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Youth at the edge of employment: local mentoring, skills training, and livelihood pathways in indonesian rural communities

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ABSTRACT

Background: Rural youth in Cibeber Subdistrict face fragmented transitions between education, informal work, and sustainable livelihoods within a population of 143,718 residents, including 32,955 people aged 15–29. **Objective:** This community engagement program aimed to strengthen livelihood planning, employability, and practical pathway development among 40 participants aged 18–29. **Method:** A participatory planning–implementation–monitoring-evaluation design combined baseline questionnaires, attendance records, mentoring logs, output rubrics, pre-post assessments, focus groups, partner validation, and follow-up indicators covering participation, capacity, output quality, pathway action, and institutional continuity. **Results:** Planning produced three coordination meetings, 40 baseline records, six stakeholder categories, five instruments, and a 12-week activity schedule aligned with locally mapped needs and referral opportunities. Implementation delivered eight training sessions with 86.9% attendance, documented 31 completed livelihood portfolios, and recorded 27 participants completing at least three mentoring cycles. Monitoring and evaluation found that matched mean capacity scores rose from 48.0 to 65.6, 26 of 31 submitted outputs met the competency threshold, and 25 participants documented at least one livelihood-pathway action during follow-up. **Novelty:** This program advances a data-grounded mentoring model that connects participant diagnosis, situated practice, community validation, assigned institutional follow-up, and transparent evidence review across diverse rural livelihood contexts without treating short-term learning indicators as proof of final employment or income impact.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Youth employment insecurity in rural Indonesia cannot be reduced to an individual skills deficit because livelihood transitions are shaped by local labour demand, mobility, education, networks, and access to productive resources. This community engagement program was implemented in Cibeber Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency, West Java, comprising 18 villages and 143,718 residents in 2024 [1]. Of this population, 32,955 residents were aged 15–29, representing approximately 22.93%, while 21,607 were aged 15–24. These figures identify a substantial population negotiating school-to-work transitions, although they do not establish unemployment or NEET prevalence among recruited participants. Cibeber also contained vocational-school provision across eight villages and senior-high-school provision across five villages,

alongside prior youth entrepreneurship and employment support through BPP Cibeber [2]. Consequently, Cibeber provided an empirically defensible site for examining how local mentoring, skills practice, and institutional referral could support more structured and contextually relevant livelihood pathways for rural youth.

Existing research indicates that rural youth employability depends on more than training exposure. Griffin et al. [3] showed that Indonesian rural youth combined aspirations for secure salaried work with continuing engagement in farming and aquaculture, while mobility and income diversification reproduced gendered and class-based precarity. Shi and Bangpan's [4] synthesis of 31 TVET studies found that participation shaped skills, socio-emotional competencies, social networks, and aspirations, yet contextual conditions and intervention quality strongly mediated participants' experiences. Kilpatrick et al. [5] demonstrated the value of whole-community support for education and career pathway choices, whereas Mariyono et al. [6] highlighted non-formal, field-based learning as a livelihood resource for Indonesian farming communities. Amalia et al. [2] documented an institutional foundation for youth employment support in Cibeber. Nevertheless, literature leaves a practical gap in integrating participant-level baselines, repeated mentoring, observable outputs, community validation, matched pre-post measurement, and post-training pathway verification within one locally governed intervention.

This community engagement program aimed to strengthen the capacity of 40 residents aged 18–29 to formulate, practise, and pursue relevant livelihood pathways through eight training sessions, four mentoring cycles, practical assignments, and institutional referral. Rather than treating attendance as evidence of employability, this program examined whether implementation intensity corresponded with measurable capability and action indicators. The empirical questions concerned the proportion of 320 participant-session records completed; the number and quality of up to 40 livelihood portfolios; the proportion completing at least three of four mentoring cycles; changes between matched pre-test and post-test scores; and the number of verified livelihood actions recorded during 30–90-day follow-up. Planning and institutional indicators included three coordination meetings, eight mapped needs, four designed livelihood pathways, one community-validation forum, and one continuation plan. These measures distinguished program delivery, short-term learning, practical application, and follow-up behaviour without assuming that training alone produced employment, enterprise survival, or income improvement.

This program contributes to community development practice by positioning employability as a negotiated local pathway rather than a standardised package of competencies. Its central argument is that skills training becomes relevant when participant data inform curriculum choices, mentors translate learning into individual action, community actors assess output feasibility, and partner institutions retain responsibility beyond workshop completion. Accordingly, this community-based intervention integrated external statistics, coded baseline records, attendance and mentoring logs, scored practice outputs, participant reflection, community validation, and follow-up verification within an evaluation architecture. Expected changes concerned stronger career planning, improved applied knowledge, greater completion of feasible livelihood outputs, and engagement with employment, enterprise, market, or referral opportunities; each claim remained subject to evidence generated by specified instruments. Methodologically, this program offers a replicable framework for combining quantitative measurement with participatory interpretation. Institutionally, it treats sustainability as an allocation of mentoring, referral, and monitoring responsibilities rather than an aspirational statement.

