

Beyond Resilience in Capacity Building: Harnessing Ordinary Magic to Empower Farmworkers in Babakan Village, Pacet District, Bandung Regency

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of capacity building on the resilience of farmworkers in Babakan Village, Pacet District, Bandung Regency, using a quantitative associative approach. The sample comprised 74 farmworkers from Babakan Village. Data were collected through observations, interviews, literature reviews, documentation, observation guidelines, and questionnaires. The findings reveal a positive and significant relationship between capacity building and farmworkers' resilience, with capacity building accounting for 74.0% of the variance in resilience. However, both capacity building and resilience remain at moderate levels, indicating a need for improvement. Current capacity-building efforts focus on maximizing resilience but overlook development needs and cultural factors, which undermines the inherent resilience of farmers in facing challenges. The concept of 'ordinary magic,' derived from farmers' long-term experiences and adaptability to change, cannot be fully realized through training-based capacity building alone. A cultural humility model that incorporates cultural aspects into the assessment process is needed to shift capacity building from solely enhancing resilience to fostering broader development.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pengaruh penguatan kapasitas terhadap resiliensi buruh tani di Desa Babakan, Kecamatan Pacet, Kabupaten Bandung, dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif asosiatif. Sampel penelitian terdiri atas 74 buruh tani yang berdomisili di Desa Babakan. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, studi pustaka, dokumentasi, pedoman observasi, serta penyebaran kuesioner. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif dan signifikan antara penguatan kapasitas dan resiliensi buruh tani, di mana penguatan kapasitas berkontribusi sebesar 74,0% terhadap variasi tingkat resiliensi. Meskipun demikian, tingkat penguatan kapasitas dan resiliensi buruh tani secara umum masih berada pada kategori sedang, sehingga memerlukan upaya peningkatan yang lebih berkelanjutan. Praktik penguatan kapasitas yang berjalan saat ini cenderung berfokus pada optimalisasi resiliensi,

Kata Kunci:

Penguatan kapasitas,
Resiliensi,
Buruh tani

namun belum secara memadai memperhatikan kebutuhan pengembangan dan faktor-faktor kultural yang melekat dalam kehidupan buruh tani. Kondisi ini berpotensi melemahkan resiliensi yang secara inheren telah dimiliki buruh tani dalam menghadapi berbagai tantangan struktural dan lingkungan. Lebih lanjut, konsep '*ordinary magic*' yang bersumber dari pengalaman jangka panjang buruh tani serta kemampuan mereka untuk beradaptasi terhadap perubahan tidak sepenuhnya dapat diwujudkan melalui pendekatan penguatan kapasitas yang semata-mata berbasis pelatihan. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan model cultural humility yang mengintegrasikan aspek budaya dalam proses asesmen dan intervensi, sehingga penguatan kapasitas tidak hanya berorientasi pada peningkatan resiliensi, tetapi juga mendorong pengembangan yang lebih komprehensif dan kontekstual.

INTRODUCTION

The global COVID-19 pandemic, which began affecting the world in 2019 and led to restrictions and business closures (Martadona et al., 2022; Mawardi et al., 2022), caused a decline in farmers' incomes due to reduced demand for agricultural products. In response, some groups implemented capacity-building interventions to enhance farmers' resilience against pandemic-related challenges (Adveni et al., 2023; Damanik & Tahitu, 2020; Suwardi, 2018). According to Kristiawati (2022), the dimensions of resilience—namely interpretation, resilience capacity, and action—illustrate the connection between capacity building and resilience. However, this link often overlooks the "ordinary magic" that farmers employ to address everyday external challenges. Masten (2014) argues that interventions relying solely on potential, without considering individuals' adaptive mechanisms, result in reduced effectiveness across various initiatives.

Researchers have traditionally focused on interventions aimed at strengthening farmers'

resilience by enhancing their capacity to address external constraints. These diverse models, often presented with similar claims, seek to enhance resilience potential. Researchers have identified three distinct approaches to capacity-building interventions. First, local community capacity building involves supporting local leaders to empower communities through localized problem-solving (Dako & Ilham, 2019; Heryanto & Deden, 2021). Self-reliance is a central theme in this needs-based problem-solving process (Yusri & Jufri, 2023; Zitri et al., 2022). Second, external intervention models involve external parties, such as NGOs, to establish systems encompassing funding, policy strategies, and empowerment programs (Suratna et al., 2021; Suwardi, 2018). However, claims of increased capacity to strengthen community resilience—particularly among farmers who already possess natural adaptive mechanisms to external threats—were overlooked in these studies.

