assistance and support to community members.</li></ul>
7.	Broker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Act as intermediaries or liaisons to protect members' interests and various other parties.</li></ul>

**Source:** data processing results, 2022

#### 4.4 Community Empowerment in Turen Village

Apart from CSW, the empowerment process in Turen Village also involves empowering actors. Furthermore, the dominant roles played by these individuals are described as follows:

First, empowering actors assist CSW in motivating the community members to participate in the empowerment process. This is boosted by engaging in training sessions, mentoring, coaching, or counseling activities. The role of the motivator is carried out to encourage and mobilize members.

“Yes, as community leaders in Turen Village, we were invited to coordinate and collaborate with social workers to get involved and participate in empowerment programs...the community were motivated, to actively get involved in the empowerment programs” (Interview with ASY, one of the empowering actors or community leaders, March 2022)

Second, they assist CSW in disseminating information concerning the empowerment programs to various parties. An empowering agent is a party that acts as a sender of messages to the communicant during the communication process. They not only play a role in disseminating information to the community, but they are also responsible for responding and inputting, either directly or indirectly.

“As the head of the hamlet, our responsibility is to disseminate information to the social workers regarding the implemented empowerment programs in Turen Village. I communicate with various parties, specifically with the community members, to support the initiative because it is useful in improving their social welfare...” (Interview with TMN, one of the empowering actors and head of the Hamlet 18, March 2022)

Third, as a mediator, they assist CSW in bridging the interests of the community and various parties, such as the government, private sectors, etc. The main essence is to act as mediators; therefore, community empowerment programs tend to trigger the interests of other stakeholders.

“As a resident and head of the women's business group in Turen Village, I support and participate in implementing a community empowerment program. As a community leader, I also help social workers by acting as a mediator to various parties, to get support for the successful implementation of this initiative” (Interview with AW, one of the empowerment actors and head of the women's groups, March 2022)

Fourth, empowering actors also act as empowerment facilitators to help the community to identify and solve certain problems by ensuring members are empowered. This involves changing from a powerless condition to an empowered and independent community. As facilitators, they help CSW carries out various activities, including socialization, training, and other empowerment tasks.

“Yes, as part of the implementing team in the empowerment program, we strive to facilitate the community's interests. This activity is planned and carried out for the benefit of members as well as improving their welfare” (Interview with ASY, an empowering actor and community leader, March 2022)

**Table 5: Summary of the role of community empowerment actors**

No.	Form of Role	Description of Role
1.	Motivator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Act as motivators who encourage the active participation of members in community empowerment activities.</li></ul>
2.	Communicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Act as communicators by disseminating information concerning protecting the interests of community members and various stakeholders involved in the empowerment process.</li></ul>
3.	Mediator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Act as mediators who bridge the community's interests and various related parties, such as the government, etc.</li></ul>

- 
4. Facilitator
    - Act as facilitators who facilitate tackling various needs in the empowerment process.
- 

**Source:** data processing results, 2022

## 5.0 DISCUSSION

This research depicts two relevant attributes, namely the role of CSW and empowering actors through the implementation of PAR based on the community empowerment model. The research of Cristina (2020); Setianingsih & Aalin (2020) and Hukom et al., (2021) in Indonesia stated that implementing this initiative often fails due to the less-than-optimal role, task, and function of these facilitators. Seth & Tutor (2021) in the Philippines showed that social work plays an important role in community empowerment programs related to poverty alleviation. Likewise, Busaspathumrong (2008) in Thailand showed social workers' important role and efforts in handling the crisis intervention for Tsunami Survivors.

Furthermore, Sharp (2019) stated that the community empowerment process aims to support people and enable them to take control of the decisions and factors that affect their lives and communities. Therefore, implementing PAR-based community empowerment programs is appropriate. Various research showed that this initiative is functional through the implementation of PAR approach ((Sadabadi & Rad, 2021; Dudgeon et al., 2017; Ruechakul et al., 2015; Bacon et al., 2013; Trisnowati et al., 2021; Below et al., 2021; Sulaiman, et al., 2021).

From a social perspective, the community empowerment process is one model of macro work practice (Netting et al., 2017). Social work is a professional activity that helps individuals, groups, or communities increase or improve their abilities to execute certain social functions, thereby creating a conducive society to achieve their goals (Kirst-Ashman, 2018). In this perspective, CSW is a change agent system which role is to take the initiative in macro processes, including changing institutions, organizations, and community systems (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2018).

