



A STUDY OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF MOI TRIBE IN SORONG, WEST PAPUA

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ABSTRACT

The view that the Papuans as the second class has created a culture that is not balanced in the social interaction between natives and immigrant. Moi Tribe is Sorong customary owners but poor or marginalized, both in education and opportunities to be involved in the executive and legislative branches. In this study we used naturalistic approach which eyesight of social reality in its natural setting. Instead of conducting study to test hypothesis, this study aims to describe and reflect the social reality of groups of local community of Moi tribe in Sorong. Social gap between migrants and indigenous peoples in Sorong result in conflict and limit the whole society's participation in development. On the other hand, Moi tribe has remarkable attitudes, behaviors and actions and traditions so that cultural empowerment can be a driving force in many areas of life, especially in economics. We found that economic empowerment of the Moi tribe will work well if it is done should be done by way of tribe chiefs.

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JEL Classification: Z130.

Contribution/ Originality

This study is one of very few studies which have investigated potentials of the Moi tribe in Sorong through economic empowerment. We found that economic empowerment of the Moi tribe will work well if it is done should be done by way of tribe chiefs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sorong city which is located on the island of Papua, is a strategic location as trade flows and the gate of Papua in its interaction with the outside world. Even Manokwari and the surrounding

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areas such as Bintuni, Babo, make Sorong as transit transport of goods. This position makes people's lives quite dynamic, coupled with the variety of natural resource exploration activities; ranging from oil and coal mining, to the marine potentials. Sorong is a city that is open to variety of human activities, goods and services, so that in this city there are oil and gas companies, fisheries, services, and companies engaged in other sectors.

The implication is that life in the city of Sorong is dynamic and fast moving. Unfortunately, this condition is not ready faced by native people who still reliant on natural resources and the management are still through traditional manners. Development which has been undertaken in Sorong has benefit for many parties, but on the other hand it has detriment, where natives' people of Moi tribe are marginalized. The purpose of special autonomy which has been launched by Indonesian government accelerating regional development by increasing community participation has not been generally perceived by society of Moi.

This requires the selection of an adaptive approach and strategy to deal with a plurality of the Indonesian citizen who made up of diverse ethnics and cultural. One part of Indonesia that has a specific culture is community of Moi tribe which has its own unique social systems characteristics, and attitudes and behaviors that demonstrate genuine hospitality. Although the Moi tribe is customary landowner city of Sorong, but the people condition of the tribe members, in general, are in poverty or marginalized, both in education and opportunities to be involved in the executive and the legislature which is still very small. Recently, even more lands owned by members of the tribe Moi have been sold to migrants. The tribal population is now less than the other tribes in Sorong.

The population in the city consists of mainly Papuans although there are various ethnics, as has been mentioned by [Ridha et al. \(2015\)](#). In general, there is common perception about Papuans where they are primitive, retrograde tribes and stupid are still heard in the community and have created unbalance situation in intercommunication between natives and immigrants. This kind of situation is reflected in the various forms of inhuman treatment, in the form of regulations or policies. This encourages the collective thinking of the Papuans to establish themselves as a form of statement of their existence as a community and unite steps to fight together against injustice.

In the empowerment of local communities, especially of the Moi tribe, we analyze causes, reveal public perceptions, looking for opportunities, find the hidden assumptions, map the destination, and combine opposing views by offering a different problem solving. Then we found a portrait of Sorong city development which is involving various components of society and optimizing participation Moi tribe who have often marginalized. One of indicators of the success of regional autonomy in Sorong is the high intensity of public participation which reflects the good local government, which is a key element in maintaining and improving the function of the district, in terms of improving the quality of life and global competition.

Based on the description above, research problem in this study is formulated as follows: 1) how are the values of community economic empowerment of the Moi tribe in Sorong?, and 2) what efforts have been done to empower the local economics of Moi tribe? Those research questions lead us to specify the study aims which are to decrypt and analyze values of economic empowerment of Moi tribe communities in Sorong as well as to analyze the economic empowerment efforts of Moi tribe in Sorong. Results of this study are expected to be taken as a

consideration as input for central and local government in making policy and develop rural community development programs, in general, and in particular, Moi tribe. For practitioners, the findings could be used as a reference relating to the social, cultural and local wisdom of Moi tribe in Sorong.