This study aims to examine the relationship between capacity building and the strengthening of farmers' resilience in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve this objective, the study proposes three key assessments. The first assessment investigates farmers' responses to capacity-building interventions. The second evaluates their resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. The third seeks to identify the relationship between capacity building and enhanced resilience. These assessments are designed to evaluate the capacity-building model, which serves as the primary intervention strategy for addressing community welfare issues.

This research is based on three main hypotheses: Hypothesis 1: Capacity-building interventions significantly enhance farmers' resilience to the economic and social challenges following COVID-19 in Babakan Village. Hypothesis 2: Gaps in current capacity-building programs negatively impact the resilience of some farmers in Babakan Village. Hypothesis 3: Collaborative initiatives involving local leaders, organizations, and NGOs significantly improve capacity building and farmers' resilience in Babakan Village. These hypotheses form the foundation for evaluating the effectiveness of capacity-building interventions in strengthening the resilience of farmers, who demonstrate "ordinary magic" in overcoming various external challenges.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Assessment of Local Needs in Farmworker Empowerment: From Victims to Active Participants

Capacity-building initiatives through the formation of local communities are not fully aligned with the approaches described by several researchers. According to Adveni et al. (2023), Damanik and Meilvis (2020), and Suwardi (2018), capacity building is reflected in the emergence of local communities—both formal and informal—that enhance farmworker participation in addressing evolving social and economic conditions. Informal local communities play a crucial role by providing support independently or through mutual aid, thereby strengthening farmworkers' engagement in responding to challenges. Furthermore, Muniarty et al. (2021) emphasize that organizing efforts focused on local leadership and empowering vulnerable groups can create opportunities for farmworkers to collectively address challenges, such as coordinating with government entities to improve service delivery. Reason: Improved clarity and readability by refining sentence structure and punctuation. Corrected minor stylistic issues, such as replacing with government entities for improved service delivery.

Direct community involvement in organizing fosters mental adaptation to social and economic changes. Alwi et al. (2019), Damanik & Meilvis (2020), Muktasam et al.

(2022), and Yusmaniarti et al. (2021) found that such involvement enables communities to shape their own destinies and shift perceptions from victims to active agents. However, dependence on external resources can hinder recovery due to barriers in utilizing these resources (Imron et al., 2011; Syafitri et al., 2022). Therefore, capacity-building initiatives must involve local communities in decision-making to ensure that assistance meets their needs, such as access to a clean environment, decent work, and enhanced knowledge and skills, all of which are critical for social development, particularly for vulnerable groups.

Resilience of Vulnerable Groups in Improving Quality of Life: Identifying Group Capacity Building

Community resilience in the face of challenges affecting well-being is defined as the process encompassing the ability to adapt, survive, and recover from stress or adversity. This resilience is critical, as communities often encounter risks and vulnerabilities in their work, such as economic fluctuations or environmental changes (Hak & Ibrahim, 2023; Irwanto et al., 2021). Capacity-building initiatives are a key strategy for enhancing resilience, involving collaboration across sectors, including local leaders, formal and informal organizations, and external stakeholders. These efforts may include training, information sharing, and technical support to help communities address challenges, as explained by Nisa (2016) and Saraswati (2023).

Such cross-sectoral collaboration is essential for fostering sustainable collective actions that support farmworkers' resilience.

The role of local leaders, organizations, and external parties is crucial in fostering group resilience by identifying needs and implementing appropriate programs. Local leaders can coordinate policies and initiatives to support communities, while both formal and informal organizations contribute by providing training and access to information that enhance risk adaptation. External parties, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and funders, offer funding, technical assistance, and support for sustainable market development. According to Nisa (2016) and Saraswati (2023), resilience involves efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of stress, improve adaptability, and develop effective coping skills. These enable farmworkers to confront challenges without avoidance, maintain self-esteem, and thrive amid adversity. Additionally, the development of efficient agricultural technologies and improved market access are essential components in strengthening this resilience.

