

# DEVELOPMENT OF A CREATIVE ECONOMY FOR SHALLOT FARMERS TO ENHANCE HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN SUMBERKEDAWUNG PROBOLINGGO

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**Abstract:** Sumberkedawung village, particularly the hamlets of Sempol and Kedungminian, is an agrarian area where shallots constitute the primary commodity and serve as a major driver of the local economy. Despite this potential, the shallot sector has not fully translated into improved farmer welfare due to several persistent challenges, including unstable market prices, limited financial capital, the absence of subsidised fertilisers, insufficient technical assistance from farmer groups and agricultural agencies, and weak post-harvest creative management. This study and community engagement programme employed a *Participatory Action Research* (PAR) approach, comprising several stages: general mapping, thematic mapping, transect walks, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), problem- and objective-tree analyses, and the formulation of community-approved action plans. The principal intervention involved organising a seminar entitled “*Creative Economy Development for Shallot Farmers to Improve Community Income in Sumberkedawung Village*”, involving farmers and leaders of local farmer groups. The programme successfully encouraged a shift in farmers’ mindsets from relying solely on selling raw produce toward embracing value-added processing and developing high-quality shallot seed enterprises. These initiatives opened new opportunities for more stable and sustainable income generation. By the conclusion of the programme, the community demonstrated enhanced understanding of agricultural management and the potential of creative economic strategies, and formulated recommendations for developing processed shallot-based products as a pathway to improving the socio-economic well-being of farming households.

**Keywords:** Creative Economy, Shallots, Community Income, Participatory Action Research

## Introduction

Sumberkedawung Village, located in Leces District, Probolinggo Regency, is an agrarian community in which most residents depend on farming activities, particularly shallot cultivation, as the primary source of household income. At the national level, shallots are recognised as a strategic horticultural commodity with high

economic value, playing an essential role in meeting household food needs and supporting the culinary industry, as well as absorbing labour in rural areas.<sup>1</sup>

However, various studies in major shallot-producing regions indicate that farmers' income remains vulnerable due to price fluctuations, high production cost structures, limited access to technology and capital, and the relatively small scale of farming operations. Consequently, farm profits are unstable, and improvements in farmers' household welfare remain difficult to achieve in any significant manner.<sup>2</sup>

The condition of shallot farmers in Sempol Hamlet, Sumberkedawung Village, reflects a similar pattern: dependence on the sale of raw shallot commodities to middlemen, unstable selling prices often controlled by marketing chain monopolies, limited access to subsidised fertilisers and other production inputs, and suboptimal yields. These constraints ultimately result in modest earnings that are frequently insufficient to meet children's educational costs or to fulfil basic household needs adequately.

Within this context, the creative economy offers a new perspective for agricultural development, namely a shift from merely producing raw commodities toward generating added value through creativity, innovation, and the utilisation of local resources. This may take the form of product diversification (for instance, fried shallots, shallot powder, culinary derivatives, and high-quality seed production) as well as the strengthening of marketing networks and village branding.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Muhaimin and A. Wahib, "Efficiency of Production Factor of Red Onion Farming in Indonesia," *Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences* 65, no. 5 (May 29, 2017): 255–60, <https://doi.org/10.18551/rjoas.2017-05.33>; Milka Silvia CD and Dwi Susilowati, "Analisis Keputusan Petani Dalam Berusahatani Bawang Merah (*Allium Ascalonicum* L.) Di Desa Tawangargo Kecamatan Karangploso Kabupaten Malang," *JU-Ke: Jurnal Ketahanan Pangan* 5, no. 1 (2021): 21–29; Anis Fuadi, Siti Nurlaela, and Elea Nur Aziza, "Pemberdayaan Petani Berbasis Participatory Action Research (PAR) Untuk Meningkatkan Adopsi Budidaya Bawang Merah Di Desa Tambakrejo," *Jurnal Pemberdayaan Masyarakat* 13, no. 1 (June 19, 2025): 53, <https://doi.org/10.37064/jpm.v13i1.24573>.

<sup>2</sup> Navita Maharani, "Pendapatan Usaha Tani Bawang Merah Di Kecamatan Junrejo Kota Batu," *Jurnal Ilmiah Hijau Cendekia* 4, no. 2 (September 30, 2019): 70–73, <https://doi.org/10.32503/hijau.v4i2.636>; Eko Santoso, Cakti Indra Gunawan, and Jatmiko Setiaji, "Faktor Yang Memengaruhi Pendapatan Usahatani Bawang Merah Di Desa Tamban Kecamatan Pakel Kabupaten Tulungagung," *Journal of Agribusiness and Agricultural Communication* 8, no. 1 (2025): 71–82, <https://doi.org/10.35941/jakp.8.1.2025.18930.71-82>; Khoirul Umam Hasbiy and Andrian Eka Hardana, "Analisis Pendapatan Usahatani Bawang Merah Di Dataran Tinggi Kota Batu," *Agrikultura* 35, no. 2 (August 11, 2024): 331–39, <https://doi.org/10.24198/agrikultura.v35i2.53760>.

<sup>3</sup> Satrio Pratomo, Khusnul Ashar, and Dias Satria, "Role of Creative Economy on Local Economic Development," *Journal of Indonesian Applied Economics* 9, no. 2 (August 1, 2021): 27–35,

A number of studies demonstrate that creative-economy initiatives grounded in local potential and cultural wisdom can contribute to poverty reduction, increased income, and strengthened economic independence in rural communities, including through the development of household-based agro-industries and women farmer groups.<sup>4</sup> The application of creative-economy principles within the agricultural sector has been shown to enhance farmers' income and generate new employment opportunities in rural areas.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, with improved technology and marketing systems, shallot farmers in Sumberkedawung Village have the potential to significantly increase their production outcomes.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, the literature on Participatory Action Research (PAR) emphasises that participatory approaches positioning citizens as both researchers and agents of change are effective for promoting sustainable socio-economic transformation. The cyclical process of action and reflection enables the emergence of collective learning, capacity strengthening, and greater community control over local development processes.<sup>7</sup>

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<https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.JIAE.009.02.4>; Puput Puspita et al., "Peran Ekonomi Kreatif Dan Industri Lokal Dalam Meningkatkan Pendapatan Dan Mengurangi Kemiskinan Di Masyarakat Pedesaan Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Ekonomi* 18, no. 2 (2024): 345–55; Dominicus Priyarsono and Tantan Hermansah, "Membingkai Pertanian Dengan Ekonomi Kreatif: Suatu Telaah Eksploratif," in *Orange Books* (Bogor: FEM IPB, 2014)2014, [https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/63252/1/MEMBINGKAI\\_PERTANIAN\\_DENGAN\\_EKONOMI\\_KREATIF.pdf](https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/63252/1/MEMBINGKAI_PERTANIAN_DENGAN_EKONOMI_KREATIF.pdf); Syahrizal Maulana et al., "Conceptual Model on Creative Economy Development of Waterfront Cities in Indonesia: Lesson Learned from Palembang and Surabaya," *Spatium* 51 (2024): 21–31, <https://doi.org/10.2298/SPAT231219004M>.

