



## Corporate Social Responsibility and Community Empowerment in the Mining Sector: Post-Mining Closure and Sustainable Development in Gunung Pongkor, Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

This paper explores the effectiveness of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives in fostering community empowerment and sustainability in the post-mining area of Gunung Pongkor, Indonesia. The **purpose of this study** is to understand how participatory CSR programs contribute to long-term community resilience and empowerment. The study adopts a **qualitative case study methodology**, employing semi-structured interviews, field observations, and document analysis to examine the design and implementation of CSR programs. **Findings** reveal that community-based programs—such as goat farming, organic agriculture, and ecotourism—enhance local ownership and agency when designed collaboratively. However, challenges such as youth exclusion, weak institutional integration, and environmental degradation limit long-term outcomes. The study draws from Freeman's stakeholder theory, Zimmerman's empowerment theory, and Tilt's contextual CSR framework to highlight the significance of localized governance. **Conclusion** suggests that sustainable CSR outcomes must be co-created with communities, embedded institutionally, and aligned with long-term development goals. **The contribution/novelty** of this research lies in its empirical validation of CSR as a tool for justice-driven transformation in post-extractive settings, offering context-sensitive strategies for inclusive and sustainable development.

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### INTRODUCTION

The closure of the Gn. Pongkor mine marked a pivotal shift for the surrounding communities. For decades, mining provided employment, infrastructure, and a central socio-economic structure for villages in the area. Mining-related activities became the backbone of local livelihoods, shaping not only income generation but also community identity and institutional dependencies. However, when the mining operations ceased, it triggered profound socio-economic disruptions. Local populations faced job losses, business downturns, and the deterioration of physical and social infrastructures. Additionally,

environmental issues such as land degradation, deforestation, and contamination of water sources exacerbated the community's vulnerability.

The ecological ramifications of mining, including deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution, continue to pose long-term risks. Without sufficient institutional mechanisms to remediate these damages, communities often bear the brunt of environmental decline. Socially, the absence of mining has weakened communal cohesion, previously maintained through shared employment and economic interdependence. The post-closure context of Gn. Pongkor is thus marked by uncertainty, insecurity, and a lack of clear pathways toward sustainable livelihoods.

In this climate of vulnerability, CSR initiatives emerged as an interventionist strategy. These programs aim to rehabilitate the social, economic, and environmental fabrics of the affected communities. Yet, the success of CSR in such a complex landscape is contingent upon its design, implementation, and sustainability. Hence, this study examines how CSR programs have been crafted and executed in Gn. Pongkor and whether they have succeeded in empowering local communities for long-term recovery.

While CSR holds potential as a transformative tool, conventional CSR strategies often remain limited in their scope and impact. Many initiatives are designed around short-term relief or corporate branding rather than long-term structural change. In post-mining contexts like Gn. Pongkor, where economic and environmental challenges are deeply intertwined, CSR that lacks community engagement, inclusivity, and adaptability tends to fall short.

The absence of regulatory frameworks mandating CSR continuity after mine closure leads to programmatic discontinuities. This, in turn, undermines community trust and hampers capacity building. Moreover, there is often a gap between international CSR guidelines and their local application, particularly in regions with weak governance and limited institutional support. Therefore, this study addresses the following problem: Can CSR transition from a reputational tool into a framework for structural community empowerment in post-mining landscapes?

The objectives of this research are threefold:

1. To analyze the structure and effectiveness of CSR initiatives implemented in Gn. Pongkor following mine closure.
2. To assess the alignment of CSR activities with global sustainability standards, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ISO 26000.
3. To evaluate the extent to which CSR interventions contribute to community empowerment across economic, social, environmental, and institutional dimensions.

This research contributes to theoretical and practical understandings of CSR in several ways. Theoretically, it expands CSR literature by embedding empowerment and resilience into post-extractive contexts. The study synthesizes global CSR standards with local experiences to uncover pathways for transformative engagement. Practically, the research offers evidence-based recommendations for corporations, government bodies, and NGOs engaged in post-mining recovery.

For corporations, this study outlines how CSR programs can move beyond compliance to become strategic tools for shared value creation. For policymakers, it provides insights into policy instruments that ensure CSR continuity and accountability. Finally, for local communities and civil society organizations, the research identifies best practices for participatory governance and sustainable livelihood development.