2. METHOD

This community engagement program employed a participatory planning–implementation–monitoring and evaluation design in Cibeber Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency, West Java. BPP Cibeber functioned as the principal coordinating partner, supported by village institutions, educational providers, youth organisations, producer groups, and local enterprises. Forty residents aged 18–29 constituted the target participant group. A participatory design was adopted because employment constraints involved heterogeneous aspirations, skills, mobility conditions, and access to markets rather than a uniform training deficit. Program activities extended across 12 weeks, combining institutional coordination, participant-level assessment, structured training, mentoring, practical production, community validation, and short-term livelihood-pathway follow-up.

Table 5. Program stages, activities, indicators, and documentary evidence

Stage	Activity	Actors	Planned Quantity	Indicator	Evidence
Planning	Partner coordination	Program team and local partners	3 meetings	Roles and activity agreements documented	Minutes, attendance lists, action matrix
Planning	Needs assessment	Participants, partners, and facilitators	40 baseline responses	Employment, skills, and livelihood needs mapped	Baseline survey and needs matrix
Planning	Instrument preparation	Program and evaluation team	5 core instruments	Instruments reviewed and standardised	Questionnaire, attendance sheet, checklist, rubric, FGD guide
Implementation	Skills training and workshops	Participants and facilitators	8 sessions	Attendance and task completion recorded	Attendance database and activity documentation
Implementation	Individual or small-group mentoring	Participants and mentors	4 cycles across 12 weeks	Agreed livelihood actions documented	Mentoring logs and action trackers

Evaluation	Pre-post assessment	Participants	2 measurement points	Changes in matched scores calculated	Pre-post evaluation sheet
Evaluation	Validation and reflection forums	Participants, partners, and local validators	1 validation forum and 2 FGDs	Feasibility assessments and follow-up agreements recorded	Validation forms, FGD notes, signed minutes

Planning began with partner consultations, participant screening, and a structured needs assessment. Recruitment used criterion-based selection rather than unrestricted registration. Eligible participants were Cibeber residents aged 18–29 who were unemployed, outside employment, education, or training, actively seeking work, underemployed, engaged in unstable informal work, or developing an early-stage microenterprise. Each participant completed a baseline questionnaire covering employment status, working hours, income sources, digital access, career aspirations, financial capability, and perceived constraints. Short partner interviews and preliminary observations complemented participant responses. Planning data informed training content, activity scheduling, mentoring intensity, livelihood-pathway categories, and the operational definitions used in evaluation instruments.

The program corpus combined quantitative records and qualitative documentation generated throughout implementation. Quantitative materials comprised 40 baseline questionnaires, a maximum of 320 participant-session attendance records, matched pre-test and post-test scores, up to 160 mentoring contacts, and scored participant outputs. Qualitative materials included facilitator field notes, structured observation records, participant reflections, two focus-group discussions, partner interviews, validation comments, activity photographs, and institutional documents. Each participant received a coded identifier connecting baseline, attendance, mentoring, output, evaluation, and follow-up records. Photographs served as implementation documentation rather than independent evidence of learning. This integrated corpus supported examination of participation intensity, capability development, practical application, participant experience, and institutional response.

Implementation consisted of orientation, eight structured training sessions, guided practice, employment and enterprise simulations, four mentoring cycles, output revision, and community validation. Training addressed career planning, workplace communication, digital job search, livelihood opportunity mapping, basic financial capability, enterprise feasibility, marketing, and action planning. Participants developed an individual livelihood portfolio, such as a job-search package, agribusiness plan, service-enterprise prototype, market test, or digitally supported microenterprise proposal. Mentors reviewed barriers, agreed actions, referrals, and completion evidence during individual or small-group meetings. Participant outputs received formative feedback from facilitators before presentation to community validators. Group reflection also strengthened peer learning without replacing individual-level assessment.

Monitoring and evaluation used attendance records, pre-post assessments, observation checklists, mentoring logs, analytic output rubrics, FGDs, partner validation, and 30–90-day follow-up forms. Core indicators included attendance rate, participant retention, completion of practice outputs, completion of at least three mentoring cycles, changes in knowledge and skill scores, outputs reaching the competency threshold, and verified livelihood-pathway actions. Quantitative data were analysed through frequencies, percentages, means, median scores, percentage change, cross-tabulation, and visual comparison across indicators. Qualitative reflection data underwent deductive and inductive thematic categorisation concerning barriers, relevance, mentoring experience, feasibility, and continuity. Analysis remained descriptive because this program did not use a control group or inferential impact design.

