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Collaborative Governance in the Corporate Social Responsibility Forum: A Multi-Stakeholder Participation Model for Sustainable Regional Development in South Sumatra, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in regional development is often positioned as an instrument to support government programs. However, its implementation does not only depend on corporate resources, but also on the ability of actors to coordinate, negotiate interests, and translate development priorities into collaborative programs. In South Sumatra, the CSR Forum serves as an institutional space that brings together local government, business actors, communities, and academics, while at the same time facing issues related to stakeholder engagement, communication, program alignment, and division of roles. This study aims to analyze collaborative governance practices in the South Sumatra CSR Forum and to formulate a multi-stakeholder participation model for sustainable regional development. The study uses a qualitative case study with data from in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving government representatives, business actors, beneficiary communities, academics, and other relevant stakeholders. The data were analyzed thematically through actor participation, institutional coordination, communication, decision-making, and the linkages between CSR programs and sustainable development. The results show that the CSR Forum functions as a coordination arena, but actor participation is not yet equal. Government and corporate actors tend to dominate planning and coordination, communities are more involved in implementation and as beneficiaries, while academics contribute through reflection, analysis, and consultation. CSR programs are more effective when communication is dialogical, priorities are jointly negotiated, and monitoring is linked to regional development needs. This study offers a forum-based multi-stakeholder participation model that positions CSR governance as an institutional and communicative process, and emphasizes the need to reposition the CSR Forum into an arena of participatory governance through clearer institutional roles, more inclusive deliberation, stronger community involvement in planning, and systematic evaluation of CSR contributions to social, economic, environmental, and regional development agendas.

1. INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is generally framed as a corporate contribution to society, but in the context of regional development, its meaning becomes more complex. CSR does not operate in a vacuum; it enters communities that already face social problems, local expectations, government development agendas, and unequal access to resources. In this context, CSR is not only about the number of programs delivered, the budgets allocated, or the visibility of corporate contributions in public reports. CSR also concerns how actors meet, communicate, negotiate priorities, and determine which social problems deserve collective attention [1,2].

In many regional contexts, CSR programs remain fragmented. Companies often design programs based on internal priorities, while local governments seek to align them with development targets. Meanwhile, communities often experience CSR merely as beneficiaries rather than as actors involved in planning and evaluation. This creates a gap between CSR as an institutional commitment and CSR as a lived experience for local communities. When coordination is weak, CSR becomes a series of separate activities rather than a collaborative process that addresses social, economic, and environmental needs [3].

The South Sumatra CSR Forum offers an important case for understanding this issue. The forum brings together local government, business actors, communities, academics, and other stakeholders within a single institutional arena. In principle, the forum creates a space where various actors can discuss priorities, coordinate resources, and connect CSR initiatives with regional development agendas. However, the existence of a forum does not automatically produce collaboration. Formal institutions may bring actors into the same room, but meaningful collaboration depends on the quality of communication, division of roles, openness in decision-making, and the extent to which community voices are included [4,5].

This study views the CSR Forum not merely as an administrative mechanism, but as a social and communicative space. Within this space, each actor brings different resources, interests, authority, and expectations. Government actors often bring mandates for development planning and public coordination. Corporate actors bring financial resources, program experience, and institutional interests. Communities bring direct experience of local problems, although their position in formal decision-making is often limited. Academics can contribute through analysis, reflection, and knowledge production, but their role depends on the extent to which the forum opens space for evidence-based discussion. These differing positions indicate that collaborative CSR governance is shaped by interactions, negotiations, and power relations among actors [1,4]

Previous CSR studies have extensively examined corporate motivations, program implementation, community empowerment, and the relationship between CSR and sustainable development [6,7]. Research on collaborative governance has also highlighted the importance of trust, shared understanding, institutional design, and facilitative leadership in cross-sector collaboration [1,4]. However, discussion remains limited regarding how CSR forums function as institutional arenas where government communication, corporate interests, community participation, and academic reflection intersect in regional development. This gap is significant because the effectiveness of CSR governance cannot be understood solely from program outputs; it must also be examined through the processes by which actors communicate, negotiate, and construct shared responsibility.

To address this gap, this study analyzes collaborative governance practices within the South Sumatra CSR Forum. The study focuses on :

1. How stakeholders participate in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of CSR programs;
2. How communication patterns influence coordination among actors; and
3. How the forum connects CSR initiatives with sustainable regional development.

Using a qualitative case study approach, this study captures not only the institutional arrangement but also the dynamics of collaboration as actually experienced among stakeholders.

This article contributes to interdisciplinary studies by integrating CSR, public governance, communication, stakeholder participation, and sustainable development into a single analytical framework. Rather than treating CSR merely as a corporate program, this study positions CSR governance as a collaborative process that depends on institutional quality and communicative practices. Its main argument is that the CSR Forum can become a meaningful governance arena when participation extends beyond formal attendance toward joint problem identification, priority negotiation, transparent coordination, and continuous evaluation.

