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Implementation of New Public Service in the Management of the Fishing Village in Labuang Rano Village, West Tapalang District, Mamuju Regency

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Abstract

Labuang Rano Village in Tapalang Barat District, Mamuju Regency, is a coastal village whose residents largely depend on small-scale capture fisheries. The management of its fishing village still faces persistent problems, including limited landing and fish-handling facilities, reliance on middlemen, weak fishers' institutions, and pressure on fishing grounds from activities along the coast. This research examines how the New Public Service paradigm is put into practice in the management of Labuang Rano's fishing village. Using a descriptive qualitative design, the study draws on in-depth interviews, field observation, and a review of documents, which were processed through the interactive analysis technique of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The discussion is framed by the seven tenets of New Public Service formulated by Denhardt and Denhardt. The results indicate that three tenets, namely treating fishers as citizens rather than customers, putting the public interest first, and respecting citizenship, are already apparent in village meetings, the registration of fishers, and the inclusion of fishers' groups in planning. The remaining four tenets, which cover strategic planning with democratic action, layered accountability, a facilitative rather than directive role, and respect for people, are still only partly achieved. This is reflected in participation still dominated by local elites, uneven access to program information, and dependence on top-down assistance. The study recommends strengthening coastal citizen forums, information transparency, and sustained institutional support for fishers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's coastal areas display contrasting conditions. The sea supports food security, serves as a source of livelihood, and shapes the cultural identity of millions of households. However, fishing villages are often recognized as sources of food, employment, and cultural identity for millions of families. On the other hand, fishing villages are often identified as pockets of poverty with dense settlements, limited sanitation, and weak market access. Kusnadi (2009) explains that the empowerment of fishermen is not solely determined by the quantity of fish caught. The surrounding socio-economic structure, including patterns of relationships with financiers and middlemen, also plays a role. Therefore, efforts to improve fishing villages are not simply about building physical facilities; they also require new ways for the government to relate to its citizens.

The state's obligation to do so is stipulated in Law No. 7/2016. This regulation views small-scale fishers as entitled to protection and empowerment, not merely as recipients of aid. At the village level, Law No. 6/2014 grants village governments the right to regulate their own local affairs, allowing programs to be tailored to the needs of residents. Starting

in 2025, the central government will roll out the Red and White Fishermen's Village program, which will include facilities such as frozen storage, an ice factory, a boat repair shop, a fisherman's fuel station, and a cooperative-managed fish market. Some warn that such programs can easily become fragile if they focus solely on physical structures without real community participation and capacity building (Mongabay Indonesia, 2025).

Labuang Rano is a coastal village on the West Tapalang coast in Mamuju, West Sulawesi, directly bordering the Makassar Strait. The majority of its residents rely on small-scale fishing, using both outboard motorized boats and rowboats. The village was once in the public spotlight when coastal reclamation for the construction of a mining company's pier was questioned by fishermen and members of the West Sulawesi Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) in 2022, as it was considered a threat to the marine ecosystem and residents' fishing grounds (Detik Sulsel, 2022). This incident demonstrated that the management of fishing villages directly impacts the interests of many parties, thus ensuring that fishermen's voices are heard in every public decision concerning their living space.

In public administration studies, the way the government positions citizens can be seen through a paradigm shift. The old public administration paradigm emphasized adherence to procedures and hierarchy, while *New Public Management, popularized* by Osborne and Gaebler (1992), views government as a business organization that pursues efficiency and treats citizens as customers. In response to this trend, Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) proposed *New Public Service*, a perspective that positions citizens as sovereign, while officials serve and facilitate dialogue to formulate shared interests. This paradigm is relevant to fishing villages because coastal issues are collective and involve shared resources that cannot be resolved unilaterally by the government.

Denhardt and Denhardt (2015) formulated *New Public Service into* seven principles. First, civil servants serve citizens, not customers, so that relationships are built on trust and a sense of community ownership. Second, the public interest is the primary objective, which must be formulated jointly through dialogue. Third, citizenship is valued over entrepreneurship, as public funds and affairs do not belong to civil servants. Fourth, policies are designed strategically but implemented democratically through collective work. Fifth, accountability is multi-layered, as civil servants are responsible not only to superiors and regulations, but also to the values of society and its citizens. Sixth, public leaders serve and assist citizens in achieving common interests, not to control the direction of society. Seventh, public organizations must respect human beings and not solely pursue productivity.