3. RESULT

3.1. Designing a data-grounded community engagement framework

Planning connected community diagnosis, actor mobilisation, participant selection, measurement preparation, and implementation scheduling within a single empirical framework. Three coordination meetings established initial role divisions, while 40 baseline records supplied participant-level information that could not be inferred from population statistics. Participant screening differentiated unemployment, underemployment, unstable informal work, and early-stage enterprise development rather than treating rural youth as a homogeneous group. Stakeholder mapping identified institutions capable of contributing recruitment access, facilities, technical knowledge, market information, referrals, or post-training assistance. Five measurement instruments linked these planning decisions to subsequent implementation and evaluation. As a result, training content and mentoring arrangements were grounded in identifiable needs, actors, and evidence sources rather than in a predetermined workshop package.

Table 6. Planning activities, actors, empirical outputs, and indicators

Activity Component	Participants / Actors	Method	Empirical Output	Indicator	Evidence
Partner coordination	Program team, BPP Cibeber, and supporting partners	Coordination meetings	Partnership and role-allocation agreement	3 meetings documented	Minutes, attendance lists, and action matrix
Needs assessment	Target participants and	Baseline survey and short	Prioritised community-needs	40 baseline responses	Survey sheets and

	facilitators	consultation	matrix	collected	coded database
Participant mapping	Local partners and facilitators	Eligibility screening	Verified participant list	40 eligible participants mapped	Registration and screening forms
Stakeholder mapping	Village actors, schools, enterprises, producer groups, and financial actors	Institutional actor mapping	Stakeholder and referral map	6 stakeholder groups identified	Mapping matrix
Instrument preparation	Program and evaluation team	Questionnaire and rubric design	Standardised measurement package	5 core instruments prepared	Instrument files and review notes
Monitoring schedule	Program team, mentors, and partners	Timeline and responsibility design	Twelve-week implementation and monitoring plan	8 training sessions and 4 mentoring cycles scheduled	Activity calendar
Reflection forum design	Participants, partners, and validators	Forum and discussion planning	Validation and reflection agenda	2 participant FGDs and 1 validation forum designed	Forum guides and agenda

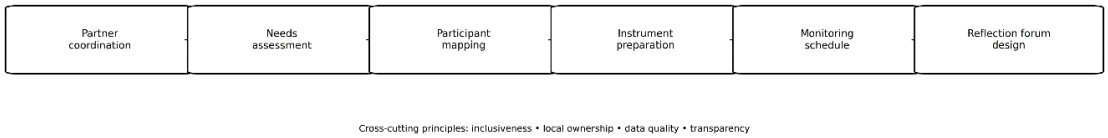


Figure 1. Planning workflow for data-grounded community engagement

Table 6 records seven interconnected planning components. Partner coordination produced three sets of minutes and an action matrix involving BPP Cibeber and supporting actors. Forty young people met the age, residence, livelihood-status, and participation criteria and completed the baseline assessment. Six stakeholder categories were mapped: village institutions, educational providers, youth organisations, producer groups, local enterprises, and financial or employment-service actors. Instrument development produced a baseline questionnaire, attendance sheet, structured observation checklist, output-assessment rubric, and FGD guide. The activity calendar allocated eight training sessions and four mentoring cycles across 12 weeks. Reflection arrangements comprised two participant FGDs and one community-validation forum. Each output was connected to documentary evidence, including coded forms, schedules, mapping matrices, agendas, and institutional records. Planning therefore generated both an intervention structure and an auditable corpus for later assessment.