2. LITERATURE REVIEWS

2.1. Community Concepts, Local Communities and Empowerment

Society is a group of people who are relatively independent, live together for long time, inhabiting a particular area, have the same culture, and do most of their activities in the community. While local community is group of people who historically have territorial and identity and identify themselves as a distinct group. Koentjaraningrat (1990) suggested that there are four types of communities, namely city, town, peasant village (farmers village), tribal village (isolated village). Then, Soekanto (1998) added that based on location or place of residence, modern society is divided into rural and urban communities.

Community empowerment is an approach which is often used to improve the quality of life and uplift the dignity of people. This concept is important because it will give a positive perspective on marginally poor society. Trommlerova *et al.* (2015) suggested that empowerment is intrinsically important and instrumentally valuable to escape poverty. Meanwhile, research which was conducted by Boleya and McGeheeb (2014) asserted that empowerment is playing a crucial role in sustainable development such as in tourism and they proposed a way to measure the empowerment. Previously, Sutawa (2012) also found that empowerment of the community becomes a main key for tourism development because of involvement of the community in tourism development. McHenry (2011) has another view about empowerment. He revealed empowerment through art where the arts were utilized as a means for encouraging and enabling civic participation, as well as providing opportunities for social interaction and networking, which are essential for the health and wellbeing of rural and remote residents.

The main idea of empowerment is associated with the concept of power. Power is often associated with ability to make others to do what we want, regardless of the wishes and interests. Traditional social science emphasizes that power is associated with influence and control. This notion assumes that power as something that does not change or cannot be changed. The success of community empowerment can be seen through their empowerment regarding economic ability, the ability to access welfare benefits and the cultural and political capabilities. These three aspects are linked to the four dimensions of power, namely: power within, power to, power over and power with. Community development activities can be done through social assistance. In this case, there are five important events in empowerment, i.e. motivation, awareness-raising and training capabilities, self-management, resource mobilization, and construction and development of the network.

2.2. Community Participation in Development

Participation is a person's involvement in a group to take responsibility in realizing the objectives of the group. Public participation is a growing part from the bottom as the formed

initiative and creation of awareness and responsibility of the community for the benefit of society. According to [Thoha \(1998\)](#) participation is defined as a person's mental and emotional involvement in a group where and the person feel a sense of responsibility to it. Meanwhile, according to [Moeljarto \(1993\)](#) participation is an activity to share feelings which are involved in the activities of organization. Thus, public participation should be interpreted to bear the burden of development, responsibility for development implementation and then the community receives back development outcomes.

Community involvement in planning (participatory planning) and an interactive decision-making is an attempt to bridge the problems that appear between the government and the public, private from outside community, and the problems in the community itself. The community involvement in planning and interactive decision making must be running continuously in a formal manner as the educational process for all parties. A development is said to be successful if it's activity involves the participation of the entire community ([Tjokroamidjojo, 1995](#)). Indonesian Act No. 32/2004 confirms that the community is no longer positioned as objects of development, but as the subject which means that there is active participation of the community for the development.

2.3. Social Capital

In relation to the community, participation, and empowerment, we need to understand also about social capital. Social capital is a new terminology developed by social scientists to enrich the understanding of society and communities. Social capital is an understanding and knowledge shared by the community, as well as patterns of relationship that allows a group of individuals do one productive activity. This terminology refers to organizations, structures, and social relationships which are built by the community, regardless of government intervention or other parties ([Putnam, 1993](#)). Meanwhile, [Coleman \(1988\)](#) insisted on the importance of productivity in social capital. Social capital is necessary to realize the objectives which may not be achieved individually. Several articles have been talking about the importance of empowerment. One of them is a research which was conducted by [Akgomak and Ter Weel \(2009\)](#) to investigate the interplay between social capital, innovation and per capita income growth.