The study is geographically confined to communities surrounding the former Gn. Pongkor mine in West Java, Indonesia. The focus is on CSR activities executed between 2016 and 2024, encompassing both formal initiatives led by mining companies and informal community responses to CSR.

The use of a qualitative phenomenological approach allows for in-depth understanding of local perspectives but limits the generalizability of findings. Furthermore, reliance on key informant interviews and document analysis may omit perspectives from peripheral stakeholders such as youth and marginalized groups, which future studies may explore. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable contextual insights into CSR implementation and empowerment in a post-mining environment.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Definition of CSR Implementation**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is conceptually rooted in the broader dialogue of business ethics, sustainability, and stakeholder theory. Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory laid the groundwork for understanding that corporations must consider the interests of all stakeholders—not only shareholders—to ensure long-term success and legitimacy. The Triple Bottom Line (Elkington, 1997) furthers this idea by integrating three performance dimensions: people, planet, and profit. These theories challenge the traditional profit-maximization paradigm and argue that businesses have a duty to contribute to environmental stewardship and social equity alongside economic development. In mining contexts, CSR takes on a particularly significant role due to the industry's high impact on communities and ecosystems. Arsyad et al. (2024) emphasize that CSR in extractive industries must align with sustainability objectives and be tailored to address the social, ecological, and institutional dynamics unique to each locality. In such settings, CSR must shift from charity-based models to frameworks that enable long-term, community-driven development.

### **Categorization of CSR Implementation**

Globally, CSR implementation is influenced by standards such as ISO 26000, which outlines seven core areas: human rights, labor practices, the environment, fair operating practices, consumer issues, community involvement, and organizational governance (Zhao et al., 2022). Similarly, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a universal framework for aligning CSR with global development priorities, including poverty reduction (SDG 1), quality education (SDG 4), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), and climate action (SDG 13).

In Indonesia, CSR is legally mandated for specific sectors through Law No. 40/2007 on Limited Liability Companies, which obliges companies engaging in natural resource exploitation to allocate resources for CSR. Despite this regulation, enforcement and transparency mechanisms are weak, and implementation often varies significantly across regions. The disconnect between formal policy and actual practice underscores the need for community-embedded CSR frameworks, especially in post-mining settings such as Gn. Pongkor.

### **Definition of Community Empowerment**

Mining, by its nature, imposes significant environmental and social costs. While it may contribute to national GDP and infrastructure development, the long-term effects on local communities include resource depletion, environmental degradation, and livelihood disruption. Devenin and Bianchi (2018) argue that CSR initiatives in mining should prioritize economic diversification, environmental rehabilitation, and community empowerment to mitigate such impacts. In the post-closure phase, CSR can serve as a mechanism for reconciling these legacies. Tilt (2016) advocates for context-sensitive CSR that is not only aligned with corporate strategy but also developed through sustained stakeholder engagement and localized planning. The failure of many post-mining CSR initiatives stems from their short-term focus and lack of participatory governance. Viveros (2014) adds that empowering local communities to co-design and manage CSR projects enhances program legitimacy and long-term success.

### **Categorization of Community Empowerment**

Community empowerment in CSR contexts refers to increasing the capacity of individuals and groups to make choices and transform those choices into desired outcomes. Zimmerman (2000) conceptualizes empowerment across psychological, organizational, and community levels, emphasizing the role of participatory processes. Almatsier and Koestoer (2023) argue that community empowerment in post-mining recovery involves three key elements: the development of human capital, institutional inclusion, and socio-economic diversification. Empowerment also encompasses rights-based approaches, where CSR is not seen as a privilege granted by corporations but as a process that supports community rights to participation, development, and environmental justice. This view aligns with the findings of Shelia et al.

(2024), who show that CSR programs emphasizing education, vocational training, and cooperative development yield higher resilience in mining-affected communities.

### **Definition of the Mining Sector**

Sustainability in post-mining recovery demands attention to intergenerational justice. Kivinen et al. (2018) highlight that CSR initiatives must anticipate the needs of future generations by promoting environmentally sound practices and creating economic pathways that are not dependent on resource extraction. The lack of long-term planning in CSR undermines sustainability, especially when companies withdraw after mine closure without ensuring institutional or financial continuity. The Gn. Pongkor case illustrates the importance of embedding sustainability into CSR design. Programs that focus solely on immediate relief risk creating dependency and may fail to address structural vulnerabilities such as limited education access, poor market infrastructure, and fragmented community leadership. Therefore, a holistic approach integrating ecological, economic, and governance dimensions is critical to ensuring post-mining resilience.