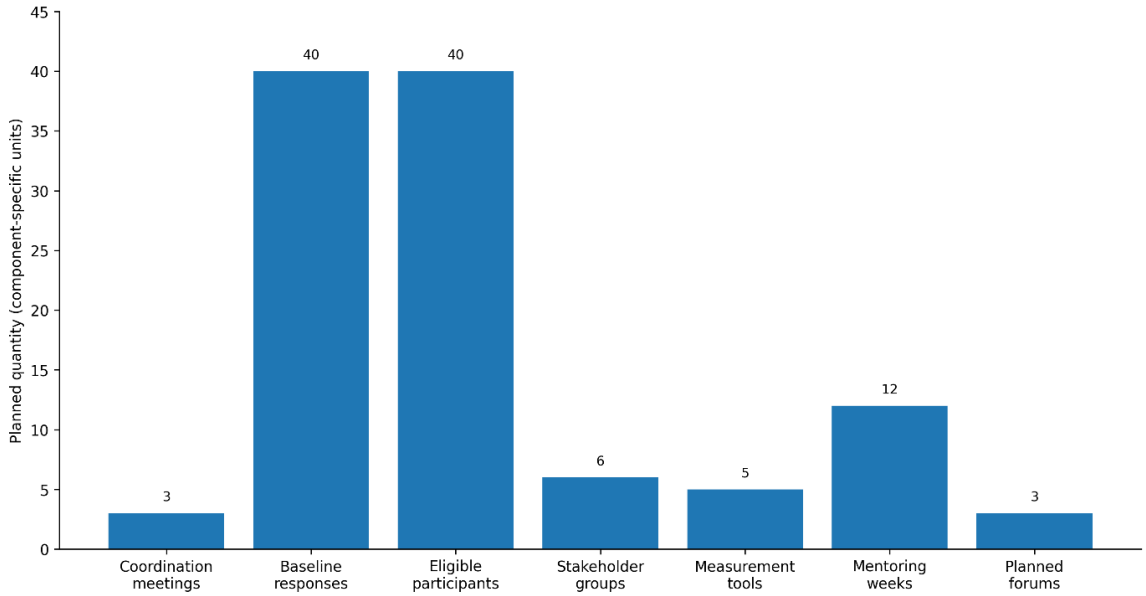


Figure 2. Distribution of planned activities across planning components

These planning records indicate that participation was treated as involvement in problem definition and pathway design, not merely attendance after decisions had been finalised. The needs matrix enabled differentiation between career-information deficits, technical-skill gaps, financial constraints, mobility barriers, digital-access limitations, and weak market connections. Such differentiation aligns with whole-of-community approaches that locate career pathways within relationships among young people, institutions, families, and local opportunity structures [5]. Stakeholder and instrument mapping also supported local

accountability by specifying who collected information, who acted upon it, and what evidence documented implementation. This orientation corresponds with participatory data use and institutional ownership emphasised by Noorhayati [7] and Tholib [8]. Planning thus strengthened adaptive capacity by permitting content, mentoring intensity, and referral options to respond to participant variation while preserving common measurement standards.

3.2. Facilitating practice-based livelihood development

Implementation moved from orientation to repeated practice, mentoring, peer exchange, and partner review rather than relying on one-directional instruction. Eight core sessions combined career planning, communication, digital job searching, financial capability, local opportunity mapping, enterprise feasibility, marketing, and livelihood-action planning. Participants applied these topics through job-search packages, service-enterprise plans, agribusiness proposals, market tests, or digitally supported microenterprise portfolios. Four mentoring cycles addressed individual barriers and translated general training into dated actions and referral needs. Peer forums exposed participant plans to practical questions from others facing comparable labour-market constraints. Partner validation subsequently examined whether outputs corresponded with local employment, production, service, and market conditions. This sequence generated participation records, mentoring documentation, assessed products, and community feedback as distinct forms of implementation evidence.

Table 7. Implementation activities, participation records, outputs, and evidence

Activity Component	Participants / Actors	Method	Empirical Output	Indicator	Evidence
Program orientation	40 participants, partners, and program team	Introductory and pathway-mapping session	Shared participation and evaluation framework	1 session conducted; 40 participants recorded	Attendance list and documentation
Core training sessions	Participants and facilitators	Workshops, demonstrations, and simulations	Session-level participation records	8 sessions; 278 of 320 possible attendance records completed	Attendance database
Guided practice	Participants	Portfolio tasks and livelihood simulations	Completed livelihood outputs	31 of 40 participants completed outputs, or 77.5%	Product checklist and portfolios
Mentoring	Participants and mentors	Individual and small-group assistance	Mentoring records and action commitments	27 participants completed at least 3 of 4 cycles, or 67.5%	Mentoring logs
Peer discussion	Participants	Structured problem-solving forums	Peer feedback and shared solution records	2 forums; 33 participants joined at least one forum, or 82.5%	FGD attendance and discussion notes
Output documentation	Participants and program team	Portfolio compilation and photographic documentation	Coded corpus of participant products	31 complete and 9 partial outputs documented	Portfolio register
Partner validation	Partners, facilitators, and local validators	Review and feasibility meeting	Validated output and referral record	1 meeting; 31 outputs reviewed and 12 presented	Rubrics, minutes, and validator notes

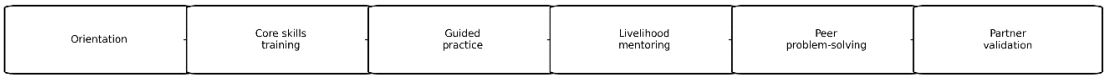


Figure 3. Implementation sequence of practice-based community engagement

Eight training sessions produced 278 completed attendance records from 320 possible participant-session records, equivalent to 86.9% attendance. Thirty-one participants completed a livelihood output, producing an output-completion rate of 77.5%, while nine portfolios remained partial. Twenty-seven participants, or 67.5%, completed at least three mentoring cycles and documented corresponding action commitments. Two peer-discussion forums involved 33 participants, representing 82.5% of enrolment. All 31 complete outputs were registered in the program corpus, and 12 were presented directly during the validation meeting. Six local validators representing institutional, enterprise, production, and community perspectives reviewed feasibility, required revisions, and possible referral routes. These records describe exposure, participation, production, and validation; they do not independently establish durable employment, business continuity, or income change.