One important element of social capital is a strong desire of the members of the group to not only participate but always find a way for their involvement in a community activity. Social capital is more emphasis on the potential of the group and the patterns of relationships between individuals in a group and between groups with attention to the social networking space, norms, values, and beliefs among fellow who were born of the members of the group and become the group norm. Thus, social capital can be in forms of participation in a network, social awareness, beliefs, social norms, social values, and act proactively.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used a naturalistic approach ([Lincoln and Guba, 1985](#)) which eyesight of social reality in its natural setting, without any manipulation of the researchers. Instead of conducting study to test hypothesis, this study aims to describe and reflect the social reality of groups of local community by attempting to reveal the "how" and "why" there is a change according to Moi tribe

perception. The research was conducted at the Moi tribe in Sorong, West Papua Province. Reasons of determining the location of the study are:

- a) Moi tribe is native of the city of Sorong who have been marginalized in many aspects of development,
- b) There are mobility of the population outside the community
- c) The traditional rituals are performed in the community
- d) The indigenous movement of the tribe is very strong
- e) There is high tolerance between tribe leaders,
- f) Moi tribe is open to changes.

3.1. Data Collection

One of the characteristics of qualitative research is the understanding of the social phenomenon of the community as a research subject has a very important role. In this research, source of information come from human and non-human sources including documents and available record. The sources must be chosen appropriately in order to provide accurate information about the phenomena encountered. According [Arikunto \(1998\)](#) source of data which come from human in qualitative research is called the respondent/respondent. In this study, the respondents' selection was conducted based on authority and competence of researchers in order to appropriate respondent who can provide required information/data. The main respondents in in this study were: 1) Indigenous leader of Moi tribe, 2) government officers, 3) education figure, 4) figures religion figure (3), and 5) few people in the community. While, the non-human resources are documents, records and files related to community development in the city of Sorong.

3.2. Data Analysis

Phase of data analysis in this study is done by abstractive inductive analysis. Abstractive inductive analysis is conducted data analysis with guidance on events that have been observed. The obtained data is sorted out and described, which then would lead to the conclusion. In the implementation, data analysis of this study used several techniques which are based on an approach developed by [Strauss and Corbin \(1990\)](#). The approach will be done through several procedures, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

1) Open coding

This stage involves activities related to data collection and analysis in the study area. In this stage, four activities that must be done are labelling, sorting, recording, and categorizing. The process of field observations is conducted by detailing, conceptualizing, and categorizing the data based on the properties and dimensions that are relevant to the focus of research. At this stage, researchers have analyzed data in Moi community, and then interpret/perceive various community development programs in Sorong,

2) Axial coding

This stage refers to the activities related to data mapping based on the results from open coding, and then reorganize it in accordance with the grounded framework,

3) Selective coding

This stage refers to the process of structuration and systematization, thinking and re-determination, which is a continuation of axial coding.

3.3. Data Validity

A study requires a standard for degree of belief. In the qualitative research, standardization is often referred to the validity of the data. In order to obtaining naturalistic conclusion, it requires four criteria as introduced by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Those criteria are 1) credibility (degree of belief), which includes allocation of sufficient time in the research field, perform triangulation to strengthens references and research findings, 2) transferability which includes the use of adequately sample, comparing power constantly, looking for empirical occurrence of similarity contexts, 3) dependability) through examination of field data, and 4) certainty through the collection of data, confirmation of ethics, discussions with research subject, reveal research ethics of research and checking back the results.

