

Accelerating the Realization of Well-Being in Papua Indonesia

Agus I. Sumule^{1*}, Amestina Matualage², Yunita Palinggi³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Papua, Indonesia; agussumule@gmail.com

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Abstract. This paper attempts to answer the following question: What to be done to accelerate the creation of well-being in Papua, Indonesia. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of well-being in Papua. Key areas of investigation include human development indicators, poverty rates, education levels, healthcare access, and market for the indigenous people produces. Through case studies and comparative analysis, the paper highlights the challenges and opportunities in improving governance efficiency, service delivery, and overall well-being for the indigenous population in Papua.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past three years, significant changes have occurred in Papua. Perhaps never have such fundamental transformations taken place as those unfolding today. The Papua Special Autonomy Law has been amended for the second time through Law No. 2 of 2021. Its derivative regulations, namely Government Regulation (PP) No. 106/2021 on regional authority—both for the provincial and regency/municipality levels—and PP No. 107/2021 on budgeting, have also been established.

Several new autonomous regions (daerah otonom baru—DOB) at the provincial level have been created. Papua is no longer a single entity as it was under Law No. 12 of 1969 and Law No. 21 of 2001, or even two entities under the Special Autonomy framework following the enactment of Law No. 35 of 2008. Today, Papua consists of six provinces, each with equal rights and authority, reporting independently to Jakarta. This decentralization aligns with the broader Decentralization Theory, which argues that regional autonomy can improve governance efficiency and service delivery (Faguet, 2014).

Additionally, as stipulated by the Law No. 2 of 2021, the government has formed the Steering Committee for the Acceleration of Papua Special Autonomy (Badan Pengarah Percepatan Pembangunan Otonomi Khusus Papua -- BP3OKP), led by the Vice President. This body includes the Minister of Home Affairs, the Minister of Finance, the Head of the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), and one representative from each of Papua's six provinces. Bappenas has also produced the Master Plan for the Acceleration of Papua Development 2022–2041, formalized as a Presidential Regulation No. 24 of 2023 (Tamma & Duile, 2020).

Regarding development funding, total allocations have increased, particularly the Papua Special Autonomy Fund, which has risen from 2% to 2.25% of the national General Allocation Fund (DAU). The central government hopes that these changes will significantly improve conditions in Papua, bringing tangible benefits to indigenous Papuans as the primary subjects of these policies. However, the time frame for achieving these objectives is short—only 20 years from 2021 (Gaventa, 2006).

On May 20th, 1955, the U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia, Hugh S. Cumming, Jr., made the following conclusion in his letter to the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs: "... [President Soekarno]'s view ... is that the Indonesian revolution will remain incomplete until Indonesian sovereignty is extended over Dutch New Guinea [Papua region of Indonesia] ...". This rhetoric has been reiterated repeatedly to the present day. For certain parties, this represents a reaffirmation of Papua's political status within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. However, in the current era of democracy and transparency, this statement should be interpreted as the state's commitment to creating the greatest possible welfare in Papua (Bauw, 2025).

The objective of this paper is to provide an overview of the human development situation in Papua, outlining what has been done, particularly by the central government of Indonesia, and identifying what further actions should be taken to accelerate the realization of welfare for the people of Papua, particularly among the indigenous population.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a mixed-methods research approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to gain a holistic and in-depth understanding of the multifaceted aspects of well-being in Papua, Indonesia. The choice of a mixed-method design is driven by the complex socio-economic, cultural, and political contexts within the Papuan region, which necessitate both statistical insight and contextual interpretation to uncover the root causes and sustainable pathways for improving local welfare.

On the quantitative side, the study relies on the analysis of secondary data collected from authoritative and credible sources, such as Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), Papua Province Development Index Reports, and related governmental and non-governmental institutions. Indicators analyzed include income levels, poverty rates, education enrollment, life expectancy, access to clean water, and health service utilization. These quantitative metrics are instrumental in measuring progress, identifying disparities, and evaluating the effectiveness of existing development policies in Papua.