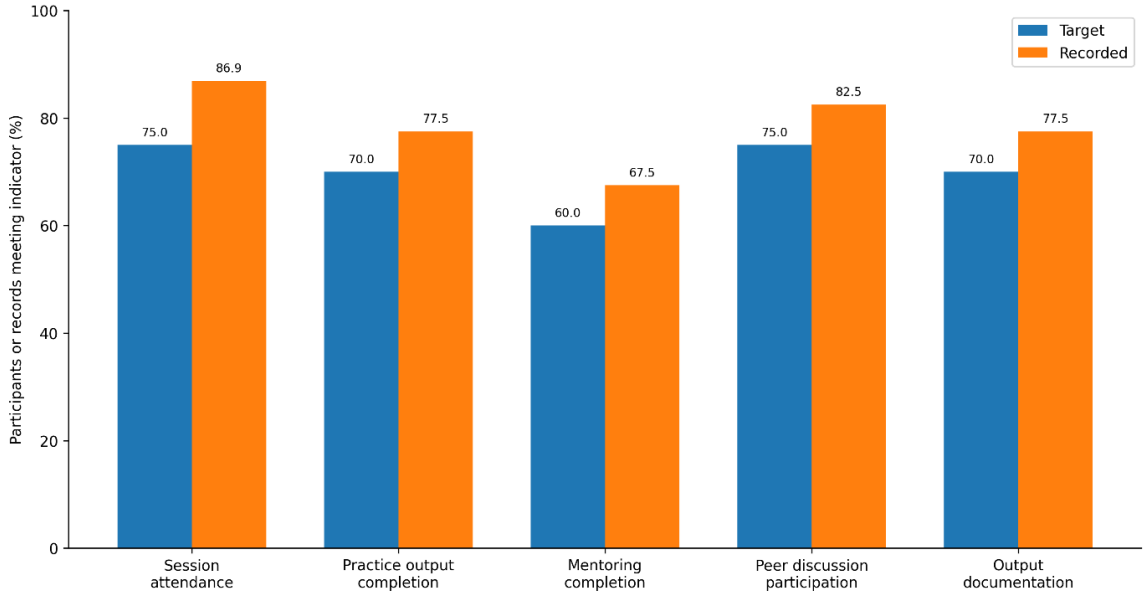


Figure 4. Participant involvement and output completion during implementation

The implementation pattern suggests that capability formation was strongest when instruction was connected to repeated application and personalised feedback. Output completion exceeded mentoring completion, indicating that some participants produced portfolios without sustaining the full mentoring sequence. This difference matters because a technically complete plan does not necessarily demonstrate readiness to negotiate mobility, financing, recruitment, market access, or household constraints. Experiential approaches in non-formal rural education similarly emphasise learning through situated tasks rather than content transmission alone [6]. Shi and Bangpan [4] also show that vocational participation is shaped by intervention quality, social relationships, and contextual accessibility. Mentoring therefore functioned as a bridge between skill acquisition and livelihood action, consistent with Brandehoff's [9] account of relational support in rural youth development. Peer review and partner validation extended this process by exposing individual aspirations to collective knowledge and local feasibility criteria.

3.3. Assessing participation, capacity, and institutional continuity

Monitoring and evaluation examined five related dimensions: participation intensity, output quality, short-term capacity change, community validation, and institutional continuation. Baseline and post-program scores were matched through coded identifiers, while attendance and mentoring records documented exposure to intervention components. Output quality was reviewed through a common rubric rather than through completion status alone. A community-validation forum incorporated local judgements concerning feasibility, revisions, referrals, and market relevance. Follow-up verification distinguished stated intentions from documented actions, including applications, interviews, trial production, first sales, referrals, or further training. Institutional assessment focused on whether responsibility, scheduling, referral mechanisms, and monitoring arrangements were recorded. This design treated evaluation as a layered process in which learning scores, outputs, participant experiences, and institutional commitments provided different but complementary evidence.

