

Research Article

# Community Empowerment through the Batik Industry: The Facilitative Role of the Urban Village Administration in Strengthening the Creative Economic Capacity of Residents in Kampung Batik Okra Surabaya

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**Abstract:** Kampung Batik Okra, located in Kranggan Urban Village, Bubutan District, Surabaya City, represents a community-based creative economy initiative officially inaugurated on 28 December 2022 by the Surabaya City Government. This study aims to analyze the facilitating role of the urban village administration in strengthening the creative economic capacity of residents through the batik industry, as well as to identify supporting and inhibiting factors for community empowerment in Kampung Batik Okra. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Informants were purposively selected, encompassing village government officials, batik group administrators, artisans, and academic facilitators. The findings reveal that the urban village administration performs three principal facilitative roles: (1) facilitation of training and skill enhancement; (2) facilitation of market access and promotion; and (3) facilitation of multi-stakeholder partnerships. These roles contribute significantly to the strengthening of residents' creative economic capacity, as evidenced by an increase in active artisans, product diversification, and expanded marketing networks. Nevertheless, limited human resource capacity within the village administration, inconsistent community participation, and restricted access to capital remain structural barriers requiring more systemic policy interventions. This research offers a conceptual framework of empowerment-based facilitating roles for urban villages, which may serve as a reference for developing creative economy villages in Indonesian urban areas.

**Keywords:** Batik Industry; Community Empowerment; Creative Economy; Facilitating Role; Urban Village Administration.

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## 1. Introduction

The batik industry in Indonesia occupies a dual strategic position: as an intangible cultural heritage recognized by UNESCO since 2 October 2009 and as a creative economy sector that contributes meaningfully to the national economy. Data from the Creative Economy Agency (Bekraf) indicate that the craft subsector, in which batik is a dominant component, contributes approximately 15.7 percent to Indonesia's total creative economy gross domestic product (GDP). More than 46,000 batik enterprises are spread across the archipelago, absorb millions of workers, and position batik as one of Indonesia's leading cultural export commodities (Setiyo et al., 2021; Putri Wahyuni et al., 2024).

Amid the urgency of developing a community-based creative economy, the Surabaya City Government launched the Kampung Batik Okra initiative, an acronym for Orang Kranggan, located in Kranggan Urban Village, Bubutan District. Officially inaugurated on 28 December 2022, this kampung was built upon residents' commitment, particularly that of housewives, to develop batik-making skills as an additional source of income as well as an effort to preserve culture (Azhar et al., 2023; Fajariyah et al., 2025). This initiative represents a concrete model of local community-based economic empowerment that utilizes cultural wealth as its primary capital.

The urban village administration, as the lowest governmental unit closest to the community, holds a strategic position in the community empowerment ecosystem. Within Indonesia's administrative decentralization framework, the urban village administration does not merely function as an implementer of upper-level policies, but also acts as a facilitator, mediator, and catalyst for grassroots development (Gandung Kunchahyo et al., 2026; Roziqin et al., 2021). This facilitative role includes coordinating training programs, opening access to external resources, and developing partnership networks with academic and private sectors.

However, academic studies that specifically analyze the facilitative role of urban village administrations in the context of community-based batik village development in urban areas remain very limited. Most existing research focuses on the cultural dimension of batik, tourism development, or digital marketing aspects without positioning the institutional role of the urban village administration as the central analytical variable (Dwi Bhakti Iriantini et al., 2025; Paramita et al., 2021). This gap provides a strong academic justification for the present study to contribute to the discourse on urban community empowerment in Indonesia.

Therefore, this study aims to: (1) analyze the forms of the facilitative role of the urban village administration in strengthening the creative economic capacity of residents in Kampung Batik Okra Surabaya; (2) identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing this facilitative role; and (3) formulate a contextual empowerment-based conceptual framework for the facilitative role of urban village administrations that can be adapted for developing creative economy villages in urban Indonesia. The research questions guiding the analysis include: what forms of facilitative roles are performed by the urban village administration in this context; what factors support and inhibit their implementation; and what conceptual framework can be formulated from the findings of this study.

## 2. Literature Review

### Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is a multidimensional concept that refers to the process of expanding the ability of individuals and groups to control their lives, access resources, and participate actively in decision-making that affects their conditions (Rappaport, 1987). In the context of community development, empowerment is not viewed as a static condition that can be "given" by external parties, but rather as a dynamic process emerging from the interaction between the internal capacity of the community and facilitative external support.