For the qualitative component, the study employs documentary analysis and policy review, drawing upon national policy documents, strategic plans, local government regulations, and international development frameworks relevant to Papua's welfare development. Additionally, qualitative insights are drawn from semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and stakeholder reports, particularly from community leaders, indigenous representatives, NGOs, and public officials engaged in the region's development efforts. This qualitative data enables a deeper exploration into the socio-cultural dimensions, local perceptions of well-being, governance issues, and structural barriers that often escape numeric representation.

The integration of qualitative and quantitative methods allows for a triangulation of findings, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study. It also enables the researcher to contextualize statistical trends with human experience, policy dynamics, and institutional performance, providing a multi-layered narrative that reflects the reality on the ground in Papua.

The methodology is grounded in library research techniques (Penders, 2021), which support the systematic and rigorous review of literature and documents. The data analysis follows (Huberman, 2017) model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification for the qualitative portion, while descriptive statistics and correlation analysis are applied to the quantitative data to identify trends and inter-variable relationships.

Ultimately, this methodological framework provides a robust foundation to evaluate the state of well-being in Papua not only from an output perspective (quantitative indicators), but also from an outcome and impact-oriented lens that considers people's voices, institutional practices, and socio-political dynamics.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Current Situation

Before the establishment of new autonomous regions, as stated by BPS (2022), the Human Development Index (HDI) of Papua Province had reached 60.44, transitioning from a low to a medium level. West Papua Province had an HDI of 65.09. Following the regional divisions, some new provinces recorded higher HDI values than their parent province, such as Papua Province (66.96) and South Papua (60.53). However, others saw significant declines, such as Central Papua (55.72) and Papua Highlands (47.86). Similarly, in terms of poverty rates, despite regional divisions, all six Papuan provinces remain among the poorest in Indonesia (Fobih, 2004).

These statistics underscore the urgent need to accelerate development efforts in Papua. For example, in 2021, an estimated 620,724 school-age children in Papua were not enrolled in school based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture. This number has continued to rise despite the enactment of Law No. 2 of 2021 and its implementing regulations PP 106 and 107 of 2021. Using data from the same ministry, the number of unschooled children has reached almost 700,000 in 2023. If these trends continue, Papua could see over 1 million unschooled children by 2030 (Faguet, 2014).

Healthcare development has also seen little progress. Many villages lack midwives to provide reproductive health services for indigenous women, and many districts do not have functioning community health centers (Puskesmas) due to shortages of medical personnel. The guiding principle should be: one village, one midwife; one district, one fully operational Puskesmas. This aligns with global recommendations for improving rural healthcare access (Agustina et al. 2019).

Another often-overlooked issue is the demographic shift due to increased migration. For instance, indigenous Papuans comprise only 39.92% of the population in Southwest Papua, according to Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) 2022 (Rosyidah et al., 2024). Since the 2010 Population Census, it has been evident that indigenous Papuans are now a minority in several areas, such as Mimika, Nabire, Merauke, Keerom, and Jayapura City. Addressing how Special Autonomy is implemented in regions where indigenous Papuans are minorities requires careful thought and wisdom.

3.2. Strategies for Fostering Well-being in Papua

To enhance well-being in Papua, the central government, through the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), issued Presidential Regulation No. 24 of 2023, which outlines the Master Plan for the Acceleration of Papua Development (Rencana Induk Percepatan Pembangunan Papua – RIPP). This plan spans a 20-year period from 2022 to 2041. The vision of the RIPP is to create a self-reliant, just, and prosperous Papua, while its mission focuses on ensuring that the region is healthy, educated, and productive (Ferrazzi, 2022).

However, the 400-page technical document needs to be simplified into a more accessible and actionable framework, particularly for local government implementation. Several contemporary issues must be addressed to expedite the development process and improve well-being in Papua.

3.3. Village Development Focus

A significant portion of Papua's indigenous population resides in villages, many of which are geographically isolated, accessible only by foot or small aircraft. With a total of 7,548 villages in Papua, development efforts must prioritize these communities. A substantial share of the Special Autonomy Fund should be allocated directly to villages, employing models like the RESPEK program, which operated from 2006 to 2011 under Governors Barnabas Suebu of Papua Province and Abraham Atururi of West Papua Province. The RESPEK model involved the active participation of villagers, guided by a facilitator, in identifying and implementing annual development projects. Village committees could be established to oversee project execution, and at the end of each year, an accountability report was required to secure the following year's budget allocation (Dawson, 2021).