In addition, this study also used a triangulation of the data collection methods and triangulation of the data source. Triangulation technique is a way of checking or comparing data that have been collected. With this method, the accuracy of data obtained through a method or from a source can be checked or compared to data obtained through methods and other data sources (Faisal, 1990). In this research, we used the triangulation technique which is proposed by Denzin (1970) and many articles discussed about the data triangulation such as Dyn *et al.* (1990); Quak and Schumaker (1991); Rippa (1992); Dyn (1993); Alboul *et al.* (2000) and Cervenanský *et al.* (2010). Through this triangulation, we will eliminate differences in the construction of reality in the context of a study while collecting data. Moleong (2005) found through triangulation, researchers can recheck the findings by comparing it to various sources, methods or theories. For those reasons, researchers can do it by: 1) proposing various types of questions, (2) checking it with various data sources, and (3) utilizing a variety of methods so that the level of confidence of data can be done.

Technically, triangulation in a research is carried out by checking the degree of confidence behind the information obtained from observation, interviews with related documents, and then compare the situation and perspective of someone with opinions and views of others about certain thing. From this comparison we not only gain common views, opinions or thinking of the source, but also the reasons for such differences Patton (1987).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Geographical, Administrative and Demographic Conditions of Sorong

Sorong city is located in West Papua with the area is 656.64 km² which is divided into 6 sub districts and 30 villages. Sorong has a strategic location as trade flows and the gate of Papua in its interaction with the outside world. Even, Sorong is a place of transit transport of goods to Manokwari, Bintuni, Babo, and surrounding areas.

The population of the Sorong city has been growing from year to year, either due to birth or due to population growth because of increasing number of people seeking for jobs. Male and female population in Sorong between 2006 and 2010 is shown in Table 1.

Table-1. Yearly Sorong Population based on Gender in Sorong within 2006-2010

Gender	Year				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Men	81,709	86,954	86,846	91,290	99,920
Women	80,994	76,890	62,432	81,268	90,705
Total	162,703	163,844	149,278	172,558	190,625

4.2. Economics Situation in Sorong City

The issuance of Indonesian Act No. 21/2001 on Special Autonomy for Papua Province is the answer for the government and people of Papua to obtain rights over more than just special regional autonomy. The main thing from the law is an attempt for accelerating of development in Papua Province, which is considered still lagging behind in comparison with other provinces in Indonesia. Authority which is written in the law also means a responsibility for the province to empower all the existing potentials, including the provision of a greater role for communities through tribe, religious and women representatives. On this basis, explicitly, the province is given special authority to regulate and administer governmental affairs and social development according to its own initiative.

Sorong's strategic position makes life quite dynamic society. Variety of natural resource exploration activities are mostly done in this city, such as oil, coal, and the marine potential. Sorong is a city that is open to a variety of human activities, goods and services. In this city there are many oil and gas industries, fisheries, services, and companies engaged in other sectors.

4.3. Moi Tribe in Sorong

Due to the strategic position of Sorong, people's lives become very dynamic and fast moving. This reality is not ready faced by indigenous peoples who still reliant on natural resources which is explored by traditional management practices. Perspective and simple agricultural technologies lead the people in this tribe to poverty and educationally as well as economically marginalized. Opportunities to seize the obtain chances to be involved in executive and legislature institution are still very small. This situation then to worsen since many lands which were formerly owned Moi tribe members had been sold.

Moi tribe inhabits the area Sorong (Sorong district and Sorong city) and Raja Ampat. Facts which prove that the areas are a clump of Moi tribe are:

- 1) Weigeo Island: In Moi language is called as Malawaigii, where Mala means a place or a mountain, while Wai means looking for and Gii means hamlet. In fact, the native Moi tribe arrived on the island to find sago.
- 2) Missol Island: In Moi language, it is called Malamuswek, a kind of tree which, by Moi tribe, is called Muswer.
- 3) Salawati: Moi tribe called it as Malaibinkeyam, where Mala means a place or a mountain, Ibin means land, and Keyam means small. So, Mala Ibin Keyam is little land or a small island called Salawati.
- 4) Batanta Island: Moi tribe called it as Mala Baanta, where Mala means a place or a mountain

and Baanta means between the two islands. So, Mala Baanta is the place/land between two islands. In fact, Batanta Island is located between Salawati and Waigeo.