Ife and Tesoriero (2006) argue that genuine community empowerment must rest on three main domains: economic empowerment, socio-cultural empowerment, and political empowerment. In the economic domain, empowerment means expanding access to capital, markets, skills, and production technology. In the socio-cultural domain, empowerment includes strengthening collective identity, community self-confidence, and local organizational capacity. Meanwhile, in the political domain, empowerment means ensuring that community voices are represented in relevant policy formulation processes.

This framework is relevant to the context of Kampung Batik Okra, where the batik industry functions simultaneously as a vehicle for economic empowerment (through income generation), socio-cultural empowerment (through local heritage preservation and strengthening the identity of "Orang Kranggan"), and political empowerment (through resident participation in the governance of the tourism village).

### The Facilitative Role of Local Government in the Creative Economy

Roziqin et al. (2021), in their study of the Batik Tulis Lasem industry, identified three main roles of local government in developing creative industries: regulator, facilitator, and empowerment agent. Among these three roles, the facilitative role has the most contextual character because it is adaptive to the specific needs of the community and is not solely based on top-down regulatory instruments.

The facilitative role of local government in creative economy development includes at least four main functions: (a) capacity building, namely strengthening human resource capacity through training and mentoring; (b) market linkage, namely connecting producers with markets through exhibitions, digital platforms, and distribution networks; (c) resource mobilization, namely mobilizing resources from various partners, including academics, state-owned enterprises, and financial institutions; and (d) regulatory facilitation, namely simplifying licensing procedures and protecting intellectual property rights for artisans (Paramita et al., 2021).

Natarajan et al. (2022) emphasize that within the sustainable livelihoods framework (SLF), local government acts as a “transformative structure” capable of converting community assets, including human capital, social capital, and cultural capital, into sustainable productive capacity. This framework positions facilitation not as a single intervention, but as an integrated support ecosystem that is responsive to local dynamics.

### **The Batik Industry as a Vehicle for Community-Based Creative Economy**

The batik industry in Indonesia has long functioned as a vehicle for community-based economic empowerment, particularly for women in both rural and urban areas (Setiyo et al., 2021). The characteristics of the batik industry, which is labor-intensive, based on skills that can be learned gradually, and rich in cultural value, make it an ideal empowerment instrument for communities with limited access to the formal economic sector.

Azhar et al. (2023), in their study of Kampung Batik Okra Surabaya, highlight that developing a creative economy-based batik village requires an integrated strategy that includes local wisdom-based branding, the development of educational tourism products, and the use of digital platforms to expand market reach. The study emphasizes that the success of this model depends greatly on the quality of mentoring provided by various parties, including the urban village administration, universities, and local business communities (Ditto Arfin Al-Maraghi et al., 2025).

Paramita et al. (2021) further argue that culture-based creative industries, including batik, have potential as an economic disaster risk reduction strategy because of their ability to build community livelihood resilience through income diversification and the strengthening of social cohesion. This argument is relevant in the context of Surabaya as a metropolis facing significant urbanization pressures and economic inequality.

### **3. Research Method**

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study design conducted in Kampung Batik Okra, Kranggan Urban Village, Surabaya City, during January–April 2025. Data were collected through three mutually complementary techniques: semi-structured interviews with 12 purposively selected informants, participatory observation of various group activities, and documentation studies of urban village program reports and documents. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles et al. (2014) through four stages: condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification, with layered coding from open coding to selective coding. Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation, thick description, audit trail, and member checking with key informants.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

#### **General Overview of Kampung Batik Okra Surabaya**

Kampung Batik Okra emerged from an initiative of Kranggan Urban Village residents who were motivated by the desire to develop alternative livelihoods based on local cultural wealth. The name “Okra” is an acronym for Orang Kranggan, reflecting the collective identity bond of residents that forms the social foundation of this kampung. Since its inauguration by the Mayor of Surabaya on 28 December 2022, the kampung has developed into a batik production cluster involving more than 30 active artisans with various distinctive motifs inspired by the visual elements of the Bubutan area and the history of Surabaya City.

Geographically, Kranggan Urban Village is located in the dense central area of Surabaya and has typical urban characteristics: high-density housing, limited land, and complex socio-economic dynamics. These conditions make the batik industry a strategic empowerment

choice because it does not require large areas of land and can be carried out in available household spaces. As shown in Table 1, the development of Kampung Batik Okra during its first two years of operation demonstrates an encouraging growth trajectory, although it is not free from various challenges.