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

Community empowerment is one of the models in the macro practice of social workers, who act as initiators, planners, coordinators, advocates, enablers, negotiators, and brokers. In addition, the successful implementation of these initiatives is also determined by the roles played by empowerment actors who come from the local communities. This includes community, local government, and women's group leaders who act as motivators, communicators, mediators, and facilitators. This implies CSW needs to be able to cooperate with empowerment actors in the process of implementing this initiative. They have implemented the PAR approach as an important aspect in supporting the success of these practices, specifically in Indonesia.

## 7.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors are grateful thank to the Director of Research and Community Service (DPPM), the Muhammadiyah University of Malang, for supporting this research.

## REFERENCES

- Adamson, D., & Bromiley, R. (2013). Community empowerment: Learning from practice in community regeneration. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 26(3), 190-202.
- Annas, S., Side, S., Pandjajangi, A.M.R.T.S.A., Syahrul, F., & Arradiah, L. (2017). Using SAPR Model for Solution of Social Poverty Problem Due to Covid-19 in Makassar City. *Jurnal Varian*, 5(1), 47-58.
- Asutin, M.J., Anthony, E.K., Knee, R.T., & Mathias, J. (2016). Revisiting the relationship between micro and macro social work practice. *Family in Society*, 97(4), 270-277.
- Bacon, C., Devuono-Powell, S., Frampton, M., Lopresti, T., & Pannu, C. (2013). Introduction to empowered partnership: Community-based participatory action research for environmental justice. *Environmental Justice*, 6(1), 1-8.
- Below, J.V., Nahuelhual, L., Eleuterio, A.A., & Latorra, P. (2021). Can participatory action research foster social learning in communities struggling for land tenure? *Land Use Policy*, 101, 1-13.
- Berggren, J., Anand, C., & Bjerger, B. (2021). Dilemmas in social work practice. *Nordic Social Work Research*, 11(5), 3019-3028.
- Burns, D., Howard, J., & Ospina, S.M. (2021). *The SAGE Handbook of Participatory Research and Inquiry*. New York: SAGE Publications.
- Busaspathumrong, P. (2006). The role of social workers and social service delivery during crisis intervention for Tsunami survivors: A case study of Thailand. *Journal of Social Work in Disability and Rehabilitation*, 5(3-4), 127-137.
- Chevailer, J.M., & Buckles, D.J. (2019). *Participatory Action Research: Theory and Methods for Engaged Inquiry*. New York: Routledge.
- Cristina, H. M. (2020). Community Empowerment Program to Increase Community Income in Sitimulyo Village, Piyungan District, Yogyakarta. *Jurnal Penelitian Humaniora*, 128-134.
- Dudgeon, P., Scrine, C., Cox, A., & Walker, R. (2017). Facilitating Empowerment and Self-Determination Through Participatory Action Research: Findings From the National Empowerment Project. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), 1-11.
- Fritz, J.M., & Rheaume, J. (2014). *Community Intervention: Clinical Sociology Perspectives*. New York: Springer.
- Gill, S.L. (2020). Qualitative Sampling Methods. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 36(4), 579-581.
- Gupta, J., Pouw, N.R.M., & Ros-Tonen, M.A.F. (2015). Towards an Elaborated Theory of Inclusive Development. *European Journal of Development Research*, 27(4), 541-559.