Capacity Building in Community Empowerment Processes

The relationship between capacity building and resilience has become a central focus in community empowerment and sustainable development efforts, especially in the face of global challenges such as climate change and socioeconomic crises. Although capacity-

building initiatives have not always fully aligned with initial theoretical frameworks, contemporary literature suggests that capacity building is a deliberate social change process that significantly enhances community resilience by improving skills, knowledge, and active participation. As outlined by Adveni et al. (2023), Damanik & Meilvis (2020), and Suwardi (2018), capacity building serves as a foundation for improving quality of life and community resilience by leveraging the role of local leaders as influential agents of development. These leaders not only shape the informal attitudes and behaviors of community members but also facilitate development efforts by formulating shared goals, overseeing activities, and organizing groups to reach broader audiences. Furthermore, local community development—both formal and informal—encourages participation through discussion forums that foster creativity, particularly among isolated or marginalized groups, as supported by findings from Carmen et al. (2022) in their meta-synthesis on social capital and community resilience in the context of climate change.

The dimensions of resilience—interpretation, resilience capacity, and action—are strengthened through collaboration with local leaders and external stakeholders, reflecting contemporary social work principles. Resilience interpretation involves the community's confidence in understanding and addressing challenges, while resilience capacity is fostered through enhanced self-worth, self-

efficacy, and personal energy derived from collective experiences and active community participation, as described by Adveni et al. (2023), Muniarty et al. (2021), and Alwi et al. (2019). Action, as a concrete manifestation of resilience, is implemented through participation in decision-making, policy advocacy, and tailored development programs, aligning with the systemic approach to building community capacity and resilience proposed by Amadei (2020) within a systems dynamics framework. Open vertical and horizontal communication facilitates the identification of relevant assistance, such as access to resources or training, which strengthens socioeconomic well-being. Collaboration with external parties, including government and non-governmental organizations, through planning and coordination, further supports social work's role in building disaster and climate resilience (Nyahunda & Ncube, 2025). This process embodies core social work values, such as the right to assistance, problem-solving, and the enhancement of local wisdom, ultimately promoting sustainable resilience.

METHODS

An Overview of Babakan Village

Based on information from the Babakan Village Profile 2021, administratively Babakan Village area has regional boundaries with Harempoy Village (north), Harempoy Village (west), Wangunjaya Village (east), and Jamburaya Village (south). Kampung Babakan has one community pillar and five

neighborhood pillars and has 210 heads of families.