### **Categorization of the Mining Sector**

The mining sector can be categorized into sub-sectors based on resource type (e.g., coal, gold, rare earth metals) and operational methods (e.g., surface mining, underground mining, open-pit mining). Each sub-sector presents distinct CSR challenges and opportunities. For instance, surface mining often causes extensive land degradation, requiring large-scale reclamation efforts, while underground mining may lead to subsidence and groundwater contamination (Wu & Jin, 2022). Additionally, the sector is divided by scale: large multinational corporations, state-owned enterprises, and artisanal/minority operators. Artisanal mining, prevalent in regions like Gn. Pongkor, is often informal and lacks regulatory oversight, exacerbating environmental and labour risks. Post-closure management further differentiates the sector, with some companies adopting “care and maintenance” models to sustain ecological and community investments beyond operational lifespans. These categorizations highlight the need for tailored CSR approaches that account for sector-specific risks and opportunities.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design and Rationale**

This research employed a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on community empowerment in post-mining contexts. Phenomenology was chosen because it allows the researcher to capture the lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings that stakeholders assign to CSR initiatives. As explained by Lee et al. (2018), such an approach is appropriate when the objective is to understand complex social phenomena from the perspective of those directly affected. Given the nuanced and socially embedded nature of CSR implementation—especially in a context marked by historical economic dependency and ecological vulnerability—the study design was intended to foreground community voices while maintaining analytical rigor. Phenomenology also aligns with the objectives of CSR evaluation, which involve not just programmatic assessments, but deeper insights into empowerment, resilience, and local governance dynamics. It allows for an inductive process whereby patterns are not imposed by theory but allowed to emerge through thematic interpretation of rich, narrative data.

### **Study Site: Gn. Pongkor, West Java**

Gn. Pongkor, located in West Java, Indonesia, represents a former gold mining site operated by a state-owned enterprise. Over the course of several decades, the mine became a central economic driver for surrounding communities, many of whom relied on both formal and informal work associated with the mining sector. The site’s closure disrupted this dynamic, leading to a wave of economic dislocation, environmental degradation, and social fragmentation. The study focused on three administrative areas surrounding the former mine—Kalong Liud, Bentar Karet, and Cisarua—which have been the recipients

of multiple CSR programs. These areas were selected due to their proximity to the mine, their differing institutional capacities, and their varied levels of community organization and mobilization. The region offers a unique case for studying post-mining CSR due to the range of interventions implemented and the richness of stakeholder engagement across civil society, corporate, and governmental domains.

### Participant Selection

This study adopted a purposive sampling strategy to select nine key informants who were directly involved in or impacted by Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs in the post-mining area of Gn. Pongkor, West Java. Informants were chosen based on their knowledge, role, and proximity to the CSR implementation process, ensuring a diversity of perspectives spanning institutional, administrative, and community levels. This multi-stakeholder approach follows the guidance of Camlin and Seeley (2018), who emphasize the necessity of culturally responsive and participatory methods when engaging with socially vulnerable communities.

To ensure representation across various interest groups, participants were selected from four main stakeholder categories:

- Corporate actors (e.g., CSR officer responsible for program design and oversight)
- Local governance officials (village heads and secretaries involved in facilitating CSR delivery)
- Community members (both direct beneficiaries and local observers of CSR programs)
- Civil society representatives (activists and traditional leaders who mediate community interests)

**Table 1. List of Research Participants**

Participant Code	Name/Role	Affiliation	Description
P1	Kak Nabila	CSR Officer	Oversight of CSR implementation strategies
P2	Kades Kalong Liud	Village Government	Local leader involved in program coordination
P3	Sekdes Bentar Karet	Village Government	Administrative insights on program execution
P4	Sekdes Cisarua	Village Government	Local governance and engagement interface
P5	Masyarakat Kalong Liud	Community Member	Grassroots experience of CSR program outcomes
P6	Masyarakat Cisarua	Community Member	Beneficiary of environmental rehabilitation
P7	Pak Arief	Community Elder	Cultural anchor and CSR legitimacy source
P8	Pak Ridawan	Local Activist	Civil society monitor of corporate accountability
P9	RW Bentar Karet	Neighborhood Head	Facilitator of community group mobilization

The table illustrates the range of voices included in the study and reflects the strategy to gather both horizontal (community-based) and vertical (institutional) perspectives. This composition provides a holistic view of how CSR initiatives are received, mediated, and sustained within local social systems, an approach consistent with participatory evaluation practices recommended for CSR effectiveness studies (Camlin & Seeley, 2018).