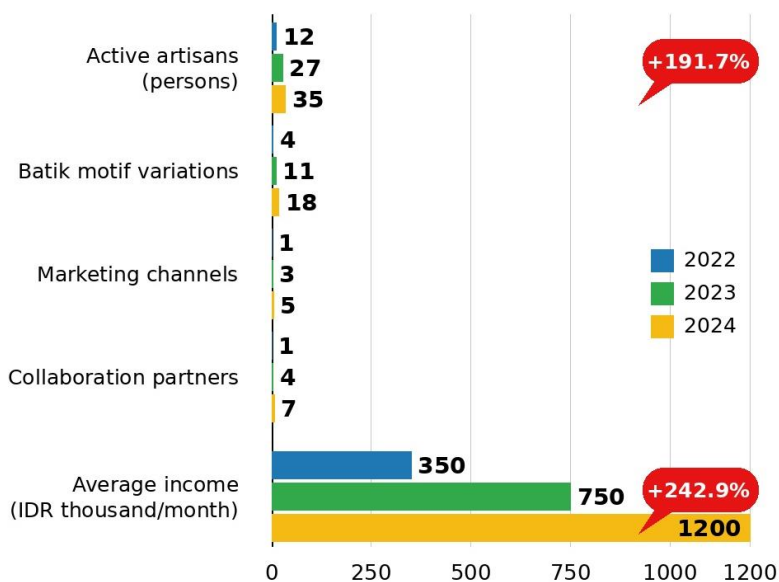
**Table 1.** Development of Kampung Batik Okra Surabaya, 2022–2024

| Indicator                 | 2022 (Initial)               | 2023       | 2024         |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Number of active artisans | 12 people                    | 27 people  | 35 people    |
| Batik motif variations    | 4 motifs                     | 11 motifs  | 18 motifs    |
| Marketing channels        | 1 (offline)                  | 3          | 5            |
| Collaboration partners    | 1 (Surabaya City Government) | 4          | 7            |
| Average income/month      | Rp 350,000                   | Rp 750,000 | Rp 1,200,000 |

*Source: Kranggan Urban Village Documents and Batik Okra Artisan Group*

Based on the data in Table 1, the number of active artisans increased by 191.7 percent over two years, while the average monthly income of artisans rose by 242.9 percent from Rp 350,000 per month in 2022 to Rp 1,200,000 per month in 2024. Although these absolute income figures remain below the Surabaya City Minimum Wage (UMK), their growth trend reflects the effectiveness of the ongoing empowerment program.

A comparative visualization of the development of all empowerment indicators during the 2022–2024 period is presented in Figure 5. This visual representation confirms that the growth trajectory is consistent and multidimensional, not limited to a single indicator, indicating that capacity strengthening has taken place holistically across various aspects.



*Source: Kranggan Urban Village Documents and Batik Okra Artisan Group, processed, 2025*

**Figure 1.** Development of Creative Economy Empowerment Indicators in Kampung Batik Okra Surabaya (2022–2024)

## The Facilitative Role of the Urban Village Administration in Strengthening Creative Economic Capacity

Based on the analysis of interview, observation, and documentation data, three main facilitative roles performed by the Kranggan Urban Village Administration in strengthening the creative economic capacity of Kampung Batik Okra residents were identified.

### *Facilitation of Training and Skill Improvement*

The first and most fundamental facilitative role performed by the urban village administration is facilitating batik training and skill improvement. The urban village administration acts as a connector between residents and various sources of knowledge and technical training, including inviting experienced batik trainers, facilitating access to training programs from the Surabaya City Industry and Trade Office, and encouraging partnerships with local universities for community service programs.

The training facilitated by the urban village administration covers two categories: technical batik training (canting technique, natural coloring, product finishing) and non-technical training (simple bookkeeping, product photography, and the use of social media for marketing). This categorization reflects the urban village administration's understanding that strengthening creative economic capacity cannot rely solely on production skills but must also include comprehensive business literacy.

One artisan informant stated as follows:

*“Before the training from the urban village administration, we only knew how to make batik traditionally from our mothers. After the training, however, we were able to create more varied motifs, understand how to calculate selling prices, and learn how to take good product photos for online sales.”*

The statement above illustrates the cross-dimensional impact of the training facilitated by the urban village administration: from strengthening technical capacity to enhancing digital and entrepreneurial literacy. As presented in Table 2, the training programs facilitated by the urban village administration during 2022–2024 show increasingly diverse themes in line with the evolving needs of the community.