These seven principles stem from the belief that citizens are not simply recipients of services, but rather equal partners in determining policy direction. Consequently, government success is measured not only by the amount of aid distributed or the speed with which procedures are completed, but also by the extent to which citizens feel heard, involved, and respected. In the rural context, this measure becomes even more crucial because the distance between the government and citizens is relatively close, making the quality of social relations crucial for policy legitimacy.

The concept of a fishing village itself refers to settlements in coastal areas where the majority of residents depend on fishing activities for their livelihood, including catching, processing, and marketing. Management of a fishing village includes the arrangement of settlements and basic infrastructure, the provision of fish landing and handling facilities, strengthening fishermen's institutions, access to capital and markets, and the protection of fishing areas. Because it involves shared resources, managing a fishing village requires rules agreed upon by the community. Ostrom (1990) demonstrated that shared resources can be

managed sustainably if the user community is involved in developing, monitoring, and enforcing the rules, and obtains recognition from government authorities.

Thus, there is a meeting point between the ideas of *New Public Service and* the need to manage fishing villages. Both emphasize the role of residents as primary actors, the importance of dialogue in formulating shared interests, and the role of government as a facilitator. This common ground forms the basis for the use of the seven principles. *New Public Service as* an analytical framework in this research.

A number of previous studies have examined the application of *New Public Service in* public services. Nubala, Muhtar, and Buchari (2024) found that bureaucratic reform in the cultural and tourism service in Bandung City has reflected the seven principles of *New Public Service through* streamlining services and creating spaces for creative actors to participate. Daniswara and Wardiyanto (2026) demonstrated that innovative nutrition services based on empowering housewives were able to transform conventional services into participatory models that generated long-term public value. Maulidia, Putri, and Winarti (2026) also found that family learning centers in Tanjungpinang had implemented the principle of *New Public Service*, although still hampered by socialization and inter-agency coordination. Meanwhile, studies of fishing communities show that empowerment programs often stall due to assistance not meeting fishermen's operational needs, limited training facilities, and environmental pressures from mining activities (Putra & Rahaju, 2023; Saputra & Hos, 2026).

These studies are generally located in urban services or focus on economic empowerment. Studies that specifically use *New Public Service research* into the management of fishing villages at the village level, particularly in coastal areas of West Sulawesi, which face competing interests over marine space, are still rare. The novelty of this research lies in its attempt to link the seven principles of *New Public Service with* the daily practices of village government, technical services, and fishermen's groups in managing fishing villages. On that basis, this study is directed at examining the extent to which *New Public Service is implemented* in the governance of the Labuang Rano fishing village, West Tapalang District, Mamuju Regency, and mapping the obstacles that need to be addressed.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study was designed as a qualitative-descriptive study. This design was used to comprehensively capture the meanings, experiences, and perspectives of the actors managing the fishing village in their original context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research was conducted in Labuang Rano, a coastal village in the West Tapalang region, Mamuju, West Sulawesi. This village was deliberately chosen because the majority of its residents depend on capture fisheries and have experienced conflicts over coastal land use that have challenged the relationship between the government and residents.

Informants were selected using *purposive sampling* and developed through *snowball sampling.* The informants included the Village Head of Labuang Rano, the Village Secretary, a fisheries extension officer from the Mamuju Marine Affairs and Fisheries Department, the Head of the Village Consultative Body, the head of a joint fishermen's business group, two fishermen, a female fish processor, and a community leader. The diversity of informants was intended to allow for a balanced comparison of government and community perspectives. The identities of community informants were disguised with initials.

Primary data collection was conducted through two methods: in-depth interviews using semi-structured guidelines and in-person observations of activities at fish landing sites,

fishing groups, and village deliberation forums. Secondary data were obtained from village planning documents, sub-district data in figures, relevant regulations, and media coverage. The interview questions were derived from seven principles. *New Public Service (Denhardt* and Denhardt, 2015). The seven principles include service to citizens, prioritizing the public interest, respect for citizenship over entrepreneurship, strategic thinking accompanied by democratic action, awareness of the complexity of accountability, a role of serving rather than directing, and respect for people over productivity.