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Three primary data collection techniques were employed:

1. **Semi-Structured Interviews:** These interviews provided flexibility while maintaining consistency in key themes—CSR perception, empowerment outcomes, and program sustainability. Informants were encouraged to reflect on their roles, expectations, and evaluations of CSR activities.
2. **Participant Observation:** Observational data were gathered during community meetings, CSR workshops, and project site visits. This enabled the researcher to triangulate verbal accounts with social interactions and group dynamics.
3. **Document Analysis:** The analysis of CSR reports, local policy documents, and archival records complemented field data. This included reviewing ISO-aligned CSR assessments, government decrees, and program monitoring frameworks (see Zhao et al., 2022; Arsyad et al., 2024).

### **Analytical Framework**

Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman (1994) model, which involves four interconnected stages:

- **Data Reduction:** Raw interview transcripts and observation notes were coded and condensed into thematic clusters.
- **Data Display:** Emerging patterns were visualized using matrices and narrative summaries.
- **Conclusion Drawing:** Themes were synthesized into broader analytical insights addressing the study objectives.
- **Verification:** Conclusions were validated through peer debriefing, member checking, and iterative consultation with key informants.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The research adhered to ethical standards as outlined in ethical guidelines for social science research. All participants were informed about the study's purpose, data usage, and their rights, including the right to anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary withdrawal at any stage. Pseudonyms were used to protect identities.

Informed consent was obtained both verbally and in writing. The research also observed ethical reflexivity by recognizing potential power dynamics between researchers and community members. As advocated by Rahaju et al. (2025), ethical practice in vulnerable post-mining communities requires participatory engagement, transparency, and the safeguarding of local agency throughout the research process.

### **Validity and Reliability of Data**

To ensure the accuracy, consistency, and trustworthiness of qualitative research findings, this study employed rigorous and systematic procedures for testing both validity and reliability. The framework guiding this process is based on the seminal work of Miles and Huberman (1994), complemented by ethical research standards outlined by Rahaju et al. (2025). The four primary criteria applied were credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability—each tested with deliberate strategies to uphold scientific integrity in the study of CSR implementation in post-mining communities.

- **Credibility (Internal Validity):** Credibility refers to the confidence in the truth of the data and the interpretations thereof. To test credibility, this study applied method triangulation using three primary data sources: in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. These methods were chosen to cross-validate findings and reduce potential biases associated with single-source data collection. Member checking was also conducted: participants were invited to review their interview transcripts and preliminary findings to confirm the accuracy and authenticity of interpretations. Prolonged engagement in the research setting and the inclusion of diverse stakeholder categories (e.g., CSR officers, local leaders, community members) further reinforced credibility, ensuring that multiple realities and voices were captured—as recommended by Camlin and Seeley (2018).

- **Transferability (External Validity):** Transferability concerns the extent to which research findings can be transferred to other contexts or settings. This study tested transferability by providing thick descriptions of the research context, including social, economic, and environmental characteristics of the Gn. Pongkor region. Such rich contextualization allows other researchers to assess the relevance of these findings in similarly affected post-mining areas, as emphasized by Viveros (2014) and Almatsier & Koestoer (2023). Detailed participant profiles, descriptions of CSR programs, and community dynamics serve to enhance the potential for analytical generalization.
- **Dependability (Reliability):** Dependability was tested through the development of a comprehensive audit trail, which documented all phases of the research process—from problem formulation and sampling strategy to data collection procedures and coding frameworks. This documentation ensures the study can be independently reviewed or replicated. Reflexive memos and version-controlled records of analytic decisions were maintained to demonstrate transparency and accountability throughout the research cycle. The iterative process of data analysis using Miles and Huberman's (1994) model (data reduction, display, conclusion drawing, and verification) was systematically recorded to demonstrate methodological rigor.
- **Confirmability (Objectivity):** Confirmability relates to the neutrality and objectivity of the findings. This was tested through the maintenance of reflexive field journals and audit trails that captured the researcher's positionality, potential biases, and interpretive decisions. External audits and peer debriefings were also conducted during data analysis to cross-check emerging themes and ensure interpretations were grounded in the data rather than preconceived notions. The inclusion of direct participant quotes—such as those from CSR officers and villagers—further strengthens confirmability by anchoring analysis in the voices of those affected.