<sup>4</sup> Puspita et al., "Peran Ekonomi Kreatif Dan Industri Lokal Dalam Meningkatkan Pendapatan Dan Mengurangi Kemiskinan Di Masyarakat Pedesaan Indonesia"; Agustinus Kismet Nugroho Jati, Endang Purwaningsih, and Maria Karmelia Fajarlestari, "Penerapan Ekonomi Dan Inovasi Hijau Dalam Pengembangan Ekonomi Kreatif Lokal Kelompok Wanita Tani Desa Paulan, Solo," *Abdimas Galub* 7, no. 1 (March 31, 2025): 217–25, <https://doi.org/10.25157/ag.v7i1.16639>.

<sup>5</sup> Sindi Claudia Br. Pinayungan et al., "Pengembangan Ekonomi Lokal Di Desa Raut Bosi: Peran Sektor Pertanian Dalam Meningkatkan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat," *SEWAGATI: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Indonesia* 4, no. 3 (August 25, 2025): 130–38, <https://doi.org/10.56910/sewagati.v4i3.3085>.

<sup>6</sup> Faradina Zevaya et al., "Program Inovasi Desa (PRO-IDE) Mengintegrasikan Ekonomi Kreatif Dan Pertanian Inovatif Dalam Pembangunan Kampung Wisata Edukasi Hijau Di Kelurahan Bakung Jaya," *Masyarakat Berkarya: Jurnal Pengabdian Dan Perubahan Sosial* 1, no. 4 (November 20, 2024): 60–69, <https://doi.org/10.62951/karya.v1i4.796>.

<sup>7</sup> Jennifer Keahey, "Sustainable Development and Participatory Action Research: A Systematic Review," *Systemic Practice and Action Research* 34, no. 3 (June 10, 2021): 291–306, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11213-020-09535-8>; Roy Jones and Christopher R. Bryant, "Participatory Action Research for Rural and Regional Development," *Geographical Research* 54, no. 2 (May 27, 2016): 115–17, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-5871.12185>.

In Indonesia, PAR has been utilised in farmer empowerment initiatives, including in enhancing the adoption of innovations in shallot cultivation and strengthening farmer organisations. Nevertheless, its application remains predominantly focused on technical cultivation aspects and has not been widely integrated with creative-economy development based on specific agricultural commodities, particularly in religious rural communities such as Sumberkedawung.<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, this community-engagement article aims to critically describe the process and outcomes of mentoring shallot farmers in developing a creative economy in Sumberkedawung Village through the PAR approach. It further seeks to strengthen farmers' capacities in farm-management practices, value-added product development, and institutional as well as marketing-network reinforcement. Through synergistic collaboration between local government, the private sector, and the community, the creative-economy potential of Sumberkedawung Village is expected to continue advancing and contribute sustainably to improving rural household welfare.

## **Theoretical Frameworks**

In the Indonesian context, the creative economy is understood as a set of idea- and talent-based activities that generate economically valuable goods and services through the protection of intellectual property rights, with measurable contributions to GDP, employment absorption, and regional competitiveness.<sup>9</sup> The application of this concept to the agricultural sector encourages a shift from raw commodity production to diversified derivative products, creative packaging and branding, household-scale agro-industry development, and integration with culinary, tourism, and digital-content subsectors grounded in local knowledge.

A range of studies on rural creative economies indicates that when farmers are able to process their harvests into value-added products such as processed foods, ready-to-use seasonings, or distinctive village-based products, there is an increase in

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<sup>8</sup> Sifwatir Rifah, "Jagung Betiring Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Berbasis Potensi Lokal Dengan Metode Participatory Action Research (PAR)," *PARTICIPATORY: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 1, no. 2 (October 31, 2022): 98–114, <https://doi.org/10.58518/participatory.v1i2.1836>.

<sup>9</sup> Pratomo, Ashar, and Satria, "Role of Creative Economy on Local Economic Development."

income, the emergence of new employment opportunities, and strengthened economic autonomy within rural communities.<sup>10</sup>

From a commodity perspective, shallots hold a strategic position as one of Indonesia's leading horticultural products, serving both as a staple household seasoning and as a raw material for the food industry. Research in several major production centres such as Batu City, Karanganyar, Lampung, and Enrekang demonstrates that shallots possess high economic value and carry the potential for substantial profits, yet remain highly vulnerable to price fluctuations, pest and disease outbreaks, and elevated input costs.<sup>11</sup> Farm-profitability and marketing-chain analyses reveal that lengthy supply chains, the dominant role of intermediary traders, and unequal marketing margins result in farmers receiving a relatively small share of the final consumer price.<sup>12</sup>

These conditions create unstable and vulnerable household incomes for shallot farmers, making them prone to expanding production without adequate price and market-risk management. In the context of Sumberkedawung Village, this analytical framework helps explain why reliance on selling raw shallots to middlemen traps farmers in conditions of limited earnings, while simultaneously revealing opportunities for developing derivative products, high-quality seed production, and strengthened marketing institutions as relevant creative-economy strategies.

The framework on income enhancement and rural welfare complements the previous perspectives by highlighting that welfare is measured not only through income levels but also through income stability, diversification of income sources, and the household's ability to meet basic needs, education, healthcare, and future savings.

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<sup>10</sup> Irhamni Rahman and Lucky Maulana Hakim, "Development of Creative Economy Based on Local Wisdom in the Era of Digital Transformation Through Inclusive Education and Village Community Empowerment in Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta," *BASKARA: Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship* 6, no. 2 (April 30, 2024): 213–24, <https://doi.org/10.54268/baskara.v6i2.21629>.