The importance of community-based development models, such as RESPEK, is supported by participatory development theory. This theory, as articulated by authors like (Cornwall & Coelho, 2007), emphasizes the value of local communities actively participating in the decision-making process to ensure that development interventions meet their real needs and priorities. Participatory approaches are particularly relevant in contexts like Papua, where local knowledge and context-specific solutions are crucial for addressing the unique challenges of geographically isolated communities.

Since 2015, the Village Fund, established under Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages, has been disbursed to all villages across Indonesia, further formalized by Government Regulation No. 43 of 2014. In Papua, the allocation of these funds is considerable. For example, in 2023, the village fund allocated to Papua Highlands Province (Rp 2,140,973,836) exceeded the amount provided by the Special Autonomy Fund (Rp 1,766,038,303). Despite this, the Human Development Index (HDI) of Papua Highlands remains the lowest in the country.

This comparison underscores the need for effective planning at the village level. Simply allocating substantial funds is insufficient without proper involvement of the local communities in identifying their most pressing needs. Villagers, assisted by competent facilitators, must play an active role in project selection and planning. Moreover, the development process must be accompanied by reliable accountability reports, which should serve as a prerequisite for the disbursement of subsequent year's funds.

3.4. Strengthening District Governance

Under the Special Autonomy status, Papua's governance structure comprises four administrative levels: province, regency/municipality, district, and village. Historically, during the Dutch administration, the role of the government controller, or "controleur," was pivotal in executing governmental policies. (Becker, 1975) edited narrations made by 16 indigenous Papuans who were former Dutch civil servants and have worked as controleurs in one way or another. Additionally, one former Governor under the Indonesian administration was also interviewed.

The responsibilities of the controleurs were basically maintaining public order, stopping the tribal war, introducing the indigenous Papuans to the presence of modern government and overseeing local affairs. Their responsibilities encompassed tax collection (especially in the coastal area), labor regulation, and the enforcement of colonial laws (Beneite-Martí, 2022).

In contrast, the contemporary Head of the District (referred to as "Kepala Distrik" in Papua or "Camat" in other regions of Indonesia) lacks comparable influence and authority. This discrepancy has been addressed through the enactment of Government Regulation No. 106 of 2021, which aims to enhance the role of district governments in Papua. This regulation emphasizes the delegation of specific powers and responsibilities from higher administrative levels—namely, regency or municipality governments—to district authorities. Such delegation must be accompanied by the provision of adequate budgets and personnel to ensure effective service delivery to indigenous Papuans residing in villages and remote areas.

3.5. Respect for Indigenous Land Rights

The existence of Indigenous people in Papua cannot be separated from their respective land. This is not only the case on the island of Papua but also in other Melanesian areas—both in Indonesia and the South Pacific. A commonly used expression in Papua regarding the relationship between Indigenous people and land is: "The land is our mother" (Beneite-Martí, 2022).

Before permanent contact between the Indigenous people of Papua and the outside world, they essentially lived in a state of subsistence affluence. (Bauw, 2025) points out that "...all members of the population have as much food as they desire, adequate housing by their traditional standards, and ample leisure time for feasting, ceremonies, and other entertainment." However, this situation changed significantly when migrants arrived and took over their land, either voluntarily or involuntarily. When forests were destroyed, their food sources disappeared. The practice of shifting agriculture no longer produced as much food as before.

The United Nations recognizes that land is a fundamental source of identity for Indigenous peoples. Consequently, this principle is binding on all UN member states that have ratified it, including Indonesia. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), particularly Article 25, acknowledges the spiritual relationship that Indigenous peoples have with their traditional lands and resources. As stated in the declaration: "Indigenous peoples have the right to their special and important spiritual relationship with their lands, waters, and resources and to pass these rights to future generations".

Practices related to land ownership transfers, including land dispossession and land grabbing, have been occurring for decades in Papua. According to a report by the Papua Office of Manpower and Transmigration of Papua Province (n.d.), a total of 1,195,710 hectares of fertile land belonging to Indigenous Papuan communities has been allocated and utilized for the transmigration program since 1964. By March 30, 2000, a total of 217 transmigration settlements had been established across Papua, inhabited by 78,650 households and a total population of 306,447.