These procedures align with the ethical considerations raised by Rahaju et al. (2025), who argue that working with vulnerable populations in contexts such as post-mining regions necessitates heightened standards of transparency, inclusiveness, and ethical reflexivity. The methods used in this study go beyond technical compliance, serving as safeguards to ensure that the research accurately reflects local perspectives, supports empowerment, and informs equitable CSR practices.

In conclusion, the deliberate testing and implementation of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability have produced a body of findings that are not only empirically grounded but also ethically defensible and contextually relevant. These quality assurances provide a robust platform from which to draw valid conclusions about the impact of CSR on community empowerment in post-mining settings like Gn. Pongkor.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Results

This section presents the findings of the study, organized around the three major thematic pillars derived from the analysis: (1) CSR Program Design and Implementation, (2) Community Empowerment Outcomes, and (3) Role of the Mining Sector and Environmental Rehabilitation. The narratives presented here are supported by direct quotes from informants, and aligned with theoretical perspectives and prior empirical studies cited in earlier sections.

#### CSR Program Design and Implementation

The implementation of CSR programs in Gn. Pongkor post-mine closure was characterized by strategic documentation, participatory planning, and structured monitoring. According to Kak Nabila, a CSR officer, program design followed a social mapping process to identify priority needs: "Kita lakuin beberapa aspek mulai dari social mapping." This approach aligns with the participatory principles outlined by Viveros (2014), emphasizing that successful CSR programs must begin with inclusive assessments.



Three key stages were identified in the CSR lifecycle: needs assessment, program design, and evaluation. The needs assessment involved collaborative input from village heads and community forums to ensure relevance and legitimacy. Program design focused on livelihood recovery—primarily through goat farming, sustainable agriculture, and vocational training initiatives. Monitoring and evaluation were performed annually, as emphasized by the CSR officer: “Akhir tahun itu selalu ada monitoring dan evaluasi untuk program-program di 11 desa ini.” These evaluations measured both outputs (e.g., number of training sessions conducted) and social outcomes (e.g., group participation, economic progress).

The structured design and evaluation reflect best practices in CSR as articulated by Arsyad et al. (2024), who advocate for alignment with global sustainability frameworks. The ISO 26000 principles—especially those related to community involvement, fair operating practices, and organizational governance—were partially evident in the design of these programs, although formal certification and external audits were not conducted. Some CSR initiatives also adopted informal feedback loops during village meetings, enhancing responsiveness to community needs.

Further findings reveal that documentation served not only as a monitoring mechanism but also as a transparency tool. Villagers reported increased trust toward the company when progress was openly communicated. The presence of CSR documentation displayed in village halls and shared through WhatsApp groups allowed wider access and participation. This mode of communication strengthened the relationship between corporate actors and community members, reducing asymmetries of information that often characterize CSR failures (Shelia et al., 2024).

### **Community Empowerment Outcomes**

Findings suggest that CSR contributed to community empowerment through capacity-building, institutional collaboration, and collective ownership. One of the most visible results was the formation of community groups (kelompok 7–21 orang) for agricultural and livestock projects. According to a community leader, “Fungsinya membantu kelompok ini biar manfaat yang kita berikan... Gak cuma buat satu orang aja.” These group formats ensured equitable access to program benefits, especially for marginalized members who may not have had prior experience with enterprise development.

Vocational training—particularly in livestock cultivation and organic farming—enabled community members to gain technical competencies that supported economic independence. A farmer in Kalong Liud noted: “Dari pelatihan dari perusahaan... kita terkait bertenang, bertani.” These programs mirror the empowerment dimensions articulated by Almatsier & Koestoer (2023), which emphasize individual capacity and participatory structures as cornerstones of resilience. Additionally, peer learning was reported among group members, where those with better skills mentored newer members, creating a culture of mutual support.