<sup>11</sup> Hasbiy and Hardana, "Analisis Pendapatan Usahatani Bawang Merah Di Dataran Tinggi Kota Batu"; Harina Harina, Nuraeni Nuraeni, and Muhammad Salim, "Analisis Produksi Dan Pemasaran Usahatani Bawang Merah (Allium Cepa l) Studi Kasus Di Desa Banti, Kecamatan Baraka, Kabupaten Enrekang," *Wiratani: Jurnal Ilmiah Agribisnis* 2, no. 2 (December 17, 2019): 67–81, <https://doi.org/10.33096/wiratani.v2i2.36>.

<sup>12</sup> Reza Kesuma, Wan Abbas Zakaria, and Suriaty Situmorang, "Analisis Usahatani Dan Pemasaran Bawang Merah Di Kabupaten Tanggamus," *Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Agribisnis: Journal of Agribusiness Science* 4, no. 1 (February 1, 2016): 1–7, <https://doi.org/10.23960/jiia.v4i1.1208>.

Rural-development studies in Indonesia demonstrate that income increases generated through livelihood diversification, including non-agricultural enterprises and creative-economy initiatives, contribute to poverty reduction and improvements in welfare indicators.<sup>13</sup>

From a policy standpoint, village funds and the establishment of Village-Owned Enterprises (*BUMDes*) serve as important instruments for promoting productive economic activities based on local potential. Research on *BUMDes* and village-fund management shows that when these resources are directed toward empowerment programmes and the development of village enterprises, including agriculture and creative-economy sectors, they generate positive impacts on community income and rural economic growth.<sup>14</sup>

For shallot-farming households, income improvement through the creative economy does not solely entail achieving better prices for primary products; it also opens new income streams from processed goods and knowledge-based services that can strengthen their resilience to price shocks and crop-failure risks.

These perspectives collectively form a robust conceptual foundation for designing and analysing PAR-based community-engagement interventions in Sumberkedawung Village. The creative-economy perspective articulates the direction of transformation, shifting from raw commodities to value-added creative products. The shallot-commodity framework provides contextual understanding of the technical and structural characteristics that render farmers vulnerable while also offering opportunities for enterprise development.

Meanwhile, the income-enhancement and rural-welfare framework ensures that the entire mentoring process does not stop at the implementation of activities but aims to produce fundamental changes in income stability and household-welfare

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<sup>13</sup> M. Khairul Fatihin, "Pengaruh Pengelolaan Dana BUMDes Terhadap Peningkatan Pendapatan Masyarakat Di Desa Lando Kecamatan Terara Lombok Timur," *Journal of Economics and Business UBS* 2, no. 6 (December 10, 2023): 3543–53, <https://doi.org/10.52644/joeb.v2i6.822>; Wasudewa A.A. Ngurah Gede and Doddy Aditya Iskandar, "Dampak Dana Desa Terhadap Pertumbuhan Dan Perkembangan Ekonomi Regional Di Indonesia," *Journal of Regional and Rural Development Planning* 7, no. 2 (June 30, 2023): 138–50, <https://doi.org/10.29244/jp2wd.2023.7.2.138-150>.

<sup>14</sup> Agus Afandi et al., *Metodologi Pengabdian Masyarakat* (Jakarta: Direktorat Pendidikan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Kemenag RI, 2022)2022.

quality, strengthening local institutions such as farmer groups and *BUMDes*, and increasing the village community's capacity to manage economic potential based on their flagship commodity. With this integrated framework, the community-engagement initiative possesses not only an empirical grounding at the local level but also strong academic justification and relevance to national discourses on the creative economy, agricultural development, and sustainable rural development.

## Method

The community-engagement method employed in this study is grounded in the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, a research–action framework that positions the community as active subjects involved across all stages from problem identification and planning to implementation and reflection.<sup>15</sup> PAR was selected because it aligns with the objective of empowering shallot farmers in Sumberkedawung Village, not merely to produce descriptive accounts of local conditions but also to facilitate socio-economic transformation through a sustained process of collective learning.

Across various studies, PAR is described as a methodology that integrates critical reflection, data collection, and transformative action by engaging affected groups as equal partners, thereby making it highly relevant for community development, KKN programmes, and the strengthening of village institutions.<sup>16</sup> This design creates participatory spaces for farmers, farm labourers, *BUMDes*

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<sup>15</sup> Ahmad Ihwanul Muttaqin, Muhammad Abdul Halim, and Haidar Idris, "Partisipasi Perempuan Kepala Keluarga Dalam Menciptakan Inklusi Sosial Di Desa Pandansari Lumajang," *Khidmatuna: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 3, no. 2 (May 15, 2023): 165–86, <https://doi.org/10.54471/khidmatuna.v3i2.2952>.

<sup>16</sup> Nur Afni Khafsoh and Nur Riani, "Implementation of Participatory Action Research (PAR) In Community Service Program," *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 5, no. 1 (June 3, 2024): 237–53, <https://doi.org/10.32815/jpm.v5i1.2034>; Abdul Rahmat and Mira Mirnawati, "Model Participation Action Research Dalam Pemberdayaan Masyarakat," *Aksara: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Nonformal* 6, no. 1 (January 15, 2020): 62–71, <https://doi.org/10.37905/aksara.6.1.62-71.2020>; Supriyono Supriyono and Uril Bahrudin, "Pengembangan Smart Village Melalui Digitalisasi Dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Kota Batu Menggunakan Metode Participatory Action Research," in *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Teknologi Dan Sistem Informasi*, vol. 4, 504–16, <https://doi.org/10.33005/sitasi.v4i1.890>; Afandi et al., *Metodologi Pengabdian Masyarakat*.

administrators, and village officials to articulate problems and solutions, while providing the action–reflection cycle that characterises PAR.<sup>17</sup>

The engagement activities were conducted in Sempol and Kedungminian Hamlets, Sumberkedawung Village, Leces District, Probolinggo Regency, an agrarian socio-economic environment with shallots as the primary commodity and reinforced by strong socio-religious activities that serve as important social capital. The subjects of the programme were selected purposively and included shallot farmers as primary agricultural actors, farm labourers as vulnerable groups dependent on daily wages, farmer-group leaders as institutional actors, *BUMDes* administrators as representatives of local economic institutions, and village officials responsible for coordination and policy support at the local level.