**Table 2.** Training Programs Facilitated by the Kranggan Urban Village Administration for Batik Okra Artisans (2022–2024)

| Year | Type of Training                       | Organizer                          | Participants |
|------|--|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2022 | Basic canting batik technique          | Surabaya Industry and Trade Office | 12 people    |
| 2022 | Natural coloring using local materials | External trainer                   | 12 people    |
| 2023 | Motif and design development           | Academics (FSRD)                   | 22 people    |
| 2023 | Product photography and social media   | KKN students                       | 18 people    |
| 2023 | Basic MSME financial management        | Bank BRI (CSR)                     | 20 people    |
| 2024 | Batik branding and e-commerce          | Digital platform                   | 25 people    |
| 2024 | Product packaging and labeling         | Cooperatives & MSMEs Office        | 28 people    |

*Source: Kranggan Urban Village Documentation*

The data in Table 2 show that the urban village administration successfully mobilized various training partners, ranging from municipal government agencies, academics, KKN students, and banking institutions to digital platforms, indicating the relatively effective institutional networking capacity of the urban village administration despite limited resources.

#### ***Facilitation of Market Access and Promotion***

The second facilitative role identified is facilitating market access and promotion. The urban village administration performs this role through several mechanisms: involving Batik Okra products in MSME exhibitions organized by the Surabaya City Government, advocating for the inclusion of products in the Surabaya local product procurement catalog, and facilitating the establishment of official accounts on various online marketing platforms.

Market access is one of the classic obstacles most frequently faced by community-based creative industries. Without intervention from external parties with broader networks, community products often remain trapped in a market ecosystem limited to the closest social environment (Ife & Tesoriero, 2006). The role of the urban village administration as a gateway to broader market networks is one of the facilitative contributions most significantly valued by artisans.

The Head of Kranggan Urban Village stated:

*“We always try to include Batik Okra products in every city exhibition available. This is not only about selling products, but also about introducing the name of Kampung Batik Okra to more people, including prospective institutional buyers and tourists.”*

The approach taken by the urban village administration in facilitating market access combines short-term strategies (direct sales at exhibitions) with long-term strategies (building brand awareness and developing educational tourism). This combination aligns with the argument of Azhar et al. (2023), which emphasizes the importance of sustainable branding strategies in developing batik villages as competitive cultural tourism destinations.

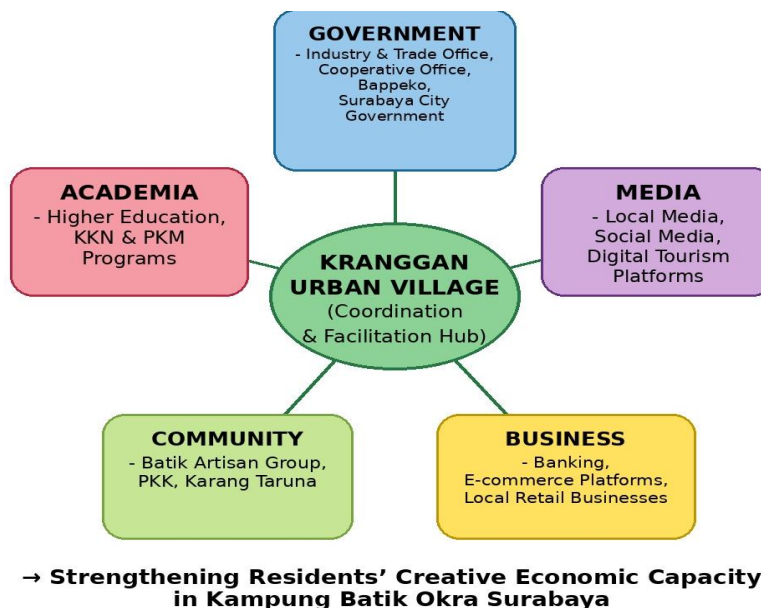
#### ***Facilitation of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships***

The third facilitative role is facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships. The urban village administration acts as a mediator and coordinator that builds bridges between the artisan community and various external actors: universities, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and government agencies at the city and provincial levels.

The partnership model established in Kampung Batik Okra shows characteristics close to the pentahelix model, in which five groups of actors—government, academia, community, business, and media—interact synergistically to encourage innovation and creative economy development. As illustrated in Figure 2, the urban village administration occupies a central position as a hub connecting the various pentahelix elements.