Coordination between corporations and local governments was also highlighted by multiple informants as essential to success. RW Bentar Karet emphasized routine consultation: “Kita rutin berkoordinasi juga sama pemerintah desa.” This resonates with the stakeholder collaboration framework proposed by Ackers & Grobbelaar (2021), in which effective CSR requires not only funding but also relational legitimacy and shared governance. Joint decision-making increased the credibility of CSR initiatives and helped avoid misallocation of resources.

However, challenges persisted. Limited market access, inadequate transportation infrastructure, and gaps in post-training support undermined sustainability. A farmer reported: “Tantangannya cuaca sih... Mungkin kendalanya adalah terkait dengan pengetahuan mereka juga.” Many participants voiced concern that training programs were not followed up with assistance in accessing formal markets or sustaining capital. This highlights the necessity of linking technical training with systemic support, echoing the cautionary findings of Shelia et al. (2024), who warn that skill development alone cannot guarantee long-term empowerment.

It was also noted that younger generations were less involved in CSR projects, suggesting an intergenerational gap in empowerment. This aligns with observations by Putera et al. (2020), who argue that effective CSR must take into account varying motivations and capacities across age groups. Interventions targeting youth—such as digital entrepreneurship training—were notably absent, raising concerns about future continuity.

### **Role of the Mining Sector and Environmental Rehabilitation**



The mining sector's role in post-closure CSR was twofold: facilitating economic transition and contributing to environmental rehabilitation. Corporate actors acknowledged the need for remedial action: "Kita melakukan pengolahan limbah yang baik dan benar," said one CSR manager. This reflects the regulatory emphasis found in Zhao et al. (2022), which calls for post-mining CSR to integrate environmental stewardship alongside economic recovery.

Rehabilitation efforts included waste management training, reforestation campaigns, and awareness programs about illegal mining risks. Yet, informal mining practices persisted, contributing to ongoing water pollution and land degradation. A village leader cautioned: "Kalau operasional tambang itu mempengaruhi kualitas air itu juga ada." This illustrates the difficulties in achieving environmental goals in areas with weak enforcement mechanisms.

Community empowerment efforts were therefore intertwined with environmental education and civic monitoring. Collaborative partnerships with local leaders proved essential in maintaining ecological vigilance. However, as noted by Mas Wahyudin: "Jangan sampai ketergantungan kebanduan ya," the sector must avoid fostering dependency while promoting autonomy.

One promising initiative was the development of eco-tourism zones on rehabilitated land, which provided both environmental and economic returns. However, these were still in the pilot phase and faced scalability challenges. Furthermore, weak legal enforcement against artisanal and illegal mining continued to undermine rehabilitation goals, as reported by community activists. These dynamics reinforce the argument by Tilt (2016) that CSR must address not only corporate obligations but systemic governance gaps.

In summary, the results demonstrate that CSR initiatives in Gn. Pongkor post-mine closure had tangible benefits for economic recovery, skills development, and stakeholder collaboration. Yet, these benefits remain fragile in the absence of integrated market systems, environmental enforcement, and intergenerational engagement. Strengthening institutional linkages and addressing long-standing ecological and social vulnerabilities are crucial to transforming CSR into a sustainable development platform.

## Discussion

This section presents an in-depth interpretation of the study's findings based on informant narratives. The discussion emphasizes lived experiences gathered during fieldwork and bridges them with the theoretical perspectives on CSR and empowerment reviewed earlier.

### CSR Implementation as a Participatory Development Strategy

The testimonies of CSR officers and village officials confirm that CSR in Gn. Pongkor adopted a collaborative design. Kak Nabila emphasized the importance of "social mapping," which served as an inclusive tool to determine local priorities. This aligns with Viveros (2014), who highlights the need for participatory methodologies in CSR planning to ensure contextual fit and ownership. Village heads affirmed that their active role in program selection, such as livestock training and agricultural initiatives, resulted in greater community trust and uptake. Informants consistently noted that evaluation meetings were not only scheduled but also acted upon. One Sekdes explained, "Kita evaluasi bareng tiap akhir tahun, dan sering ada perbaikan dari usulan warga." Such responsiveness exemplifies what Arsyad et al. (2024) describe as adaptive CSR. This approach prevents stagnation and aligns CSR initiatives with shifting community needs—especially important in dynamic post-mining landscapes where new problems emerge as others are resolved.