Data were processed using the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) through four iterative stages: data collection, summarization, presentation, and conclusion. Interview transcripts were coded according to the seven principles and then compared across informants to identify common and distinct patterns. To ensure validity, researchers used triangulation of sources and techniques. This involved comparing official statements with residents' experiences and matching interview results with observational findings and documents. Interview summaries were also reconfirmed with some informants.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. General Overview of Labuang Rano Fishing Village

Labuang Rano Village is located on the west coast of Mamuju Regency, along the main road connecting Mamuju with the southern region of West Sulawesi. Fishing settlements line the coastline, featuring wooden stilt houses and semi-permanent dwellings. Boats are moored on the beach in front of the settlements, as the village lacks a proper landing dock. The primary catch is pelagic fish, squid, and reef fish, some of which are sold fresh to traders and some processed into dried or smoked fish by the women.

The economic life of residents is strongly influenced by the seasons. During the easterly wind season, the sea is relatively calm, allowing fishermen to go out to sea almost daily. Conversely, when the westerly wind season arrives, high waves force many fishermen to stop fishing for several weeks, resorting to side jobs or borrowing from traders. This pattern creates a long-standing relationship of dependency, as traders provide loans for fuel and daily necessities in exchange for the right to purchase the catch. This situation provides important background for understanding why fishermen need a government presence that not only provides assistance but also provides access to markets and fairer financing.

The management of the fishing village in this village involves several actors. The village government handles development planning and village fund allocation. The Mamuju Regency Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Office provide technical guidance, data collection, and the distribution of fishing gear assistance. The fishermen's joint business group serves as a forum for community organization, while the middlemen play a role in marketing and informal financing. The interrelationships between these actors are depicted in Figure 3.1.

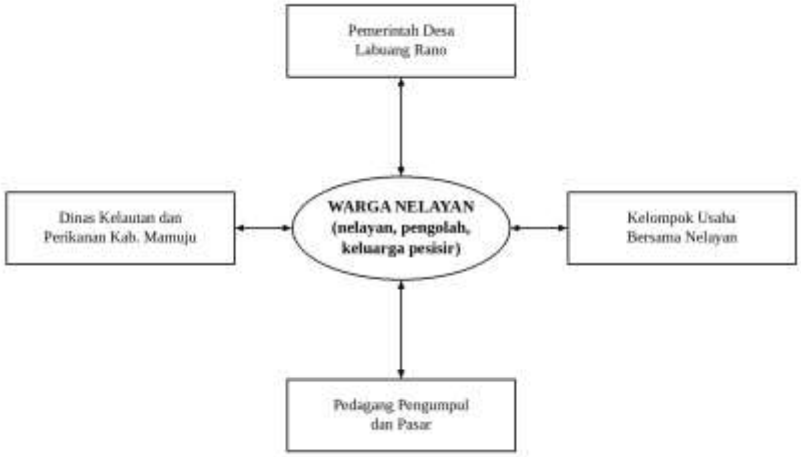

Figure 3.1 Actors in the Management of Labuang Rano Fishing Village
(Source: Processed by researchers, 2026)

The image shows that the fishermen are at the center of management, surrounded by the village government, technical services, fishermen's groups, and the market. Within the framework of *New Public Service, this* position ideally reflects citizens as stakeholders who are served and consulted, not merely program objects. The next section examines the extent to which this ideal condition has been achieved, as viewed from each principle of *New Public Service*.

3.2. Serving Citizens, Not Customers

The first principle requires officials to treat the public as holders of rights and obligations, not as consumers served according to their purchasing power. In Labuang Rano, this principle is evident in the fishermen's administrative services, which are open regardless of business scale. The village government assists small-scale fishermen in obtaining marine and fisheries business actor cards, business certificates, and assistance requirements. The village head explained:

> *"We don't discriminate; we serve all fishermen, whether they own large boats or just use canoes. It's these small-scale fishermen who need the most help, as they often don't know how to apply for a fisherman's card to receive assistance."*

This information was confirmed by a fisherman with the initials AS, who stated that village staff had visited homes to register fishermen who didn't have cards. However, this service remains seasonal and heavily dependent on assistance programs. When programs are not in place, visits by officials to residents are rare. This finding aligns with Dwiyanto (2018), who emphasized that caring public services must be consistently present and not only appear when there are administrative needs.