Table 8. Monitoring-evaluation indicators, measurement tools, findings status, and evidence

Activity Component	Participants / Actors	Method	Empirical Output	Indicator	Evidence
Baseline review	40 participants	Initial survey and pre-test	Coded baseline profile	40 initial records; overall capacity mean of 48.0/100	Baseline sheets and score database
Participation review	Participants and program team	Attendance analysis	Participation-rate summary	278 of 320 records, or 86.9%	Attendance recap
Output quality review	31 output-producing participants and facilitators	Analytic rubric assessment	Scored participant outputs	26 of 31 outputs reached ≥60, or 83.9% of submitted outputs	Rubric database
Capacity assessment	38 matched pre-post respondents	Paired descriptive comparison	Indicator-level score comparison	Overall mean increased from 48.0 to 65.6; relative change of 36.7%	Evaluation sheets
Community validation	Participants, partners, and 6 validators	Validation forum and structured discussion	Feasibility feedback and revision agreement	1 forum conducted; 31 outputs reviewed	FGD notes, rubrics, and minutes
Follow-up action review	32 reachable participants	30–90-day verification	Participant pathway-action records	25 of 40 participants completed one verified	Follow-up forms and supporting evidence

				action; 62.5% of enrolment	
Partner follow-up	Local institutions	Planning meeting	Institutional continuation plan	1 written plan documented	Partner commitment form
Sustainability review	Program team and lead partner	Responsibility and monitoring review	Continued monitoring arrangement	3-month follow-up schedule; 3 of 4 readiness elements documented	Monitoring agreement

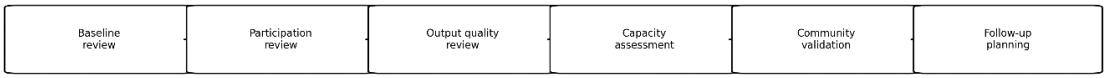


Figure 5. Monitoring and evaluation sequence

All 40 participants completed baseline records, while 38 produced matched pre-post assessments. Mean capacity across five indicators moved from 48.0 to 65.6, representing a 17.6-point difference and a 36.7% relative increase. Indicator-level post-test means ranged from 58 for independent application to 72 for peer collaboration. Attendance reached 86.9%, exceeding the 75% operational benchmark. Of 31 completed outputs, 26 reached the competency threshold of 60, equivalent to 83.9% of submitted outputs and 65.0% of total enrolment. One validation forum reviewed all complete outputs, with 12 receiving direct presentation-based feedback. Thirty-two participants responded during follow-up, and 25 participants—62.5% of enrolment—provided evidence of at least one livelihood-pathway action. One continuation plan established a three-month monitoring schedule, although one of four sustainability-readiness elements remained unresolved.