Following the enactment of the Papua Special Autonomy Law in 2001, the formal transmigration program to Papua was discontinued. However, over the past 25 years, the number of transmigrants has naturally increased due to the formation of new families. Additionally, despite the termination of the official transmigration program by the government, a continuous influx of migrants from various regions of Indonesia has persisted, driven by the search for better economic opportunities in Papua (Chambers, 1997).

The most recent case of land grabbing in Papua is the central government's plan to establish two million hectares of agricultural estates. In April 2024, President Prabowo issued Presidential Decree No. 15 of 2024 concerning the Task Force for Accelerating Sugar and Bioethanol Self-Sufficiency in Merauke Regency, South Papua Province. The project is set to begin in Ilwayab District on Kimaam Island.

In July 2024, reports emerged, accompanied by photographs, documenting the mobilization of 2,000 excavators to commence deforestation in Malind tribal lands in Merauke, starting from Ilwayab District. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, Ilwayab District has a population of only 3,856 people, with a population growth rate of just 0.03 percent. The sudden arrival of 2,000 excavators is a clear indication that the region will soon experience a massive influx of migrants.

Ilwayab District has only one junior high school, highlighting the limited educational opportunities for the Indigenous population. As a result, it is almost certain that they will struggle to compete with incoming migrant workers from other regions. The rapid marginalization and displacement of Indigenous communities on their own ancestral lands appears inevitable as a consequence of this national strategic program for food security.

This is why the rights of Papuan customary communities over their ancestral land must be protected as a concrete manifestation of respect for and adherence to the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Article 18B, Paragraph (2) states: "The state recognizes and respects traditional communities along with their traditional rights as long as they remain in existence and are in accordance with the development of society and the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, as regulated by law." The more Indigenous Papuans' customary lands are forcibly taken—without consultation and in a manner that lacks justice—the greater their resistance toward the Indonesian government.

Government Regulation No. 16 of 2021, specifically in the Annex, Section D, point 5, letter e, explicitly regulates the proper utilization of customary lands belonging to Indigenous communities by external parties. Both provincial and regency/municipal governments in Papua are obligated to "...regulate cooperation in the use of Indigenous Peoples' land with other parties in the form of agreements, leases, and/or contracts for the use of customary land and individually owned land of Indigenous Peoples." This regulation must be adhered to by any party intending to utilize the customary lands of Papua's Indigenous communities.

3.6. Availability of Quality Teachers

For an educational program to be successful, it is essential to have an adequate number of qualified and professional teachers, as they bear the primary responsibility for educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in early childhood education, as well as in formal primary and secondary education. This principle is regulated under Law No. 14 of 2014 concerning Teachers and Lecturers.

Table 1. Teachers shortage in Papua, 2020.

Education Level	Papua Province	West Papua Province	Total
Primary School (SD)	4,872	1,267	6,139
• Shortage of State Teachers	2,448	962	3,410
• Shortage of Private Teachers	868	338	1,206
• Teachers Retiring in 5 Years	8,188	2,567	10,755
• Total			
Junior High School (SMP)			
• Shortage of State Teachers	3,040	1,067	4,107
• Shortage of Private Teachers	1,132	387	1,519
• Teachers Retiring in 5 Years	249	145	394
• Total	4,421	1,599	6,020
Senior High School (SMA)			
• Shortage of State Teachers	660	446	1,106
• Shortage of Private Teachers	590	258	848
• Teachers Retiring in 5 Years	107	64	171
• Total	1,357	768	2,125
Vocational High School (SMK)			
• Shortage of State Teachers	601	338	939
• Shortage of Private Teachers	524	176	700
• Teachers Retiring in 5 Years	66	23	89
• Total	1,191	537	1,728
Grand Total of Teacher Shortage	15.157	5.471	20.628

Source: Regional Education Balance Sheet, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020

Table 2. Teachers accreditation in Papua, 2023.