From the point of view of *New Public Service, services* to small-scale fishers should be viewed as fulfilling citizens' rights, not as part of a program cycle. Periodic fisherman data collection, for example at the beginning of each year, will ensure that every fishing household is registered and has equal access to protection, including fisherman insurance and assistance with facilities. Village governments can also establish village offices as information centers for fishermen, helping residents understand various services provided by technical agencies, eliminating the need to rely on intermediaries.

3.3. Prioritizing Public Interest

The second principle requires officials to build a shared understanding of public interests through dialogue, rather than formulating them unilaterally. The most prominent public interests in Labuang Rano are the protection of fishing grounds and coastal sustainability. When plans to reclaim the beach for a company dock emerged, some fishermen expressed their objections through the village government and representatives. The head of the fishermen's joint venture group explained:

> *"The sea in front of this village has always been where we've been sourcing our food. When the landfill was built, we gathered and voiced our objections. We're grateful that the fishermen's voices are finally being heard, but we hope that in the future, we'll be consulted from the start, not only after the jobs have been created, but we won't find out."*

This statement demonstrates that public interest has been taken into consideration, but dialogue is more often initiated after issues arise. According to Denhardt and Denhardt (2000), public interest should be a shared goal formulated in a deliberative manner from the planning stage. This means that village and regional governments need to ensure that any coastal space utilization plans are openly discussed with fishermen before decisions are made.

Labuang Rano's experience also demonstrates that public interests in coastal areas often clash with investment interests. In such situations, village governments find themselves in a difficult position because their authority is limited, while permits for marine space utilization are granted at a higher level. Nevertheless, village governments can still act as liaisons, ensuring that information about planned activities is communicated to residents and that their objections are formally addressed. This role aligns with the notion that public officials are tasked with creating space for residents to voice their interests, rather than making decisions on their behalf.

3.4. Valuing Citizenship Over Entrepreneurship

The third principle holds that the common good is more likely to be achieved through cooperation between officials and residents who sincerely want to contribute to their community, rather than through managers who treat the state budget like personal capital. In Labuang Rano, fishermen are involved in village development planning discussions to propose village needs, such as coastal lighting, road improvements to landing sites, and fish drying facilities. The head of the Village Consultative Body stated:

> *"We always incorporate suggestions from coastal hamlets into our discussions. Some are directly budgeted from village funds, while others are forwarded to the district because of the high costs, such as boat moorings."*

This involvement demonstrates respect for residents as voices in village development. However, a female fish processor with the initials HR revealed that women rarely attend meetings because invitations are usually extended to heads of families. Yet, women play a crucial role in fish processing and marketing. This situation demonstrates that while civic space has been opened, it is not yet fully inclusive of all coastal community groups.

Respect for citizenship also means recognizing the local knowledge of fishermen. Fishermen possess an understanding of fishing seasons, fishing locations, and water conditions that are not always reflected in planning documents. If this knowledge is gathered through deliberations, fishing village planning will be more aligned with real needs. Expanding the invitation to deliberations to women fish processors, young

fishermen, and fishermen without boats will make the planning process more representative of all levels of coastal communities.

3.5. Think Strategically and Act Democratically

The fourth principle states that public policies are most effective when strategically designed and implemented through democratic collective efforts. The management of the fishing village in Labuang Rano does not yet have a fully agreed-upon long-term direction. Programs tend to depend on the availability of assistance from the district, provincial, or central government. A fisheries extension worker from the Mamuju Regency Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Service explained:

> *"We foster fishing groups and distribute aid according to the available quota. Ideally, each coastal village would have its own fishing village development plan, so that incoming aid could be directed accordingly. Here, such a plan is not yet fully developed."*

The lack of a shared plan has resulted in fragmented program implementation. Assistance with boat engines or fishing gear is not always accompanied by improvements to the post-harvest chain, resulting in low added value for the catch. Ansell and Gash (2008) emphasize that collaborative governance requires a forum that regularly brings together stakeholders to agree on goals and share responsibilities. Such a forum in Labuang Rano has not yet been institutionalized, so coordination between the village, the agency, and the fishing groups remains incidental.