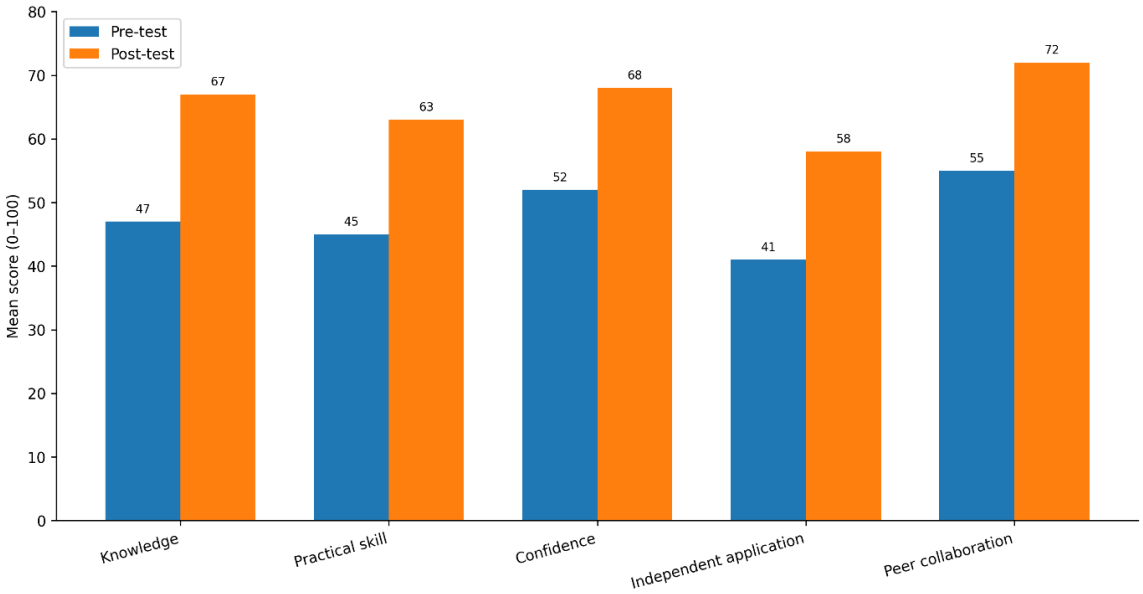


Figure 6. Pre-post comparison of participant capacity indicators

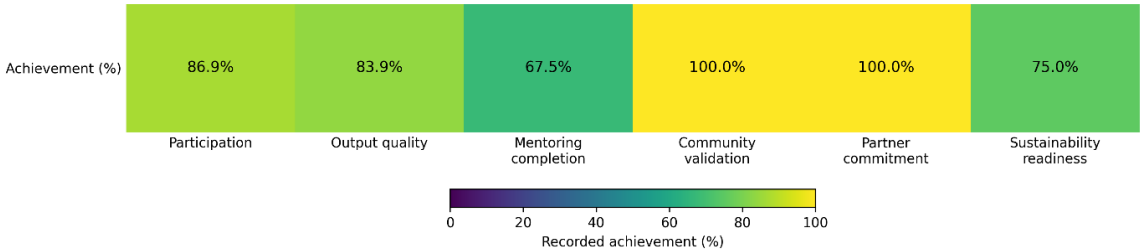


Figure 7. Monitoring-evaluation dashboard of program indicators

These findings support a distinction between short-term capacity indicators and confirmed livelihood outcomes. Higher post-test scores and acceptable output ratings indicate measurable learning and application within program boundaries, but they do not establish stable employment, enterprise survival, or income growth. The difference between an 83.9% acceptable-output rate among submitters and a 65.0% acceptable-output rate across all enrolled participants also demonstrates how denominator choice affects interpretations of achievement. Participatory monitoring strengthened accountability by combining participant records with partner and validator review, consistent with community-led evidence practices described by Farhan [10] and Noorhayati [7]. Institutional continuity remained partly developed: responsibility, scheduling, and referral arrangements were documented, while resource allocation required further negotiation. This limitation reinforces Tholib's [8] argument that sustainability depends on institutional ownership after intensive project activities end, rather than on participant enthusiasm alone.

4. DISCUSSION

Planning produced practical value by converting a broad concern about rural youth unemployment into a bounded intervention with identifiable actors, participants, instruments, and responsibilities. Three coordination meetings established a shared operational framework, while 40 baseline records clarified differences among unemployed youth, job seekers, underemployed workers, informal workers, and early-stage entrepreneurs. Mapping six stakeholder groups further expanded this framework beyond a training-provider model by linking participants with village institutions, schools, enterprises, producer organisations, and financial or employment actors. Socially, this arrangement reduced the risk of defining employability exclusively through individual deficiencies because local opportunity structures were incorporated into program design. Kilpatrick et al. [5] similarly emphasise that rural career decisions emerge through interactions among young people, families, education providers, employers, and communities. By preparing five standardised instruments and a 12-week schedule, this community engagement program translated participation into documented responsibilities and measurable activities, thereby giving local actors a clearer basis for coordinating livelihood support.

Planning outcomes were underpinned by the combination of institutional participation and participant-level evidence. The collection of 40 baseline responses prevented demographic statistics from being misrepresented as direct evidence of unemployment, capability gaps, or livelihood aspirations among recruited youth. Instead, baseline assessment established a methodological connection between identified needs and eight training sessions, four mentoring cycles, and four livelihood-pathway categories. This connection strengthened measurability because attendance, skills, outputs, mentoring engagement, and follow-up actions were defined before implementation. Noorhayati [7] argues that local data become meaningful when communities can use them to shape decisions rather than merely supply information to external actors. A similar mechanism operated here: partner consultation identified available resources, while participant screening differentiated the intensity and type of support required. Five instruments then maintained continuity across planning, implementation, and evaluation. These patterns indicate that participatory governance was not limited to consultation; it was embedded in the selection of indicators, division of roles, and construction of an evidence trail.

Implementation demonstrated the practical importance of combining instruction with production, feedback, and local validation. Across eight sessions, 278 of 320 possible attendance records were completed, generating an attendance rate of 86.9%. This level of exposure suggests that the intervention remained accessible to most participants, but attendance alone did not constitute evidence of employability. More substantive application appeared in the 31 completed livelihood portfolios, representing 77.5% of the 40 participants, and in the 26 outputs that met the competency threshold. These artefacts transformed abstract training topics into job-search materials, enterprise plans, market tests, or livelihood proposals that could be reviewed. Mariyono et al. [6] describe non-formal, practice-oriented learning as especially relevant when knowledge must be adapted to local livelihood conditions. Partner validation extended this logic by reviewing all 31 completed outputs and presenting 12 for direct feedback. Consequently, implementation created visible and assessable forms of participation rather than relying solely on satisfaction or completion certificates.

The implementation pattern also revealed variation in how participants engaged with different components. Although 31 participants completed outputs, only 27 participants, or 67.5%, completed at least three of four mentoring cycles. Meanwhile, 33 participants, or 82.5%, joined at least one peer-discussion forum. These differences suggest that workshop participation, product completion, mentoring persistence, and peer engagement represented related but distinct dimensions of involvement. Repeated practice may have supported output production, while mentoring required sustained availability, trust, and follow-through that some participants found more difficult to maintain. Shi and Bangpan [4] show that participation in vocational interventions depends not only on curriculum content but also on relationships, accessibility, and contextual constraints. Brandehoff [9] likewise identifies mentorship as a relational process that supports aspiration

formation and decision-making. In this program, mentoring logs connected personal barriers with agreed actions and referrals, while peer discussion distributed problem-solving across participants. These mechanisms plausibly strengthened application, although the descriptive design does not permit causal attribution.