The procedure followed PAR stages adapted into four main phases: *To Know*, *To Understand*, *To Plan*, and *To Act*. The *To Know* phase involved general and thematic mapping to explore the village’s socio-economic and religious conditions, including shallot cultivation and marketing patterns, institutional networks, and religious routines, supplemented with participatory observation of farmers’ daily activities. The *To Understand* phase deepened the mapping findings through focus group discussions (*FGDs*) with key actors to construct problem trees and aspiration trees related to pricing issues, access to production inputs, and post-harvest processing, ensuring that root-cause analysis emerged directly from the community’s perspective.<sup>18</sup>

The *To Plan* phase centred on the participatory formulation of action plans based on agreed priority issues and aspirations. Together with village stakeholders, an agenda was developed for the main activity, a seminar and training session on “Creative Economy for Shallot Farmers,” including topic selection, identification of resource persons (farmer-group leaders, *BUMDes* administrators, academics), activity scheduling, and designation of target groups (shallot farmers and farm labourers). This

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<sup>17</sup> Fuadi, Nurlaela, and Aziza, “Pemberdayaan Petani Berbasis Participatory Action Research (PAR) Untuk Meningkatkan Adopsi Budidaya Bawang Merah Di Desa Tambakrejo”; Pranoto Suryo Herbanu et al., “Increasing the Preparedness through Participatory Action Research in the Implementation of the Disaster Resilient Village Program in Madegondo Village,” *Jurnal Geografika: Geografi Lingkungan Laban Basab* 5, no. 1 (July 31, 2024): 49–62, <https://doi.org/10.20527/jgp.v5i1.12717>.

<sup>18</sup> Rahmat and Mirnawati, “Model Participation Action Research Dalam Pemberdayaan Masyarakat.”

planning process also established the follow-up mechanisms and role distribution to support the sustainability of the planned actions.

The *To Action* phase constituted the implementation of the action plan, including the execution of the creative-economy seminar/training, technical discussions on opportunities for derivative-product development and high-quality seed production, and ongoing mentoring for business idea formulation and follow-up planning. All stages were supported by qualitative data-collection techniques, including participatory observation of agricultural and religious activities, in-depth interviews with farmers, community leaders, *BUMDes* administrators, and village officials, *FGDs* as collective-discussion platforms, and visual documentation and village documents (village profiles, farmer-group data, and policy documents). These methods align with national guidelines for research and community-engagement activities to ensure data diversity and enhance the validity of findings.<sup>19</sup>

Data were analysed qualitatively following the steps of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification as proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña.<sup>20</sup> All field notes, interview transcripts, and *FGD* results were repeatedly reviewed and coded, then grouped into themes such as production-input issues, marketing dynamics, farmers' knowledge and skills, social capital and village institutions, and business orientations toward the creative economy. These themes were subsequently presented in matrices, problem and aspiration tree diagrams, and narrative case descriptions before conclusions were drawn, continuously verified through team discussions and member checking with key informants.<sup>21</sup>

Where supporting quantitative data were available, such as participant numbers or pre–post knowledge scores, these were analysed descriptively to complement qualitative insights, as is standart in PAR community-empowerment programmes.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Afandi et al., *Metodologi Pengabdian Masyarakat*.

<sup>20</sup> Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, ed. Terj. Tjetjep Rohindi, 3rd ed. (London: Sage Publications, Inc, 2014)2014.

<sup>21</sup> Herbanu et al., "Increasing the Preparedness through Participatory Action Research in the Implementation of the Disaster Resilient Village Program in Madegondo Village"; Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*.

<sup>22</sup> Fuadi, Nurlaela, and Aziza, "Pemberdayaan Petani Berbasis Participatory Action Research (PAR) Untuk Meningkatkan Adopsi Budidaya Bawang Merah Di Desa Tambakrejo"; Khafsoh and Riani, "Implementation of Participatory Action Research (PAR) In Community Service Program."

Programme success indicators were formulated into two categories: *output indicators* (number of *FGDs*, participatory mappings, seminars/trainings, number of participants, and business ideas or shallot-processing concepts generated), and *initial outcome indicators* (increased knowledge of the creative economy, shifts in business orientation toward processed products and high-quality seeds, and the emergence or strengthening of farmer-communication forums).

### **General Overview of Sumberkedawung Village**

A general overview of Sumberkedawung Village constitutes an essential foundation for designing community-engagement initiatives, as the village profile inherently reflects the characteristics of the locality, including basic demographic data, geographical conditions, potentials, and challenges faced by the community. Such information is crucial as a basis for village development planning. This concept aligns with the view that a complete, accurate, and up-to-date village profile enables both village governments and external facilitators to design programmes that are well-targeted and grounded in the actual needs of local communities.<sup>23</sup>

Administratively, Sumberkedawung Village is located in Leces District, Probolinggo Regency, bordered by Clarak Village to the north; Banjarsawah Village (Tegal Siwalan District) to the east; Banjarsawah and Leces Villages to the south; and Leces Village to the west. The village covers an area of approximately 1,696.17 km<sup>2</sup> with diverse topography, ranging from lowlands and coastal soils at altitudes of 0–100 metres above sea level, hilly areas at 100–1,000 metres, and mountainous zones above 1,000 metres. With an annual rainfall of around 229 mm and an average temperature of 27–30 °C, the village possesses agroclimatic conditions favourable for agricultural development.

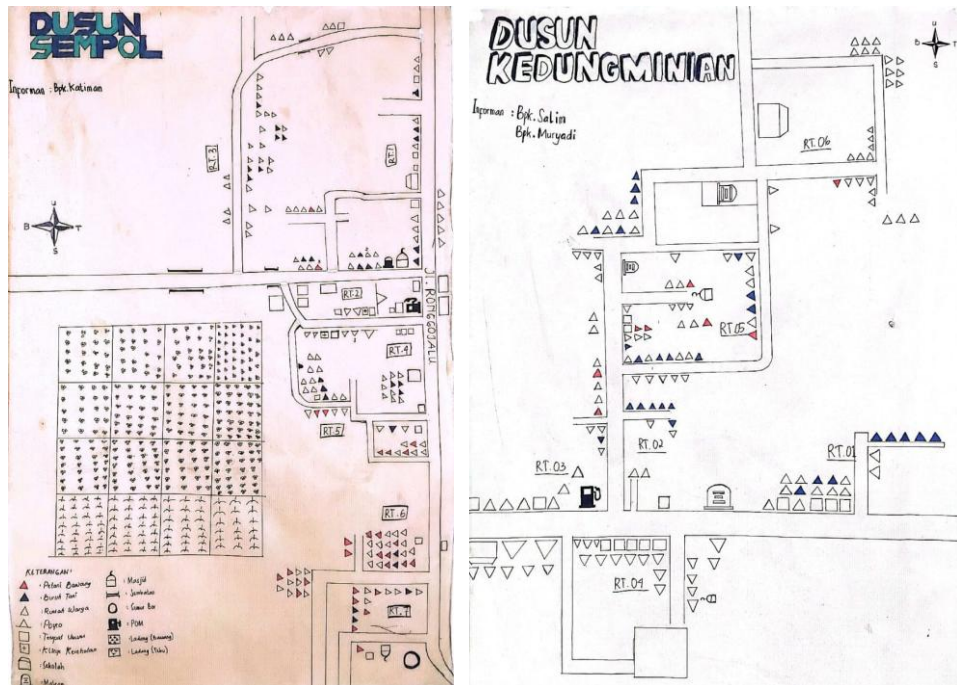
The population of Sumberkedawung consists of 11,145 residents distributed across 10 neighbourhood associations (RW) and 75 community units (RT), comprising 5,447 males and 5,582 females, and divided into eight hamlets: Krajan I, Krajan II,