According to an interviewed pastor and history witness Sangaji Warwei, deployment Moi tribe was began by the discharge of them from the jungle and met with a Biak tribe surnamed Marwei, Wariandu, and Mansawer who have occupied the territory since ancient of Moi. All the three groups have inhabited areas around river Mariat upstream to downstream before being placed by the King tribe of Moi. To date, the three tribes are growing and have many descendants in Doom Island. The whole area of Sorong and Raja Ampat are inhabited by Moi tribe which currently includes 8 sub-ethnics ie Legin Moi, Moi Abun, Karon Moi, Moi Klabra, Moraid Moi, Moi Segin, and Moi Maya. Due to expansion in the region by Indonesia government, sub-ethnics Moi are separated into areas of the administration districts, sub districts and villages.

Physically, Moi tribe can be known from the original physical features that have black skin and curly hair. These characteristics are different from other tribes who come from outside (or known as amber) such as Saparua, Nusa Laut and Seram tribe, which are characterized straight or wavy hair and white. Mixing of indigenous and migrant allows the formation various characteristics which are combinations of indigenous and tribal settlers. In addition to mixing indigenous tribes and settlers, the changes that occur in the Moi tribe are because of the following factors:

- 1) The descendants of people made of natural.
- 2) Migrants from the region of Papua or Non-Papuans.
- 3) The arrival of migrants from Java.
- 4) Changes in government construction, road construction, and improvement of administration status of villages.

Moi tribe society occupies a vast area covering from the east Mega, Makbon, Seget south westward to Mosool, Satbat up to Ayau Islands/North Waigeo and covers the entire archipelago of Raja Ampat, residence of Maya Moi. Those areas are known as customary law of Moi tribe. Moi tribe customs are mystery which are very difficult to know, or even forbidden known by outsiders of Moi. However, basically a tribal society of Moi is divided into three groups, namely:

1. Ne folus, who are knowledgeable people, knows many things and understood in philosophy.
2. The middle class, the class that is quite knowledgeable but limited.
3. The low class, who are for women, although there are women who have limited knowledge.

4.4. Economic Empowerment Values of Moi Tribe Community

Economics of Sorong is dominated by immigrants (Chinese, Bugis, Makassar and Batak, Java). Those facts can be seen from the existence of many stalls at the central market which are dominated by the immigrants. Vegetable and Papuans nut seller trade only on street side or pedestrian walks. This phenomenon is not only found in the Sorong, but also in several places in Papua. Local government policies which are supported by Special Autonomy Act No. 21/2001) and its fund do not touch and build indigenous Papuans in terms of both quality and quantity of its resources.

That reality causes social jealousy of Papuan against migrant communities (Amber). Papuans felt overlooked and marginalized. These feelings are the factors which trigger the onset of inter-

ethnic conflict in Sorong, such as the conflicts that have occurred between Papuans with Bugis society, which occurred as a result of the stabbing of a Seruinese by a Buginese. The impact of this tragedy made Sorong city's economics paralyzed. Therefore, we need an approach to improve the quality of life and uplift the dignity of the local community in the city.

The empowerment concept provides a frame of reference regarding the dimensions of power and capability that encompasses social, economic, cultural, politics and institutional. The main idea of the empowerment associated with the concept of power, namely the ability to make others do what we want, regardless of the wishes and interests. This study focuses on economic empowerment as a means of fostering the growth of local communities to create economic actors from the local community, and provide protection of growing economic actors from the local community.

4.5. Managing Human Resources to Support Family Economics in Moi Community

Since the Reformation Era in Indonesian in 1998, Moi tribes have received attention from various parties in order to develop, especially in terms of the quality of human resources. However, various attempts to provide opportunities for members of the tribe to be actively involved in the executive and legislative are always limited due to the low quality of human resources. Evident in forms of comments obtained from respondents (Tag 01 and Tag 02) are as follows:

Tag 01: Now there are some people from Moi tribe who work as government officer and the legislature, either in Sorong or in West Papua but merely to satisfy a sense of justice or "only for representing, not more than that" (Interview, December, 2012).