Based on the interview responses above, economic factors play an important role in shaping the disposition of parking attendants in the field. A remuneration system that is less competitive than the conventional system creates disincentives that weaken officers' commitment to complying with policy provisions. This contradicts the principle proposed by Mulgan and Albury (2003) that successful public sector innovation must be able to create added value not only for the public as service recipients, but also for the implementers who carry it out. This is also consistent with the study by Susanto et al. (2022), which recommends that a performance-based incentive system for parking attendants be made an integral

component of subscription parking policy design to ensure the sustainability of implementers' commitment in the field (Susanto et al., 2022).



**Figure 2.** Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (Pentahelix) Model in the Development of Kampung Batik Okra Surabaya with the Urban Village Administration as the Coordination Hub

Partnerships with universities, for example, produce community service programs that provide continuous technical and managerial assistance. Partnerships with the banking sector open access to microfinance products that were previously beyond the reach of artisans. Meanwhile, partnerships with local media and digital platforms strengthen the visibility of products and community stories in the public sphere.

### **Driving and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of the Facilitative Role**

#### ***Supporting Factors***

Based on data triangulation, three main factors were identified as supporting the successful facilitative role of the urban village administration in Kampung Batik Okra. First, strong urban village leadership commitment oriented toward empowerment. The Head of Kranggan Urban Village demonstrates personal commitment beyond formal administrative duties by actively representing the interests of the batik community in various municipal government forums. Second, high community social cohesion. Strong social bonds based on the identity of “Orang Kranggan” create social capital that facilitates collective mobilization and information distribution among artisans. This social capital becomes an important foundation that enables the facilitative role of the urban village administration to run effectively (Natarajan et al., 2022). Third, active support from the academic ecosystem. The involvement of universities through community service programs and KKN provides technical and managerial capacity inputs that the urban village administration could not provide on its own with limited resources.

### *Inhibiting Factors*

On the other hand, three inhibiting factors were also identified from the field data. First, the limited human resource capacity of the urban village administration. Urban village staff responsible for economic empowerment programs have broad administrative workloads, limiting the attention and time that can be devoted to intensive assistance for the batik community. Second, inconsistent resident participation. Not all residents who initially joined the batik program were able to remain consistently involved, mainly because of short-term economic considerations. Some artisans left the group when they found income opportunities that generated returns more quickly outside the batik industry. Third, limited access to capital. Although partnerships with banking institutions have been facilitated, not all artisans meet the administrative requirements for accessing available microcredit. This obstacle creates gaps in production capacity among artisans and has the potential to weaken group coherence in the long term. As summarized in Table 3, these supporting and inhibiting factors form a landscape of conditions that must be carefully navigated by the urban village administration in performing its facilitative role.

**Table 3.** Summary of Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Facilitative Role of the Urban Village Administration in Kampung Batik Okra

| Dimension     | Supporting Factors                        | Inhibiting Factors                      |
|---------------|---|---|
| Institutional | Urban village leadership commitment       | Limited urban village human resources   |
| Community     | High social cohesion                      | Inconsistent resident participation     |
| Economic      | Academic ecosystem support                | Limited access to capital               |
| Market        | Support from the Surabaya City Government | Competition with similar batik products |
| Technology    | Availability of digital platforms         | Low digital literacy among artisans     |

*Source: Primary data from interviews and observations, processed, 2025*

## 6. Conclusions

This study produced three main conclusions. First, Kranggan Urban Village Administration performs three complementary facilitative roles in strengthening the creative economic capacity of residents in Kampung Batik Okra: facilitating training and skill improvement, facilitating market access and promotion, and facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships. These three roles contribute gradually to improvements in the production, innovation, marketing, and institutional capacities of the batik community.

Second, the implementation of the urban village administration's facilitative role is supported by strong leadership commitment, high community social cohesion, and active support from the academic ecosystem. However, structural obstacles in the form of limited urban village human resources, inconsistent resident participation, and limited access to capital still require more systemic policy interventions from higher levels of government.

Third, this study formulates an empowerment-based urban village facilitation framework that positions the urban village administration as an adaptive enabler within the empowerment ecosystem of urban creative economy communities. This framework offers a new, more dynamic, and contextual perspective for understanding the role of lower-level local government in community-based economic development.

The policy implications of this study include: (1) strengthening the human resource capacity of urban village administrations through facilitation and community assistance training programs; (2) formalizing multi-stakeholder partnership mechanisms in regulations for developing creative economy villages; and (3) developing inclusive financing schemes specifically designed for community artisans who do not meet conventional formal credit requirements.

Future research is recommended to explore comparisons among batik villages in major Indonesian cities to test the generalizability of the conceptual framework formulated in this study, and to use a longitudinal approach to track empowerment trajectories over a longer period.

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