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<sup>23</sup> Rohmat Junarto; M Nazir Salim; Harvini Wulansari, “Pembaharuan Data Profil Desa Bumirejo Sebagai Dasar Menetapkan Sasaran Program Pembangunan Desa,” *Jurnal Inovasi Pengabdian Masyarakat Pendidikan* 3, no. 2 (2023): 90–104.



hamlet appears primarily as a liaison between landowners and labourers. In contrast, Sempol Hamlet is dominated by shallot farmers who cultivate relatively fertile land supported by irrigation from rivers and several freshwater sources, including bore wells. However, they continue to face issues such as weak coordination within farmer groups, limited knowledge of cultivation and post-harvest practices, and the suboptimal utilisation of creative-economy potentials.



**Figure 2.** Thematic Mapping of Sempol and Kedungminian Hamlets

In terms of education, the village hosts several formal institutions, such as TK Hidayatul Mubtadi'in and SDN 4 Sumberkedawung, and nonformal institutions, including TPQ Khozinatul Wiladiyah and Madrasah Diniyah Al-Munawaroh. These institutions reflect the community's concern for basic education, although access to secondary education remains limited by financial constraints and distance. SMA Taruna, the nearest secondary school, is acknowledged for its quality yet considered relatively expensive for many families.



**Figure 3.** Teaching and Learning Activities at Madin and TPQ

Socially, culturally, and religiously, Sumberkedawung Village exhibits strong religious traditions and practices, reflected in routine activities such as *Simtudduror* maulid gatherings, *Khotmil Qur'an*, *hadrah*, *Muslimat NU* study circles, *tablil*, *yasinan*, and weekly *tausiyah*. Local customs also include the *turun tanah* ceremony for infants, accompanied by Albanjari *hadrah* performances and attended widely by residents. These practices strengthen social cohesion and constitute significant social capital for community empowerment efforts.



**Figure 4.** Social and Religious Activities

Regarding infrastructure and environmental conditions, the village still faces several problems that affect residents' quality of life. The main road connecting the village to the public road near the village hall is severely damaged, with potholes and waterlogging during the rainy season, disrupting mobility and posing safety risks for motorcycle riders and pedestrians.



**Figure 5.** Road Conditions in Sumberkedawung Village

Solid-waste issues are also prominent, particularly in Sempol Hamlet, which lacks accessible waste-disposal sites (TPS). The nearest facility, located in Rawa Hamlet and subject to fees, leads some residents to dispose of their household waste into rivers, causing environmental problems such as increased fly populations and health complaints like skin allergies among children. At the same time, the village contains considerable environmental and tourism potential, exemplified by the Rawa Tirta Tourism Area in Rawa Hamlet, which offers wetland landscapes, biodiversity, and basic tourism facilities but is currently declining due to management turnover, weak coordination, and inadequate maintenance.



**Figure 6.** Waste Conditions Around the River Area

The combined profile of natural-resource potentials, agricultural labour capacity, and substantial socio-religious capital alongside infrastructure, environmental, and governance challenges is consistent with findings from various

studies which argue that the success of rural development is largely determined by a village's ability to identify, cultivate, and manage local potential through participatory processes and use it as the foundation for development planning.<sup>25</sup>

### **Potentials and Challenges of Shallot Farming**

Sempol and Kedungminian Hamlets in Sumberkedawung Village constitute two living spaces that reflect the community's economic transformation following the collapse of the Leces paper factory. The majority of residents shifted to utilising the relatively extensive land for their primary livelihoods as farmers and farm labourers, with shallots as the flagship commodity alongside rice, maize, and sugarcane. Shallots are widely recognised as a strategic horticultural commodity in Indonesia, contributing substantially to household consumption and the food industry while being highly risk-prone due to fluctuating prices and high production costs.<sup>26</sup>

In Sumberkedawung, local perceptions even portray shallot cultivation as a “prestigious” occupation; however, field narratives affirm that without a proper management system, harvest yields often do not match capital investment, thereby limiting household income to middle-level ranges. This pattern follows the cyclical planting season depicted in the seasonal calendar: shallot planting occurs in March and harvesting in July. For several months, farmers tend to their crops, manage water supply, and maintain soil fertility with the expectation that the harvest will cover input costs and generate profit. The seasonal pattern is illustrated below:

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<sup>25</sup> Kiki Endah, “Pemberdayaan Masyarakat: Menggali Potensi Lokal Desa,” *Moderat: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pemerintahan* 6, no. 1 (2020): 135–43, <https://doi.org/10.25157/moderat.v6i1.3319>.

<sup>26</sup> Venty Fitriany Nurunisa et al., “Food Supply Chain Network and Market Analysis of Shallot in Indonesia (Case Study: Brebes District),” *Jurnal Manajemen Dan Agribisnis*, November 30, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.17358/jma.21.3.408>; S Wahyuni et al., “Enhancing Red Onion Agribusiness Development: E-Planting Calendar and Production Allocation,” *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 653, no. 1 (February 1, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/653/1/012006>.