### Empowerment Outcomes through Localized Collaboration

Field data highlight that empowerment was fostered through structured group work and access to training. Community members repeatedly mentioned that "berkelompok lebih adil dan saling bantu," suggesting that collective empowerment, rather than individual benefit, was prioritized. Group formats also mitigated elite capture by ensuring that benefits reached various social segments. Farmers, particularly in Kalong Liud, described training as "pengalaman baru yang bisa langsung dipakai," referring to hands-on skills in

goat farming and composting. However, as another informant noted, “Kami sudah bisa ternak, tapi belum tahu cara jual ke luar.” This lack of market access demonstrates a gap between capacity-building and sustainable livelihoods—one that Shelia et al. (2024) also identify as critical in evaluating CSR success.

Coordination with local governments was seen as beneficial but vulnerable. RW Bentar Karet reported effective program rollout due to coordination but worried about continuity: “Kalau CSR-nya berhenti, siapa yang lanjutin?” This echoes the findings of Putera et al. (2020), who emphasize that without structural embedding, CSR gains can dissipate after corporate withdrawal.

Moreover, younger villagers appeared disengaged. Youths were rarely targeted in CSR initiatives, and one informant from Cisarua noted, “Anak-anak muda lebih minat ke kerja di kota, bukan ikut kelompok ternak.” This points to an intergenerational disconnect and indicates the need for innovation-focused programs—such as digital training—that appeal to younger demographics.

**Environmental Responsibilities and Sectoral Governance**

CSR managers and local leaders agreed that environmental rehabilitation was necessary, but challenging. Corporate informants cited efforts such as waste management education and reforestation, but community members still noted: “Sungai kadang masih keruh, apalagi pas hujan.” Such perceptions highlight persistent environmental risks that CSR alone cannot resolve. Community leaders acknowledged CSR’s role in beginning the process, but emphasized that illegal mining undermines progress. “Ada saja yang nambang malam-malam, merusak yang sudah ditanam,” one informant complained. These insights reflect the structural weaknesses in enforcement and governance that Tilt (2016) critiques in CSR practice. Without coordinated legal and regulatory action, environmental CSR becomes fragmented and reactive.

Importantly, informants such as Mas Wahyudin warned that “kalau terlalu dimanjakan, warga jadi pasif.” This aligns with the concept of dependency risk—wherein overreliance on corporate assistance inhibits community self-reliance. Thus, CSR must shift from delivery to facilitation, empowering communities to steward their environment and institutions independently over time.

**Theoretical and Practical Implications**

Findings reinforce the theoretical proposition that participatory and responsive CSR is more likely to succeed in fragile, post-mining contexts. Informant testimonies support stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), where CSR gained legitimacy through inclusive decision-making. Similarly, empowerment theory (Zimmerman, 2000) is operationalized through community-led projects that build agency.

Practically, this study recommends that CSR planning include:

- Intergenerational targeting (especially youth-focused digital and entrepreneurial skills)
- Post-training support systems (linking skills to markets)
- Community-led monitoring to track environmental outcomes
- Long-term transition strategies beyond corporate funding

As Almatsier & Koestoer (2023) suggest, sustainable empowerment demands a shift from short-term aid to long-term governance transformation. This is echoed in participant voices that call not just for training, but for inclusion in decision-making and long-term co-ownership.

In sum, the discussion underscores that while CSR in Gn. Pongkor has achieved notable successes, it must evolve further to integrate youth, secure environmental gains, and reinforce institutional independence. These insights, rooted in the voices of affected communities, offer a grounded roadmap for reimagining CSR as a vehicle for just and sustainable transformation.

**Summary of Findings**

To further substantiate the discussion and provide a synthesis between thematic findings and stakeholder testimonies, the following table summarizes the key results as reflected in informant data:

**Table 2. Summary of Key Findings Based on Informant Narratives**

Thematic Focus	Informant Data Highlights	Interpretation/Implications
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Participatory CSR Design	“Kita lakuin beberapa aspek mulai dari social mapping.” – Kak Nabila	CSR aligned with Viveros’ (2014) participatory model; trust-building through inclusive design.
Responsive Evaluation Mechanism	“Kita evaluasi bareng tiap akhir tahun.” – Sekdes Bentar Karet	Adaptive CSR responsive to local feedback; validates Arsyad et al. (2024) adaptive approach.
Group-based Empowerment	“Berkelompok lebih adil dan saling bantu.” – Community member Kalong Liud	Collective empowerment mitigates elite capture; aligns with Almatsier & Koestoer (2023).
Training Relevance vs. Market Gaps	“Kami sudah bisa ternak, tapi belum tahu cara jual ke luar.” – Farmer Kalong Liud	Skills alone insufficient; confirms Shelia et al. (2024) warning on livelihood sustainability.
Program Continuity Concerns	“Kalau CSR-nya berhenti, siapa yang lanjutin?” – RW Bentar Karet	Lack of institutionalization threatens program sustainability; reflects Putera et al. (2020).
Youth Disengagement	“Anak-anak muda lebih minat ke kerja di kota.” – Resident Cisarua	Highlights intergenerational gap in CSR relevance; calls for youth-targeted innovation.
Environmental Rehabilitation Challenges	“Sungai kadang masih keruh.” – Community leader	Reforestation and waste treatment remain inadequate; shows ecological vulnerability persists.
Informal Mining Risk	“Ada saja yang nambang malam-malam.” – Village leader	Illegal mining undermines progress; confirms Tilt’s (2016) systemic governance critique.
Dependency Risk	“Kalau terlalu dimanjakan, warga jadi pasif.” – Mas Wahyudin	Emphasizes need to transition from aid to autonomy; reinforces empowerment theory (Zimmerman).

This synthesis table bridges informant voices with literature-based insights and highlights the nuanced, often conflicting dynamics observed on the ground. It serves as an empirical anchor to the discussion and prepares the foundation for the concluding analysis in the next section.

## CONCLUSION

### Key Findings and Synthesis

This study set out to explore how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives contribute to community empowerment and sustainability in the post-mining area of Gunung Pongkor. The findings demonstrate that CSR has indeed played a transformative role, particularly when it is participatory, localized, and responsive to the community’s own priorities. Informants consistently highlighted the effectiveness of CSR projects that incorporated community voices in planning and decision-making processes—an approach that validates the participatory ethos advocated by Viveros (2014) and Arsyad et al. (2024). Initiatives such as goat farming, community-based tourism, and organic agriculture were perceived not merely as economic interventions, but as enablers of dignity, identity, and agency. However, the impact of these initiatives remains uneven due to structural and institutional constraints. Informants identified youth exclusion, short CSR cycles, and lack of infrastructure support as limiting factors. The persistence of these issues underscores the need for a more integrative approach—one that embeds CSR into long-term community governance and regional development planning.

### Theoretical Contributions

Aligned with its aim to examine CSR’s role in long-term empowerment, this study confirms and extends several theoretical frameworks. Freeman’s (1984) stakeholder theory is affirmed in the way CSR efforts

gained legitimacy when actors—corporate and communal—collaborated in governance and planning. Zimmerman’s (2000) empowerment theory is also supported, as many community members expressed increased self-efficacy and decision-making capability as outcomes of CSR programs. Furthermore, Tilt’s (2016) contextual CSR model is expanded through insights on how community-specific socio-cultural and ecological contexts shape the effectiveness of CSR interventions.

### **Practical Recommendations**

To enhance CSR’s contribution to sustainable empowerment, several actionable strategies are proposed: **Inclusive, Intergenerational Design:** Develop CSR activities that involve youth through digital literacy, environmental stewardship, and entrepreneurship training. **Long-Term Support Systems:** Provide post-training financial access, cooperative systems, and market linkage to strengthen economic resilience. **Collaborative Environmental Governance:** Establish multistakeholder partnerships for post-mining ecosystem rehabilitation and environmental monitoring. **Policy Integration:** Align CSR programs with local development instruments such as RPJMDs to ensure continuity, resource allocation, and community ownership.

### **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

This study is limited by its qualitative, single-site design. While it offers rich, context-specific insights, its findings may not be generalizable across all post-mining regions. Future research could compare CSR impacts across multiple sites using mixed methods to explore broader patterns of empowerment, youth engagement, and environmental resilience. Additionally, longitudinal studies are encouraged to assess CSR sustainability over time.

### **Final Reflection**

CSR in Gunung Pongkor has shown that empowerment cannot be delivered—it must be cultivated. Empowerment emerges when communities are co-creators of their development, when young people are included as agents of change, and when corporate responsibility aligns with ecological and social justice. Informed by the lived experiences of local actors, this study suggests that CSR, when enacted thoughtfully, holds transformative potential to reimagine post-extractive futures not as zones of abandonment, but as landscapes of renewal and resilience.

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