Province in Papua	Percentage of Certified Teachers (%)					
	PAUD	SD	SMP	SMA	SMK	SLB
Papua	6.06	20.9	26.6	34.3	44.1	40.9
West Papua	2.4	18.3	21.6	32.1	33.2	25
Central Papua	4	17	20.1	28.2	22.09	14.8
South Papua	2	15.3	21.6	32.2	36.3	48.1
Mountain Papua	3.8	7	9.5	13.1	19	0
Southwest Papua	4	21.4	24.4	29.3	35.3	25
Average	3.7	16.7	20.6	28.2	31.7	25.6

Source: Regional Education Balance Sheet, Ministry of Education and Culture, 2023

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, Papua faces serious challenges concerning both the quantity and quality of teachers. Currently, the existing teachers meet only 72 percent of the total demand based on the number and type of schools. Moreover, the quality of teachers, as measured by the percentage of teachers with professional certification, is alarmingly low.

Another critical issue related to teachers is the high absenteeism rate. According to UNICEF (2024), teacher absenteeism has reached concerning levels in certain areas, both in regions affected by armed conflict and in remote areas where teacher attendance is particularly low. A joint report released by UNICEF and SMERU in 2011 indicated that teacher absenteeism rates were 30% in urban areas, 40% in suburban areas, and 50% in rural areas (Maksum & Lutfi, 2025).

It is evident that a comprehensive effort is needed to address the serious issues of teacher availability and quality in Papua. New teachers must be recruited, and both newly hired and existing teachers should be professionally developed and certified. Additionally, local governments must ensure the security and well-being of teachers, as outlined in Law No. 2 of 2021 concerning the Second Amendment to the Special Autonomy Law for Papua, Article 56, paragraph (6), letter c. Finally, teacher awareness and discipline must be enforced to ensure that they fulfill their duties as required.

In Papua, the issue of teacher shortages and teacher quality can be resolved quickly through the implementation of the Teacher Professional Education (Pendidikan Profesi Guru, or PPG) program, as outlined in the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 87 of 2013. This program is designed to prepare graduates of Bachelor's degrees in Education (S1/D4 Kependidikan) and non-Education who have the aptitude and interest to become teachers. Through a two-semester educational program, participants will acquire the full competencies required of teachers according to national education standards, allowing them to obtain a professional educator certification in early childhood education, primary education, or secondary education.

This breakthrough must be implemented promptly, as the Regulation of Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology No. 44 of 2023, on Program for Accelerating the Fulfillment of Needs for Teachers through Teacher Education in Papua Province has yet to be followed up by both the central and regional governments.

3.7. All Day School

The high number of unschooled children in Papua requires a comprehensive innovation to address the issue. There are two implications of the term "comprehensive." First, the innovation must ensure that all children, without exception and according to their age group, are able to attend school. For example, in a village with a primary school, there should be no child left out of education. Second, "comprehensive" also means that the innovative education system must be able to solve as many problems as commonly encountered in various locations across Papua, which ultimately results in schools not functioning properly and students not receiving the appropriate education. Some of the main issues include the availability of quality teachers, availability of school facilities – including clean water, electricity and internet (Biderman & Munro, 2018).

All Day School (Sekolah Sepanjang Hari – SSH) is the innovation to accommodate as many school age children, starting from the primary level. SSH strives to incorporate as many positive characteristics and benefits as possible from boarding schools. The difference is that students do not sleep at school—except in certain circumstances where parents leave students for a relatively long period of time. In normal conditions, children still return home, although they arrive earlier and leave later than at regular schools.

There are several key characteristics of SSH that are not commonly found in regular schools. The first is that students arrive earlier and leave later. The reason for longer school hours is to allow children to experience positive aspects that are typically gained in a boarding school environment. Below are some of these aspects:

Primary school students arrive early in the morning, then they shower, wear clean and neat, ironed, uniforms, and put on their shoes. Afterward, they have breakfast, followed by a spiritual guidance session. At exactly 07:30, they begin classroom activities until midday. They then have lunch, rest, and engage in afternoon activities designed to enhance their academic abilities (including homework and additional lessons in computer science, English, mathematics, and science), as well as skills development (sports, music, and local language and culture). In the evening, they shower, change into home clothes, as their uniforms are left at school to be washed and ironed. Around 4 p.m., they enjoy an afternoon snack with tea or milk, followed by a prayer session, and then return home.