- Hukom, F.A.A., Arbiani, A., & Saribanon, N. (2021). The Entrepreneurial Capabilities for Sustainability of Community Empowerment Programs. *Journal of Social Political Sciences*, 2(1), 89-98.
- Hung, N., & Lau, L.L. (2019). The relationship between social capital and self-rated health: a multilevel analysis based on a poverty alleviation program in the Philippines. *BMC Public Health*, 19(1641), 1-13.
- Itzhaki-Braun, Y. (2021). Community social workers' perspectives on the challenges and opportunities presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. *Am J Orthopsychiatry*, 91(6), 714-723.
- Kirst-Ashman, K.K., & Hull, G.F.Jr. (2018). *Generalist Practice with Organizations and Communities*. Boston: Cengage Learning.
- Lévesque, M., & Negura, L. (2021). Organizational Context and Healthcare Reforms: What Effect on the Professional Distress of Canadian Social Workers and Social Provision? *Frontiers in Sociology*, 6, 1-17.
- Manshor, Z., Abdullah, S., & Hamed, A.B. (2020). Poverty and the Social Problems. *International Journal of Academic in Business & Social Sciences*, 10(3), 614-617.
- McMullin, C. (2021). Transcription and Qualitative Methods: Implications for Third Sector Research. *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 1-14.
- Miles, M.B., Huberman, M.A., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. New York: SAGE Publications.
- Mrhalek, T., & Kajanova, A. (2018). Work satisfaction and mental pressure of social workers and workers in social services. *Kontakt*, 2, 175-180.
- Muis, I., Agustang, A., & Adam, A. (2020). Elderly Poverty: Social Demographic, Work Distribution, Problem Health & Social Protection. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 9(1), 40-48.
- Munn, J. C. (2016). Teaching qualitative methods to social workers: Four approaches. *Qualitative Social Work*, 15(3), 322-330.
- Netting, F.E., Kettner, P., McMurtry, S., & Thomas, M.L. (2017). *Social Work Macro Practice (Connecting Core Competencies)*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Padgett, D. K. (2017). *Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research*. New York: SAGE Publications.
- Paulin, J., Matis, S., & Witt, H. (2019). *The Field Work Field Placement*. New York: Springer Publishing Company, LLC.

- Romich, J., & Fentress, T. (2019). The Policy Roundtable Model: Encouraging Scholar–Practitioner Collaborations to Address Poverty-related Social Problems. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 45(1), 76-86.
- Ruechakul, P., Erawan, P., & Siwarom, M. (2015). Empowering Communities in Educational Management: Participatory Action Research. *International Education Studies*, 8(9), 65-78.
- Sadabadi., A.A., & Rad, Z.R. (2021). Social Innovation Participatory Action Research for empowerment of marginalized people. *Asian Social Work and Policy Review*, 15(2), 160-172.
- Schubotz, D. (2019). *Participatory Research: Why and How to Involve People in Research*. New York: SAGE Publications.
- Seth, S., & Tutor, M.V. (2021). Evaluation of Anti-Poverty Programs' Impact on Joint Disadvantages: Insights From the Philippine Experience. *Review of Income and Wealth*, 67(4), 977-1004.
- Setianingsih, N.A., & Aalin, E.R. (2020). Analysis of Funds for Community Empowerment Programs for Economic Development. *Jurnal Analisis Bisnis Ekonomi*, 18(1), 49-60.
- Stoecker, R., & Falcon, A. (2022). *Handbook on Participatory Action Research and Community Development*. England: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Sulaiman, A.I., Suswanto, B., Masrukin, M., & Windiasih, R. (2021). The Economic Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship and Cooperatives for the Harmonization in Society. *Humanities and Social Science Research*, 2(3), 15-25.
- Sumaryanta, S., Mardapi., D., Sugiman, S., & Herawan, T. (2019). Community-based teacher training: Transformation of sustainable teacher empowerment strategy in Indonesia. *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, 21(1), 48-66.
- Suzuki, Y., Purnomo, S., & Rufidah, R. (2017). Islamic Microfinance and Poverty Alleviation Program: Preliminary Research Findings from Indonesia. *Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance*, 5(1), 63-82.
- Trisnowati, H., Ismail, D., Padmawati, R.S., & Utarini, A. (2021). Developing a framework for youth empowerment to prevent smoking behavior in a rural setting: study protocol for a participatory action research. *Health Education*, 121(1), 30-47.
- Trust, T. (2017). Motivation, Empowerment, and Innovation: Teachers' Beliefs About How Participating in the Edmodo Math Subject Community Shapes Teaching and Learning. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 49(1-2), 16-30.
- Urbina, M.G., & Alvarez, S.E. (2018). *Hispanics in the U.S. Criminal Justice System*. Illions: Charles C. Thomas Limited.



Weiss-Gal, I., & Gal., J. (2018). Explaining the policy practice of community social workers. *Journal of Social Work*, 20(2), 216-233.

Wood, L. (2019). *Participatory Action Learning and Action Research: Theory, Practice and Process*. New York: Routledge.

Zastrow, C. (2017). *Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare*. Boston: Cengage Learning.