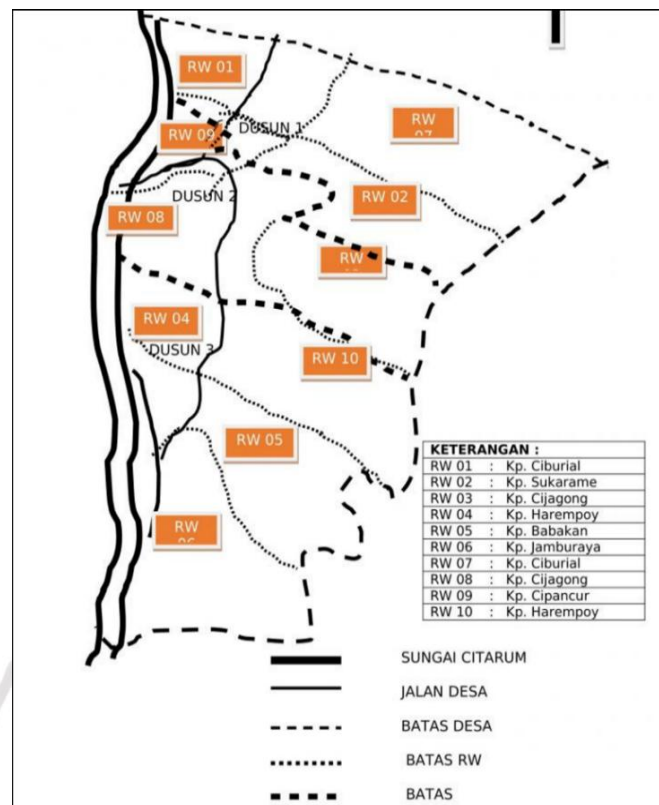


Figure 1. Babakan Village Map

Source: Profile of Babakan Village, 2021

Babakan Village has various local communities such as PKK (family empowerment and welfare), Karang Taruna, DKM (mosque prosperity council), health cadres, Posyandu (integrated service post), village community empowerment institutions, and Babakan Village Farmer Groups that have the potential to help the local community of Babakan Village, especially farmworkers to have optimal capacity strengthen, which then has the potential to have an impact on increasing resilience in respond to various situations encountered.

Survey development

To test the research hypotheses, a two-part questionnaire was developed. The first part collected demographic data from participants, while the second part included questions designed to measure the model constructs using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Very inappropriate, 5 = Very appropriate). The measurement instrument was adapted from existing literature and slightly modified to fit the context of this study. Creswell (1994) provides guidance on the quantitative associative approach and the linear regression method employed in this research. The study involved 74 farmworkers from Babakan Village, selected

based on the Slovin formula, with a population of 282 (Creswell, 1994).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Information:

n = number of samples
N = number of population
e = standard error of sampling

Primary data sources included questionnaires and observations, while secondary data comprised the profile of Babakan Village, Pacet District, Bandung Regency. Following Creswell (1994), the researchers applied the coefficient of determination test as follows:

$$kd = r^2 \times 100\%$$

Information:

kd = coefficient of determination
r = value of Pearson coefficient of determination

RESULTS

Respondents' background profile

The age profile of farmworkers, as shown in Table 1, indicates that the majority (42%) are aged 41–50 years, followed by 31–40 years (27%), and 20–30 years (14%). This distribution highlights a significant proportion of farmworkers in the productive age range (20–50 years), suggesting strong potential for enhancing agricultural capacity through targeted training, education, and access to modern agricultural technologies. These interventions can improve farmworkers' skills and knowledge, boosting productivity and enabling them to adapt to evolving challenges in the agricultural sector. However, the data also reveals a decline in younger (under 20 years) and older (over 60 years) farmworkers, signaling a potential future labor shortage. To ensure the sustainability of the agricultural workforce, investments in agricultural education and vocational training for youth are critical. Additionally, supporting older farmworkers to remain productive can help maintain sector resilience.

Table 1. Farmworker Profile

Particular	Frequency	Percent
Age		
< 20	1	1
20-30	11	14
31-40	20	27
41-50	31	42
51-60	9	13
> 60	2	3
Total	74	100
Level of Education		
Elementary School	14	19
Junior High School	35	47
High School	23	31
Diploma	2	3
Total	74	100

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

As presented in Table 1, the education levels of farmworkers are distributed as follows: elementary school (19%), junior high school (47%), high school (31%), and diploma (3%). Education is a key factor in strengthening farmworker capacity and resilience. Higher education levels equip farmworkers with improved knowledge and skills for managing agricultural operations, leading to greater productivity and efficiency, which can enhance income. Advancing education from elementary to junior high or high school offers significant benefits. Junior high education provides a foundational understanding of agricultural principles, including fertilizer and pesticide use and technical guideline comprehension, improving production quality. High school education deepens knowledge of complex concepts like risk management, income diversification, and modern agricultural

technologies. The low percentage of diploma holders (3%) indicates limited access to higher education. Increasing this proportion could enable farmworkers to acquire advanced technical skills, such as modern technology use, financial management, and market analysis, enhancing their competitiveness and ability to address sector challenges.

Normality Test

The normality test results are used to check whether the independent variable and the dependent variable have a normal distribution. If the probability value > 0.05 the data can be categorized as data with a normal distribution (Creswell, 1994). The normality test conducted based on the output of IBM SPSS 26 Windows 10 in this study has been presented in the following table:

Table 2. Normality Test Results

One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		74
Normal parameters	39,567	480.95
	4,5813	479.69
	0,163	.096
Most extreme differences	0,097	.086
	-0,163	-.096
Test statistic		0,163
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0,200

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

Based on the results of the normality test in table 2, it is known that the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) obtained a p-value of $0.200 > 0.05$. Thus, data from independent and

dependent variables have data that is categorized as data with a normal distribution.