Why are students at SSH given two meals and one snack? Meals are fundamental to human life because they are necessary not only for survival but also for maintaining health and enabling optimal activity. The functions of food include providing energy, serving as an energy reserve, reducing the risk of illness, stimulating body growth, repairing damaged body tissues, protecting the body from free radicals, maintaining nerve health, and regulating metabolism.

Breakfast is essential for children before school because it helps improve concentration, supports physical health, and assists children in their learning activities at school. A nutritious breakfast is required to ensure that the body functions optimally at the start of the day. Breakfast provides enough energy to begin the day's activities, but lunch is still necessary to replenish energy, allowing children to continue their activities with strength. Without lunch, energy will be depleted, resulting in fatigue and decreased performance in afternoon activities. The afternoon snack serves as a light meal before dinner. The afternoon snack menu provides small, nourishing portions that the body needs to maintain adequate nutrition. Allowing a child's stomach to remain empty for a prolonged period can negatively affect their digestive health.

Providing meals to children during their time at SSH is also a measure to protect children from the deprivation of their right to education. The daily economic activities of parents, which begin early in the morning before the children go to school, often result in children missing breakfast and lunch. In many cases, children also miss out on attending school because they are involved in their parents' economic, social, and cultural activities.

All food ingredients are sourced from the local market, with funds for purchasing coming from the local government. On certain occasions, parents contribute food from their gardens, hunting, or fishing. The entire process of turning raw ingredients into food is carried out by the village community, including mothers and guardians of the students.

Another key feature of SSH is the presence of additional teaching assistants when necessary. With this approach, each class can be supervised by two teachers. As a result, each student receives much more individual attention compared to a regular class with only one teacher, or even worse, no teacher at all due to absenteeism.

3.8. Healthcare Services in Villages

Table 3 provides an overview of the number of regencies/cities, villages, and districts in the Papua region. This data is essential for understanding how a healthcare system can effectively reach remote areas in Papua.

Table 3. Regencies/Municipalities, Village and District in Papua

Province	Regencies/Municipalities	District	Urban/Rural Villages
Papua	9	115	1,032
West Papua	7	86	969
Central Papua	8	131	1,208
South Papua	4	83	687
Mountain Papua	8	252	2,634
Southwest Papua	6	132	1,018
Total	42 (40 regencies, 2 municipalities)	799	7,548

Based on the data above, there should be at least six provincial government hospitals, 42 regency/municipality government hospitals, and 799 community health centers (Puskesmas) operating optimally in Papua, each fulfilling its respective function. While all regencies/municipalities in Papua have hospitals, only two provinces have provincial hospitals. Of these, only one is classified as a Type B hospital, meaning it serves as a referral hospital capable of providing broad specialist and limited subspecialist medical services. As of 2023, Papua had 599 Puskesmas, implying that at least 200 districts lacked comprehensive access to healthcare services.

During the Dutch colonial administration, responsibility for health education in villages was assigned to Papuans appointed as government officers (Rudy & Supriyadi, 2025). Alongside village leaders, they encouraged communities to practice healthy lifestyles to prevent the spread of diseases such as malaria, yaws, tuberculosis, and skin infections. Additionally, they urged communities to expand their agricultural activities by cultivating a greater variety of crops, ensuring a steady food supply for a healthy life (Boekoersjom, 2012). Health outreach activities in villages typically involved both government officials and Papuan medical personnel.

The primary agents of village healthcare services during Dutch rule were known as *kampongverzorgsters*. These individuals assisted healthcare workers during village visits and provided limited medical services to the local population (Bierdrager, 2005). Governor Barnabas Suebu, during his tenure from 2006 to 2011, also emphasized the importance of delivering healthcare services at the village level. He stated, "Our collective goal is to ensure that all residents in every village in Papua have adequate access to quality healthcare as soon as possible..." (Rante et al., 2016). The concept of extending healthcare services to villages includes:

1. Establishing small hospitals in select villages, which, despite their size, must be capable of providing quality inpatient care to village residents.
2. Increasing both the number and quality of "plus midwives" (*bidan plus*) assigned to each village. In addition to assisting pregnant women and delivering babies, these midwives would also be trained to provide certain non-reproductive healthcare services to the community.
3. Training specific members of each village to serve as health cadres. Besides delivering basic healthcare services as a result of their training, these cadres would be involved in health education and efforts to improve sanitation. In this context, health cadres would focus on ensuring the self-sufficient availability of clean water for all residents in every village.