**Figure 7.** Seasonal Calendar of Sempol and Kedungminian Hamlets

However, during the collective harvest period in July, almost all production is sold to middlemen operating in Sempol and Kedungminian. This structural arrangement places farmers in a position highly dependent on a single marketing channel and on price dynamics determined by the market and collectors. Studies on shallot agribusiness in various regions indicate similar patterns: simultaneous harvest seasons typically lead to supply gluts and price pressure, while farmers face weak bargaining positions within lengthy marketing chains.<sup>27</sup>

Problem exploration through PAR activities in both hamlets reveals that the key issue lies not only in unstable prices but also in the absence of structural support for shallot farmers. In early-week FGDs, farmers repeatedly expressed concerns over the lack of subsidised fertiliser for shallots and minimal assistance from farmer groups or agricultural agencies. They compared their conditions with rice and maize farmers who routinely receive monitoring, guidance, and access to government programmes. These grievances align with findings from various studies showing that shallot farmers

<sup>27</sup> Susanti Evie Sulistiowati, Ratya Anindita, and Rosihan Asmara, "Production, Consumption and Price (Imports, Producers and Consumer) Volatility of Shallot in Probolinggo Regency," *Agricultural Social Economic Journal* 21, no. 3 (July 31, 2021): 235–40, <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.agrise.2021.021.3.8>.

often face limited access to subsidised inputs, market information, and institutions that advocate for their interests.<sup>28</sup>

The absence of subsidised fertiliser forces shallot farmers in Sempol and Kedungminian to purchase fertilisers and pesticides from private kiosks at high prices. For smallholder farmers who rely on harvest income for daily needs, rising production costs significantly narrow opportunities for saving or investing in enterprise improvement. The agribusiness literature on shallots consistently highlights that the heavy cost structure at the beginning of the planting season without subsidies or access to affordable credit is a major contributor to low farm efficiency and stagnating farmer welfare across Indonesia's shallot-producing centres.<sup>29</sup> The results of the FGD are presented below in a Venn diagram:



**Figure 8.** Venn Diagram of Shallot Farming

In addition to input-related issues, farmers also face increasingly unpredictable agroclimatic conditions. In the FGDs, they associated price and production instability with transitional seasons: shifting dry–wet periods trigger rapid weather changes, affect

<sup>28</sup> Catur Prabowo, Suchatiningsih Wisika Prajanti, and Dwi Cahyaningdyah, “The Empowerment of Red Onion Farmers in Increasing Multiplier Effect of Income,” *Economics Development Analysis Journal* 11, no. 4 (January 11, 2023): 470–84, <https://doi.org/10.15294/edaj.v11i4.61348>.

<sup>29</sup> Sugeng Riyanto, Ina Fitria Ismarlin, and Andang Andriani Listyowati, “Pemberdayaan Petani Melalui Usaha Tanaman Bawang Merah (*Allium Cepa.L*) Di Desa Mirit, Kecamatan Mirit, Kabupaten Kebumen,” *Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Pertanian* 30, no. 2 (2023): 80–86, <https://doi.org/10.55259/jiip.v30i2.1000>; Helmi et al., “Identifying Key Factors Affecting Integrated and Sustainable Development of Red Onion Horticulture Cluster Area,” *International Journal on Advanced Science, Engineering and Information Technology* 9, no. 2 (March 5, 2019): 448–54, <https://doi.org/10.18517/ijaseit.9.2.6875>.

crop growth, and provide opportunities for pest outbreaks such as caterpillars and other insects. This narrative corresponds with national studies indicating that shallot price volatility is influenced not only by market structure but also by production fluctuations driven by climate variability and simultaneous planting patterns across regions.<sup>30</sup> Without adequate technical support for pest control and climate adaptation, farmers in Sempol and Kedungminian are forced to learn through costly trial and error.



**Figure 9.** FGD with Farmers on Agricultural Issues

From a socio-institutional perspective, PAR activities through general and thematic mapping also revealed imbalances in commodity-level attention within farmer groups. Shallot farmers reported lacking a “home” to voice their aspirations and consult about cultivation or marketing challenges. Meanwhile, studies on shallot-farmer empowerment in various regions show that institutions such as functional farmer groups, farmer-group associations (Gapoktan), and partnerships with *BUMDes* significantly influence access to information, technology, and markets, ultimately improving welfare.<sup>31</sup> This institutional gap is strongly felt in Sempol and Kedungminian: physically located in a shallot-production centre, yet institutionally positioned at the margins.

<sup>30</sup> Wahyuni et al., “Enhancing Red Onion Agribusiness Development: E-Planting Calendar and Production Allocation”; Lidwina Galuh Wandira and Mike Prastuti, “Shallot Price Forecasting in Three Locations in Indonesia Using Generalized Space-Time Autoregressive Model,” *IPTEK: The Journal of Engineering* 10, no. 1 (2024): 11–24.

<sup>31</sup> Suryani Dewi, Fitri Fitri, and Arman Amran, “Respon Petani Bawang Merah Terhadap Model Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Di Kabupaten Majene,” *Mimbar Agribisnis: Jurnal Pemikiran Masyarakat Ilmiah Berwawasan Agribisnis* 10, no. 2 (July 31, 2024): 2068–78, <https://doi.org/10.25157/ma.v10i2.14009>; Silfia Silfia et al., “Sustainable Competitiveness of Red Onion through Collective Action of Farmers in West Sumatra,” *Journal of Applied Agricultural Science and Technology* 9, no. 3 (August 24, 2025): 332–45, <https://doi.org/10.55043/jaast.v9i3.372>.

The significance of these potentials and vulnerabilities forms the rationale for community engagement in Sumberkedawung to move beyond technical cultivation matters toward organising farmers and transforming their perspectives on shallot farming. As indicated by PAR-based shallot research in Kebumen and empowerment programmes in other regions, strengthening farmer capacity cannot rely solely on one-way technology transfer; it must be accompanied by the development of critical awareness, dialogic spaces, and action planning rooted in collective analysis. Within this context, *FGDs*, problem-tree and aspiration-tree construction, and action planning in Sempol and Kedungminian serve as entry points for deeper transformation.

The portraits of Sempol and Kedungminian Hamlets reveal a paradox: they sit atop substantial shallot-based economic potential yet remain trapped in cycles of unstable prices, high production costs, and weak institutional support. This situation reflects broader findings from studies on the competitiveness and sustainability of shallot agribusiness in Indonesia, which emphasise the necessity of collective action, institutional innovation, and business diversification to strengthen farmers' positions.<sup>32</sup> These conditions form the objective foundation for designing the community-engagement initiative in Sumberkedawung not merely to teach farming techniques but to facilitate the emergence of new ways of managing shallot-related potential through participatory approaches and creative-economy perspectives.