Acting democratically also means allowing residents to participate in determining priorities. Until now, decisions regarding the type of assistance have been largely driven by budget availability at the providing agency, rather than by needs collectively formulated in the village. As a result, some assistance is underutilized because it doesn't match the type of boat or fishing gear used by residents. Developing a fishing village development plan, discussed with fishermen, the village government, and technical agencies, will serve as a guideline to ensure that all assistance complements each other and leads to the same long-term goals.

3.6. Recognizing that Accountability is Not Simple

The fifth principle emphasizes that the responsibility of civil servants extends beyond compliance with regulations and performance targets. Civil servants are also required to be sensitive to legal provisions, community values, political ethics, professional standards, and community aspirations. Village governments have installed budget information boards and submitted reports on the realization of village funds during village meetings. However, information about programs sourced from outside the village, such as the criteria for receiving fisheries assistance, has not been disseminated evenly. A fisherman with the initials MN said:

> *"Sometimes we hear about assistance with boats or engines, but we don't know who can get it or how. Those who know are usually those close to the group administrators. If the requirements are publicly announced, the rest of us can also contribute."*

This statement indicates that administrative accountability has been implemented, but accountability to the wider community remains weak. This information gap opens up the opportunity for suspicion and social jealousy among fishermen of *New Public Service*, information disclosure is not just a formal obligation, but a prerequisite for the growth of trust between the government and citizens.

To strengthen multi-layered accountability, village governments can utilize familiar resources, such as bulletin boards at fish landing sites, mosque announcements, and community chat groups, to disseminate information about the program, recipient

requirements, and aid selection results. This transparency is inexpensive but can reduce prejudice and strengthen a sense of fairness among fishermen. Technical agencies should also transparently communicate the reasons for determining aid recipients so that decisions can be accounted for to residents.

3.7. Serving rather than Directing

The sixth principle requires leadership that divides roles and accompanies residents in voicing and realizing collective needs, rather than leading them toward unilaterally determined goals. In Labuang Rano, fishermen's groups generally form to meet the requirements for receiving aid. After receiving aid, some groups cease to be active. The Village Secretary acknowledged:

> *"Most fishermen's groups here were formed because of a program. We've tried to encourage them to gather regularly and save, but not everyone has succeeded. They're still waiting for direction from the village or the department."*

This pattern indicates that the relationship between government and citizens still tends to be directed from above. Arnstein (1969) described this situation as participation that remains at the level of consultation or appeasement, not yet reaching partnership and citizen control. However, management of shared resources such as coastal fisheries will be more sustainable if communities are able to develop and enforce their own rules (Ostrom, 1990). Mentoring that fosters group independence, for example through training in financial management and joint marketing, is an urgent need.

The role of service also demands a shift in the attitude of officials from giving orders to being advisors. Fisheries extension workers, for example, can facilitate more group meetings to discuss common issues, such as low fish prices, fuel availability, or marketing plans for processed products. This approach aligns with national policy directions that encourage the management of fishing village facilities through cooperatives. Cooperatives will only succeed if their members feel ownership and are accustomed to making decisions together, not simply registering to fulfill program requirements.

3.8. Value People, Not Just Productivity

The seventh principle holds that the sustained success of public institutions depends on cooperation and collective leadership that upholds the dignity of every person. In the context of a fishing village, this principle demands attention to the dignity and well-being of fishermen, not just increasing catch volume. A community leader with the initials DL stated:

> *"Fishermen here don't just need machines and nets. Their children need school, their homes need clean water, and they can't go to sea during the west wind season. If the government also considered that, the residents would feel truly cared for."*

The village government has attempted to address these needs through social assistance during the lean season and sanitation improvements in several residential areas. However, these efforts have not been integrated with the fisheries program, resulting in separate attention to social and economic aspects. This finding aligns with Saputra and Hos (2026), who argued that empowering fishermen needs to address real needs and environmental conditions to ensure they do not stop at the distribution of aid.