Tag 02: There are factors that make Moi people who work as the executive and legislative feel "only for representing, not more than that". I think the first issue that must be solved is how to change the stigma or the view that the Papuan nation are primitive, retrograde and stupid which, until now, is still heard in the community and has created a culture that is not balanced in the intercommunication between natives and immigrants. This stigma is reflected in the various forms of inhuman treatment, either in the form of policies, regulations, or in the form of patterns of development approaches. We suspect that demonstrations recently were expressions of dissatisfaction which could encourage the emergence of collective thinking of Papuans to build themselves without any discrimination (Interview, December, 2012).

Those statements indicate that the attitude and personality of Moi people who are resilient and patient can be as an entrance and strength to empower the Moi community. On the other hand, the views and discriminatory treatment is the bottleneck of empowering the Moi people. Actions can be directed to increasing the ability of individual, rather than on the circumstances that never can be considered satisfactory or fair. Because the reality so far has shown that the social gap between migrant communities and natives of Sorong often lead to conflict. There have been differences in obtaining job between natives and migrants. That fact is recognized by all parties in Sorong because it is a reality that cannot be denied. On the other hand, to be employed especially at Pertamina (Indonesian Oil and Gas Company), human resources with specific expertise are required and not all disciplines can work in Pertamina. Meanwhile, the human resources of native

people of Moi are not ready yet with the required competency skills.

The reality requires a positive intervention of various parties, especially the government, in preparing Moi communities to face social changes through empowerment program (Figure 1). The success of community empowerment can be seen from their empowerment regarding economic ability, ability to access welfare benefits, and cultural and political capabilities. These three aspects are linked to the four dimensions of power which have been mentioned in the previous section.

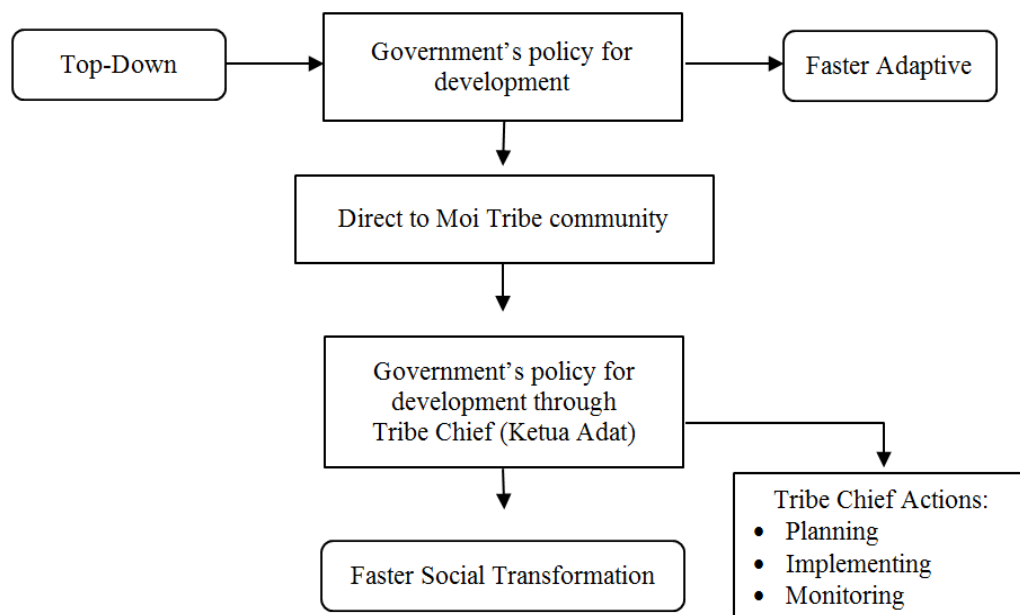


Figure-1. Efforts of community empowerment through Government Intervention Program

The figure informs us that that empowerment is a process and a goal. As a process, empowerment is a series of activities to strengthen the power or empowerment of vulnerable groups in society, including individuals who have problems of poverty. While as a goal, empowerment refers to a state or result to be achieved by social change; that is the poor people have power or knowledge and ability to meet their needs. These needs can be physical, economic, and social such as having self-confidence, able to express their aspirations, have livelihoods, participate in social activities, and independent in carrying out the duties of life.