Capacity Strengthen of Farmworkers in Babakan Village

Field observations and questionnaires from 74 farmworkers in Babakan Village provided insights into capacity strengthening and resilience, as detailed in Tables 3. Table 3 indicates a capacity strengthening score of 2,599, reflecting efforts to enhance farmworkers' skills and knowledge in agriculture, categorized on a continuum from

very appropriate (very large) to very inappropriate (very small). Most respondents rated these efforts as fairly effective, suggesting moderate success in equipping farmworkers to tackle agricultural challenges. However, some farmworkers noted unmet needs, indicating gaps in current programs that require further attention to fully support the workforce.

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis of Capacity Strengthen of Farmworkers in Babakan Village

Category	Capacity Strengthen			Resilience		
	Score	Frequency	Number of Scores	Score	Frequency	Number of Scores
Very appropriate	5	35	175	5	49	245
Appropriate	4	232	928	4	234	936
Normal	3	402	1,206	3	304	912
Inappropriate	2	145	290	2	79	158
Very inappropriate	1	0	0	1	0	0
Total			2,599			2,251

Source: Questionnaire, 2024

The resilience analysis, based on a score of 2,251 from Table 3, shows that most farmworkers possess a sufficient ability to cope with post-COVID-19 social and economic changes, though a subset exhibits low resilience, making them vulnerable to adverse conditions. To address this, collaborative initiatives involving local leaders, organizations, and external partners like NGOs are essential. These could include tailored training programs, improved market access, or community-building activities to strengthen economic, social, and psychological resilience, ensuring farmworkers can adapt to ongoing challenges.

To optimize both capacity strengthening and resilience, local leaders should prioritize regular evaluations and stakeholder

collaboration to refine interventions. For capacity strengthening, this involves enhancing access to modern agricultural technologies and training that aligns with farmworkers' needs, boosting productivity and community well-being. For resilience, targeted programs like entrepreneurship training or psychological support can address specific vulnerabilities, particularly for those with lower resilience. By understanding farmworkers' interpretations of post-COVID-19 conditions, stakeholders can design cohesive strategies that ensure sustainable agricultural development and long-term workforce resilience in Babakan Village.

The Influence of Capacity Strengthen on Resilience of Farmworkers in Babakan Village

This subchapter presents an analysis of the relationship between capacity strengthening

and the resilience of farmworkers in Babakan Village, with the results of the correlation coefficient displayed. Table 4 below presents the results of the correlation coefficient based on IBM SPSS 26 output on Windows 10:

Table 1. Correlation Coefficient Results

Correlations			
		Capacity strengthen	Farmworker's resilience
Capacity strengthen	Pearson correlation	1	.860**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0,000
	N	74	74
Farmworker's resilience	Pearson correlation	.860**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,000	
	N	74	74

Source: Primary data processed, 2024

Table 4 shows the calculation results using the Pearson correlation, which yields a correlation coefficient of 0.860 for the relationship between capacity strengthening and the resilience of farmworkers in Babakan Village. This value is derived from the coefficient of determination formula, resulting in a figure of 74.0%. This indicates that the relationship between capacity strengthening and the resilience of farmworkers in Babakan Village is strong. In other words, capacity strengthening contributes 74.0% to the resilience of farmworkers in Babakan Village, while 26.0% of their resilience is influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