In general, the overall quality of public health in Papua remains low. This is reflected in the life expectancy of Papuans, which stands at approximately 68 years, compared to the national average of 74.18 years. Life expectancy in rural villages of Papua is likely even lower.

Looking ahead, healthcare services in Papua must reach every village without exception. This requires attention to three key aspects: (1) human resources in healthcare, ensuring the presence of *bidan plus* and health cadres in every village; (2) the use of telemedicine to facilitate easy and rapid communication between medical personnel and specialists for more accurate diagnoses; and (3) the availability of transportation facilities for patient evacuation to hospitals in emergency situations, utilizing land, water, or air transport as needed.

3.9. Economies of Scale and Market Opportunities for Community Products

The six provinces of Papua are ranked as the poorest in Indonesia. While the national poverty rate in Indonesia stands at 8.57%, the respective poverty rates in Papua's provinces are as follows: Southwest Papua at 16.95%, Papua at 18.09%, South Papua at 19.35%, West Papua at 21.09%, Central Papua at 27.60%, and Highland Papua at 29.66%. In general, it can be concluded that higher poverty rates occur in provinces that are entirely or predominantly located in relatively isolated mountainous regions. Conversely, provinces with lower poverty rates tend to have a relatively large population of migrants.

Each province in Papua has agricultural products that can be marketed beyond Papua, and even internationally (Table 4). Conceptually, increased production has the potential to enhance farmers' incomes and lift them out of poverty. However, in practice, economic scale remains a significant challenge. Many farmers in Papua still engage in subsistence farming, resulting in relatively low total production, making it difficult to market their products beyond the region (Update, 2017).

In such conditions, efforts to commercialize agriculture are necessary through collective farming initiatives and/or uniformity in cultivated commodities. The objective is to increase total production volume and enhance efficiency in external marketing. Such initiatives can only materialize if farmers in Papua are organized under cooperatives or joint enterprises. Relevant regional government institutions, such as the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade, must play an active role in assisting farmers to achieve this goal.

Another approach is to attract agricultural companies that cultivate the same commodities as local farmers. To prevent unhealthy competition, the government should require companies, as a condition for obtaining operating permits, to serve as technical mentors to farmers and to purchase their produce at fair prices. Additionally, the utilization of farmland owned by local farmers should be conducted through land lease agreements with indigenous communities at mutually agreed-upon rates, while ensuring environmentally sustainable practices.

Table 4. Agricultural Product Potential at the Farmer Scale in Papua.

Province	Potential Agricultural Products	Availability of Infrastructure	Transportation
Papua	Cocoa, robusta and arabica coffee, palm oil, marine fisheries, crabs, corn, rice, sago, cajuput oil, coconut, mung beans	Available	
West Papua	Cocoa, nutmeg, arabica and robusta coffee, palm oil, marine fisheries, rice, betel nut, durian, coconut	Road access to mountainous areas needs improvement	
Central Papua	Cocoa, arabica and robusta coffee, sweet potatoes, potatoes, highland vegetables, coconut, marine fisheries	Road access to Puncak, Intan Jaya, and Puncak Jaya districts needs development	
South Papua	Rice, sugarcane, palm oil, rubber, freshwater fisheries, marine fisheries	Available	
Highland Papua	Arabica coffee, highland vegetables, cassava, potatoes	No road access to coastal areas	
Southwest Papua	Sago, shrimp, crabs, palm oil, peanuts	Some inter-district roads require upgrading	

4. CONCLUSION

This writing has highlighted the fundamental issues in Papua and the obstacles to achieving true well-being for Indigenous Papuans. There are seven aspects of development that must be considered if we aim to achieve prosperity. A crucial point is the need for intensive consultations with relevant parties, especially the Papuan people themselves, before any action is taken to bring about the desired changes. Such involvement allows development goals to be achieved more quickly and ensures that the real needs of the community are met more effectively.

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