### **Strengthening the Community's Collective Creative Economy**

The community's initial response to the PAR process in Sempol and Kedungminian Hamlets was reflected in their enthusiasm for participating in the small *FGDs* facilitated after approximately three weeks of field immersion. These *FGDs* were not merely spaces for sharing grievances but structured deliberative forums aimed at identifying problems, analysing root causes, and beginning to formulate alternative solutions from the farmers' own perspectives. This approach is aligned with PAR principles, which position *FGDs* as platforms for eliciting local knowledge, building

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<sup>32</sup> Silfia et al., "Sustainable Competitiveness of Red Onion through Collective Action of Farmers in West Sumatra."

critical consciousness, and formulating participatory action plans.<sup>33</sup> Studies conducted in various rural areas show that the combination of participatory mapping, village transects, seasonal calendars, and *FGDs* effectively enhances functional community participation in development planning and resource management.

In the first agriculture-focused *FGD*, discussions converged on the issue of unstable shallot prices. Several figures, including Bapak Heri, highlighted unpredictable weather conditions, pest attacks, and recurring caterpillar infestations each season as causes of crop failure and declining bulb quality, which subsequently affect selling prices. From this point emerged the idea of holding training sessions on pest control and the use of more effective pesticides. This proposal is consistent with the findings of various shallot-extension programmes that emphasise the importance of intensive technical training for improving productivity and yield quality.<sup>34</sup> However, the *FGD* also opened up a deeper reflection that the problems do not end with cultivation techniques but are closely related to uneven structural support.

Bapak Katiman, for example, pointed out that various training sessions and pesticide applications had indeed been attempted by farmers, yet the results remained unsatisfactory. His statement reveals that sporadic, top-down technology transfer without continuous mentoring is often insufficient to bring about real change. The literature on shallot-farmer empowerment highlights that programme success is determined more by sustained facilitation, two-way dialogue, and farmers' ability to adapt technologies to local conditions than by the mere frequency of training sessions.<sup>35</sup> The *FGDs* in Sempol and Kedungminian affirmed this: what they need is not only new training but an institution capable of absorbing their aspirations, consolidating their problems, and specifically advocating for shallot farmers' interests.

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<sup>33</sup> Muttaqin, Halim, and Idris, "Partisipasi Perempuan Kepala Keluarga Dalam Menciptakan Inklusi Sosial Di Desa Pandansari Lumajang."

<sup>34</sup> Sharin Ikka Nurmaida, Susy Edwina, and Roza Yulida, "Adopsi Inovasi Budidaya Bawang Merah Pada Petani Bawang Merah Di Kelurahan Toapaya Asri Kecamatan Toapaya Kabupaten Bintan," *Jurnal Sosial Ekonomi Pertanian* 19, no. 1 (2023): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.20956/jsep.v19i1.24404>.

<sup>35</sup> Nurliana Harahap, Yusra Muharami Lestari, and Ameilia Zuliyanti Siregar, "Pemberdayaan Dalam Meningkatkan Kesejahteraan Petani Bawang Merah Di Kecamatan Medan Marelan," *Jurnal Penyuluhan* 19, no. 0 (March 30, 2023): 170–80, <https://doi.org/10.25015/19202340349>; Fuadi, Nurlaela, and Aziza, "Pemberdayaan Petani Berbasis Participatory Action Research (PAR) Untuk Meningkatkan Adopsi Budidaya Bawang Merah Di Desa Tambakrejo."

This perspective was further reinforced by Bapak Yono, who underscored disparities in support received by shallot farmers compared with rice, maize, and sugarcane farmers. Those cultivating other commodities regularly receive visits, guidance, and programmes from farmer groups and relevant agencies, whereas shallot farmers feel “barely acknowledged”. The absence of dialogue forums and responsive institutions aligns with agribusiness studies on shallot farming, which identify weak farmer organisations and limited access to market information as major factors that diminish bargaining power within supply chains and expose farmers to price volatility.<sup>36</sup> The collective anxiety expressed in the FGD became an important source of social energy to move toward a more systematic problem analysis.

Through the development of problem and aspiration trees, the community was facilitated in formulating core issues and their downstream impacts. At the centre of the problem tree, they placed “unstable shallot prices”; at the roots, they identified factors such as transitional weather, simultaneous harvest seasons, dependence on collectors, the absence of subsidised fertiliser, and weak institutional coordination. Meanwhile, in the aspiration tree, residents envisioned more stable prices, improved bulb quality, routine mentoring, and the establishment of an active shallot-farmer discussion forum. This visualisation process made causal relationships easier to understand collectively and helped the community recognise that while some causes are structural, others can be addressed through behavioural change and local governance improvements.

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<sup>36</sup> Wahyuni et al., “Enhancing Red Onion Agribusiness Development: E-Planting Calendar and Production Allocation.”