The analysis and discussion of the effect of capacity strengthening on the resilience of farmworkers in Babakan Village reveal a strong relationship between these two variables. Capacity strengthening refers to efforts to

enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of individuals or groups to address changes or challenges. In this context, the resilience of farmworkers denotes their ability to survive and adapt to changing economic and social conditions post-Covid-19. In Babakan Village, capacity strengthening encompasses training, education, and technical assistance programs aimed at improving farmworkers' farming skills, resource management, and business diversification. Additionally, it involves empowering farmworkers through increased access to resources and markets, as well as enhancing their understanding of their rights.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of capacity strengthening and resilience among farmworkers in Babakan Village reveals a strong relationship between these factors. Field observations and

questionnaires indicate that capacity strengthening efforts, involving training, education, and technical assistance, have been moderately effective in enhancing farmworkers' agricultural skills, resource management, and business diversification, though some unmet needs persist. Similarly, most farmworkers demonstrate sufficient resilience to adapt to post-COVID-19 economic and social challenges, yet a subset remains vulnerable. To enhance outcomes, local leaders and stakeholders should focus on tailored training, improved market access, and psychological support, while fostering collaboration with organizations like NGOs and conducting regular evaluations to address gaps and promote sustainable agricultural development and long-term workforce resilience in Babakan Village.

The effectiveness of capacity-building programs in enhancing the resilience of farmers in Babakan Village against various challenges has been demonstrated; however, cultural and emotional issues remain largely unaddressed. The inherent strengths believed to empower communities to overcome difficulties (Rapp & Goscha, 2011) only partially supported farmers in Babakan Village affected by the pandemic. While intervention models that rely on self-potential can improve resilience to external challenges in certain aspects (Chaskin, 2001), they do not produce lasting improvements in prosperity through economic development. Amedei (2020) proposed an

intervention model based on local needs, involving multiple stakeholders in decision-making, advocacy, and development programs, rather than relying solely on community potential to address challenges. The active collaboration of external parties in the intervention process significantly enhances community resilience to natural obstacles (Nyahunda & Ncube, 2025). Direct collaborative interventions provide a more effective approach to strengthening resilience among farmers facing nature-related challenges.

The effectiveness of capacity-building programs for farmers in Babakan Village reveals a complex narrative of fragmented resilience, where individual innate strengths only partially address pandemic-related challenges. Overlooking farmers' natural and cultural experiences, which constitute their undermines long-term resilience and economic well-being (Masten, 2014). Understanding farmers' interactions with natural phenomena is essential for social workers conducting assessments to inform intervention strategies. Hook et al. (2013) advocate for cultural humility, urging social workers to recognize their limited knowledge and learn from clients' experiences to better understand local values that support natural resilience. Enhancing resilience also requires ongoing efforts to promote well-being. Schultz et al. (2018) argue that shifting resilience from a reactive to a holistic, proactive approach supports economic well-being by fostering an

empowerment model that enables communities not only to survive but to thrive.

The inadequacy of capacity-building mechanisms, which often overlook farmers' adaptive behaviors within their cultural contexts, reflects researchers' tendency to prioritize cultural competence primarily for social workers. Generalizations about local leaders' abilities to address community challenges reinforce the identification of local mechanisms for enhancing resilience (Dako & Ilham, 2019; Heryanto & Deden, 2021). Meanwhile, external interventions focused on system development (Yusri & Jufri, 2023; Zitri et al., 2022) promote cultural humility, thereby amplifying local potential to foster a sustainable empowerment process that targets both resilience and development. This underscores the necessity of incorporating local knowledge into intervention models, which cannot rely solely on capacity building.

CONCLUSION

Efforts to strengthen the capacity of farmworkers in Babakan Village have not fully met the demands for maintaining effective communication with authorities and community organizations to adapt to changing circumstances, particularly in the post-COVID-19 period. While these efforts show potential to positively impact local communities, gaps in vertical communication between program implementers and farmworkers create a disconnect between expectations and reality, hindering the development of innovative

solutions to evolving challenges. Regular evaluations are essential to identify problem areas and develop targeted interventions. Understanding farmworkers' perspectives on the post-COVID-19 environment can help decision-makers and community leaders design initiatives—such as financial empowerment programs or mental health counseling—to enhance resilience and improve welfare.

Despite moderate resilience among most farmworkers in Babakan Village, some exhibit low resilience, indicating weaknesses in their adaptive capacities. Capacity building, which includes enhancing knowledge and skills, accounts for 74.0% of resilience, while 26.0% is influenced by unexamined social, economic, and institutional factors. The lack of research on these factors limits the development of effective interventions. Engaging diverse stakeholders, including local leaders and external organizations, can facilitate training and resource sharing to promote sustainable empowerment and strengthen resilience.

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