Respecting human rights also means ensuring the safety of fishermen at sea. Some small-scale fishermen still go to sea without adequate safety equipment and are not all covered by insurance. Village governments, along with technical agencies, can prioritize marine safety awareness campaigns and fishermen's insurance registration as

part of fishing village management. These steps demonstrate that fishing village development is not solely measured by increased catches, but also by residents' sense of security and dignity.

3.9. Synthesis of Findings

Summary of the application of the seven principles of *New Public Service in* the management of the Labuang Rano fishing village is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Implementation of Principles of *New Public Service in* Labuang Rano Village

No	Principle *New Public Service*	Key Findings	Category
1	Serving citizens, not customers	Fishermen's administrative services are open to all business scales, but are still seasonal.	Enough
2	Prioritize public interest	The aspirations for the protection of fishing areas were heard, but dialogue arose after problems arose.	Enough
3	Appreciating citizenship	Fishermen are involved in village deliberations; women's participation is still low.	Enough
4	Think strategically, act democratically	There are no plans for a joint fishing village yet; coordination is still incidental.	Not enough
5	Accountability is not simple	Open village fund report; criteria for assistance from outside the village have not been widely disseminated	Not enough
6	Serving rather than directing	Fishermen groups are formed due to programs and depend on direction.	Not enough
7	Respecting humans	Social assistance during the lean season exists, but it is not yet integrated with the fisheries program.	Enough

(Source: Processed research results, 2026)

The table shows that principles related to basic services and formal citizen involvement have been implemented quite well, while principles requiring changes in power relations, information transparency, and collaborative planning remain weak. This pattern is similar to the findings of Maulidia, Putri, and Winarti (2026) on the implementation of *New Public Service. At* the service level, this is often normatively apparent, but remains hampered by the distribution of information and inter-agency coordination. The difference is that in fishing villages, these issues are exacerbated by economic dependence on intermediary traders and vulnerability to seasonal changes, leaving residents without a strong bargaining position in the policy process.

These findings also demonstrate that the seven principles are interconnected. Weak information transparency under the principle of accountability results in low public trust, which in turn weakens participation in strategic planning. Conversely, active and independent fishermen's groups will strengthen citizens' positions in formulating public interests. Therefore, strengthening *New Public Service in* Labuang Rano cannot be achieved through a single program, but requires a comprehensive change in the working methods of the village government and technical services.

3.10. Barriers and Direction of Reinforcement

Based on the research results, there are several main obstacles in the implementation of *New Public Service in* the management of the fishing village in Labuang Rano. The first obstacle is the village's limited authority and budget to build

large-scale fishing facilities, making the village highly dependent on external programs. The second obstacle is weak fishermen's institutions, characterized by groups becoming inactive after receiving assistance. The third obstacle is the information gap between group administrators and ordinary fishermen. The fourth obstacle is economic dependence on intermediary traders, which limits fishermen's independence in voicing their interests.

Based on these obstacles, possible strengthening strategies include establishing a coastal community forum that meets regularly to discuss fishing village issues, developing a fishing village development plan that is incorporated into village planning documents, providing transparency of program information through accessible channels, and providing ongoing support to fishing groups and cooperatives. These steps position the government as a facilitator, helping residents manage their own villages, in line with the spirit of *New Public Service*.

4. CONCLUSION

Implementation of New Public Service: The governance of the Labuang Rano fishing village in West Tapalang District, Mamuju Regency, has only been partially implemented. The principles of serving citizens, prioritizing public interests, and respecting citizenship are evident through administrative services for fishermen, channeling aspirations regarding coastal space issues, and involving fishermen in village deliberations. The other four principles, namely democratic strategic planning, multi-layered accountability, a role of facilitator rather than director, and respect for the dignity of residents, have not been optimally implemented. These weaknesses are reflected in the absence of a mutually agreed-upon fishing village development plan, uneven program information distribution, dependence on aid for fishermen, limited women's participation, and unintegrated social and economic programs.

The strength of this research lies in the use of seven principles of *New Public Service as* a framework for understanding the relationship between government and residents at the coastal village level. The limitation of this study is that it was conducted in only one village with a small number of informants, so the results cannot be generalized. Future research is recommended to compare several coastal villages, including the location of Kampung Nelayan Merah Putih, and to use mixed methods to better quantify the level of participation and trust of fishermen in the government.

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