## POHON MASALAH

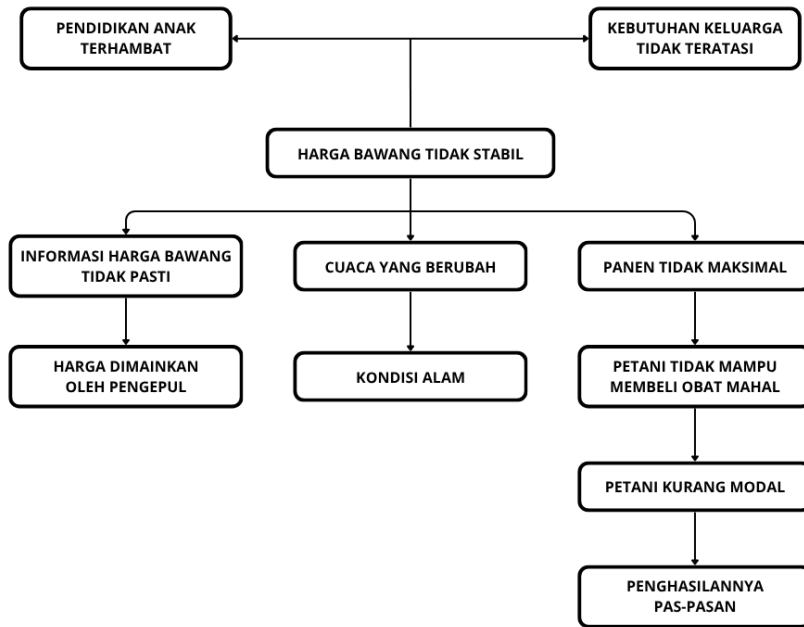


Figure 10. Problem Tree from Community FGD

## POHON HARAPAN

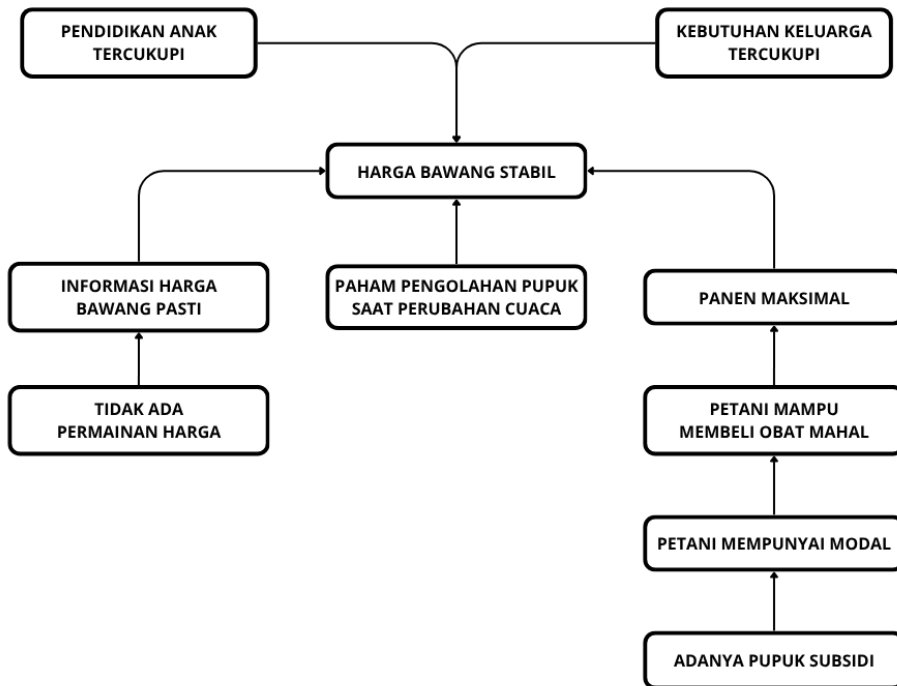


Figure 11. Aspiration Tree from Community FGD

The subsequent stage was action planning, beginning with politically realistic steps: presenting the analysis results to the Village Head as the policymaker, followed by socialising the plan to the Farmer Group Leader, *BUMDes* administrators, and the RW leader in Sempol Hamlet. This step was crucial because strengthening agricultural and economic institutions at the village level cannot proceed without formal support from village governance structures and local economic institutions. Multiple studies on village development and smart village governance highlight that the success of empowerment programmes is heavily influenced by the extent to which village leaders, local officials, and village institutions actively engage in planning and implementation processes. In Sumberkedawung, this process served as a moment to align community analysis with formal village agendas.



**Figure 12.** Joint Action Planning with the Community

From these deliberations, a single focus of action was agreed upon, one that aligned with structural problems and local potential: the organisation of a seminar entitled “*Creative Economy for Shallot Farmers to Increase Community Income in Sumberkedawung Village.*” The seminar was designed not merely to deliver technical material but to shift farmers’ perspectives on shallot farming. Through the involvement of local figures such as Wasis Hartono, Farmer Group Leader and BUMDes administrator, the seminar encouraged farmers to reconsider their orientation from pursuing large, speculative harvests towards adopting more planned and creative business strategies, including the development of high-quality shallot seeds and value-added products such as fried shallots or shallot-based snacks.

A key message delivered in the seminar was the importance of restructuring the farming mindset: avoiding the trap of pursuing large harvests without proper calculation, and instead focusing on seed quality, precise planting schedules, and opportunities to position high-quality seeds as a primary commodity that can be marketed throughout the year. Literature on shallot agribusiness reinforces that high-quality seed production and shallot-based processed products (e.g., packaged fried shallots) are two widely recommended strategies to reduce the risks associated with fluctuating fresh-harvest prices and expand farmers’ income sources. Post-seminar discussions indicated that some farmers had begun to view shallot cultivation not solely as the sale of fresh bulbs but as a continuum of upstream–downstream activities that could be managed more strategically.

Reflectively, the sequence of FGDs, problem–aspiration-tree analyses, action planning, and the creative-economy seminar contributed to increasing both knowledge and collective awareness among farmers. They not only understood that shallot prices fluctuate structurally but also recognised that there is room for local action: strengthening farmer institutions, improving enterprise management, diversifying products, and advocating for fairer access to subsidies and extension services.

The existing social infrastructure, such as religious gatherings, *hadrah* performances, and other community assemblies, provides routine and trusted meeting spaces. If these forums are later integrated with themes of creative-economy development and institutional strengthening for farmers, the synergy between

agricultural potential and socio-religious capital may form a strong foundation for more sustainable economic transformation in the village.

## **Conclusion**

Sumberkedawung Village, particularly Sempol and Kedungminian Hamlets, possesses substantial agrarian potential through shallot cultivation, supported by favourable agroclimatic conditions, land availability, and strong socio-religious capital. However, this potential has not yet been fully translated into improved farmer welfare. Various structural problems, such as price instability, the absence of subsidised fertiliser for shallots, high production-input costs, limited technical assistance from farmer groups and agricultural agencies, and weak farmer institutions, have kept household incomes at a moderate level and rendered them vulnerable to market and climatic shocks. This situation is further exacerbated by farmers' dependence on selling raw commodities to middlemen and the limited utilisation of creative-economy approaches in managing agricultural outputs.

Through the Participatory Action Research approach, with its sequential phases of *To Know*, *To Understand*, *To Plan*, and *To Action*, this community-engagement programme successfully facilitated a collective learning process involving students, village government, and the local community. General mapping, thematic mapping, *FGDs*, and the development of problem and aspiration trees helped residents to more clearly identify the root causes of the challenges they face, particularly those related to price instability, access to inputs, limited extension support, and the absence of dedicated platforms for shallot farmers. This process not only mapped existing problems but also fostered critical awareness that several issues can be addressed through strengthening local institutions, shifting mindsets, and innovating business strategies, rather than solely waiting for external policy interventions.

The culmination of the intervention, the seminar "*Creative Economy for Shallot Farmers to Increase Community Income in Sumberkedawung Village*," became a pivotal moment in shifting farmers' mindset from a speculative focus on achieving large harvests toward more strategic and sustainable perspectives. Through narratives and practical insights shared by local resource persons (the farmer-group leader who also

serves as a BUMDes administrator), farmers began to understand the importance of seed quality, precise planting schedules, and opportunities to develop superior shallot seeds and processed products as more stable income sources. Reflection results indicate an increase in farmers' knowledge and awareness regarding the creative economy, their bargaining position within the shallot value chain, and the need for more structured communication forums and sustained mentoring specifically for shallot farmers.

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