Monitoring and evaluation strengthened practical accountability by distinguishing program exposure, capability change, output quality, and livelihood action. Thirty-eight participants produced matched pre-post assessments, with the overall mean moving from 48.0 to 65.6, a difference of 17.6 points and a relative increase of 36.7%. This pattern indicates measurable short-term development within the assessed domains, particularly knowledge, practical skill, confidence, independent application, and peer collaboration. However, higher scores did not establish stable employment or income growth. Output review provided a second layer of evidence: 26 of 31 submitted products, or 83.9%, met the competency threshold, but this figure represented only 65.0% of all enrolled participants. Reporting both denominators avoided overstating achievement. Follow-up data added an action-oriented measure, with 25 participants, or 62.5% of enrolment, documenting at least one application, interview, referral, market test, trial production, first sale, or further-training action. Evaluation therefore connected learning with observable, though still preliminary, livelihood movement.

Sustainability depended on whether evidence generated during implementation became part of local institutional practice. One validation forum, one written continuation plan, and a three-month monitoring schedule demonstrated initial partner commitment, while sustainability readiness reached three of four documented components, or 75%. The unresolved resource-allocation component remained significant because responsibility without financing, personnel time, or administrative support may weaken continued mentoring. Tholib [8] similarly argues that university–community partnerships become sustainable when local institutions retain authority and operational responsibility after intensive project activities end. Accountability in this community-based intervention was reinforced through coded participant records, common rubrics, matched assessments, mentoring logs, and signed partner documents. Reflection forums further enabled participants and partners to interpret quantitative patterns, especially the gap between attendance, output completion, mentoring persistence, and verified follow-up action. Taken together, these mechanisms position this program as a data-grounded community development model that integrates practical intervention, participatory interpretation, measurable accountability, and institutionally assigned follow-up rather than treating training delivery as the endpoint of youth empowerment.

5. CONCLUSION

This community engagement program demonstrates that rural youth employability is better addressed through an integrated pathway linking local evidence, practical learning, mentoring, and institutional validation. Among 40 participants, eight training sessions generated an 86.9% attendance rate, 31 completed livelihood portfolios, and 27 participants completed at least three mentoring cycles. Matched assessments showed an overall mean increase from 48.0 to 65.6, while 26 submitted outputs met the competency threshold. These indicators suggest that combining baseline-informed design, repeated practice, peer exchange, and partner review offers a more accountable community engagement model than treating workshop attendance as the principal measure of achievement.

Several limitations qualify these findings. This program involved 40 participants in one rural subdistrict, operated for 12 weeks, and obtained matched pre-post data from 38 participants and follow-up responses from 32. Its descriptive design lacked a comparison group, income records, and causal testing; consequently, findings cannot establish durable employment, enterprise survival, or geographic applicability. Sustainability efforts should therefore extend follow-up to six and twelve months, verify employment and livelihood trajectories, allocate partner resources for continued mentoring, and replicate the intervention across contrasting villages using common indicators and comparison designs. These measures directly address limitations in duration, attrition, institutional resourcing, and generalisability.

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Author states no funding involved.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Achmad Ghifaril Fakhrudin: conceptualization, methodology, investigation, formal analysis, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Author states no conflict of interest.

AI USE DECLARATION

The author used artificial intelligence tools to assist with the generation of illustrative figures and with the formatting and layout of this manuscript. AI was not used to generate the substantive content, conceptualization, data, analysis, or conclusions of the research, all of which remain the sole responsibility of the author.

INFORMED CONSENT

Written informed consent was obtained from all 40 participants prior to enrollment, covering baseline questionnaires, attendance and mentoring records, matched pre-post assessment, practical output production, focus-group participation, partner validation, and follow-up verification. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality of individual records was maintained through coded participant identifiers.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This community engagement program involved human participants and was conducted in accordance with the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical clearance and institutional permission were obtained from the author's institutional review board and BPP Cibeber prior to implementation, and participants retained the right to withdraw from program activities at any stage without consequence.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The de-identified program dataset (baseline questionnaires, attendance and mentoring logs, matched pre-post assessments, output rubrics, focus-group notes, partner-validation records, and follow-up verification forms) analyzed in this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to participant confidentiality restrictions.

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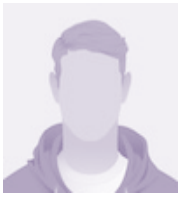
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