Community empowerment of Moi tribe which has been done by Indonesian government through the Industry Agency of Sorong by giving training, fund to buy materials, as well as assistance from Industry Agency of West Papua province. This program government has been going well. The agency trains people who have talent or want to learn the various specialization. There are tire repairs, carvings artisan, weaving, and workshops. There are about 18 centers with 6 types of activities according to specialization. Once trained, they are equipped with equipment and capital, as well as looking for ‘foster father’ for the continuation of their business development.

However, according to some respondents, human resource management is not available yet, especially Moi people in Sorong although they have been empowerment. Many children of Moi people are not registered in school. In term of infrastructure, although Sorong is an urban area, the

roads are very bad. According to another respondent, whatever development program created by the government, it cannot be separated from the interference of tribe chief to guide the society. If there is no tribe chief, no one could remind if there are misuse of funds. So, the government should contact the tribe chief first if they want to run a development program, so that community members of Moi tribe will hold a meeting with all the tribe chiefs to determine the what, how, when and who perform the program. The empowerment which is done through tribe chiefs can be described in Figure 2.

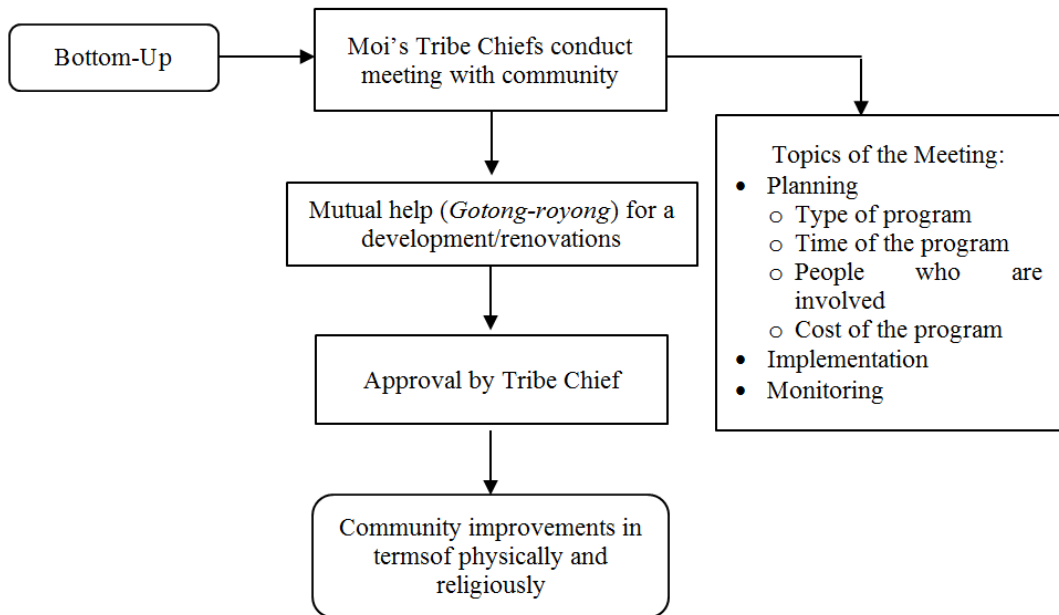


Figure-2. Efforts of community empowerment through tribe chief

5. CONCLUSION

This study focuses on the empowerment of local community that is the economic empowerment of Moi community. The community has social capital in forms of values in the attitude, behavior, actions, traditions, and culture. But this study is more specified to economic empowerment. It is driven by the fact that the leader of Moi and other educated elite always challenge to hold a community empowerment for Moi tribe.

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