Therefore, the main research question is: How is collaborative governance practiced within the South Sumatra CSR Forum, and how can a multi-stakeholder participation model explain the relationship between CSR governance and sustainable regional development? This question is addressed by examining the roles of government, business actors, communities, and academics in the collaborative process. This study offers an empirical and conceptual understanding of the CSR forum as an institutional space in which development problems are not only managed through programs, but also interpreted, negotiated, and managed collectively.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative case study design to examine collaborative governance practices in the South Sumatra Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Forum. A case study design is suitable for investigating complex social phenomena in real-world contexts, particularly when the emphasis is on processes, interactions, and meanings rather than numerical measurement [8]. The Forum is treated as a bounded institutional setting in which collaborative governance is enacted through interactions among actors with different mandates, resources, and levels of authority. This framework allows the study to examine the Forum as an empirical case shaped by the practices and positions of the actors involved. The analysis focuses on agenda setting, coordination, participation, and communication within the Forum.

Government actors are examined in relation to coordination, facilitation, and alignment with regional development priorities. Corporate actors are analyzed through their roles in CSR planning, resource provision, and implementation. Community actors are considered in terms of participation, issue articulation, and beneficiary status. Academic actors are examined through their advisory and interpretive contributions, while media actors are analyzed through their documentation and public communication functions. Thus, the design remains focused on institutional roles and observable practices, without evaluative or normative language.

2.2 Sample Collection

Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique. Participants were selected because they had direct involvement in CSR governance activities in South Sumatra or had institutional responsibilities related to the CSR Forum [9]. The sample included 10 actors from five groups: local government, corporate entities, beneficiary communities, academics, and media.

The selection criteria were based on actual involvement in specific CSR governance activities: program coordination, implementation, community engagement, public communication, monitoring, or institutional reflection. This approach allowed the study to collect data from actors who occupied different positions in the collaborative process and had different levels of access to decision-making.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents Involved in the Study

Responden	Main Field of Work	Criteria
Government Actor 1	Regional development planning	Participates in monthly CSR Forum meetings; coordinates CSR programs with regional development plans
Government Actor 1	Environmental agency	Attends CSR Forum meetings; reviews environmental compliance reports from CSR projects
Corporate Actor 1	BUMN (CSR Division)	Approves CSR budgets; attends Forum meetings; leads 3–4 CSR projects per year
Corporate Actor 2	Private company (community development)	Manages community engagement programs; participates in Forum discussions on program priorities
Beneficiary Community 1	Village representative	Attends CSR planning meetings; receives benefits from 2 CSR projects; participates in evaluation discussions
Beneficiary Community 2	Head of community organization	Involved in CSR implementation; monitors project activities; represents the community in Forum meetings

Academic Actor 1	Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang	Provides advisory input at Forum meetings; conducts research on CSR governance
Academic Actor 2	Research institution	Documents CSR activities; publishes analyses of CSR implementation in South Sumatra
Media Actor 1	Local news media	Reports CSR events; interviews government and corporate actors on CSR topics
Media Actor 2	Online media platform	Publishes CSR-related articles; follows Forum meetings and CSR project locations

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. The interviews explored how stakeholders understood their roles in the CSR Forum, how they experienced coordination meetings, how CSR priorities were discussed, and how communication occurred among actors. The interview questions also examined whether community members attended planning meetings, participated in implementation, or were invited to evaluation meetings.

Meanwhile, the observation method was conducted using a non-participatory approach to obtain a comprehensive picture of stakeholder interactions and coordination practices in the South Sumatra CSR Forum. Observations were conducted during CSR Forum meetings and at CSR project sites in Tanjung Enim Village (CSR PTBA), Talang Jawa Village and Air Gading Village (CSR PT Semen Baturaja), as well as Kalidoni and Margoyoso Urban Villages (CSR PT Pusri).

Field activities included monthly coordination meetings, discussions of program priorities, monitoring of CSR implementation, community engagement sessions, and project evaluation meetings held in Palembang and surrounding regencies in South Sumatra.

Document analysis involved reviewing program reports, institutional documents, policy references, meeting records, and other materials related to CSR implementation in South Sumatra. These documents were compared with field observations and interview data to examine whether formal narratives were consistent with actual practices. The combination of interviews, observations, and documents allowed for triangulation. In qualitative case study research, this approach is used to verify whether actors' statements correspond with institutional records and field observations [10]

2.3 Analytical Methods

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was used because it allows the identification of recurring patterns of meaning across interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents [11]. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were read repeatedly to identify patterns related to CSR governance within the Forum. The data were then coded into analytical categories such as stakeholder roles, communication patterns, institutional coordination, participation practices, power relations, program alignment, and sustainable development orientation.

The analysis examined not only what actors said, but also how they positioned themselves, how they described other stakeholders, and how they explained barriers to collaboration. After coding, similar patterns were grouped into broader themes to explain how collaborative governance operates in practice. Triangulation was used by comparing interviews, observations, and documents to examine consistency across sources [10].

The data analysis process followed the interactive model of qualitative data analysis, which consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification [12]. Table 2 outlines the stages and implementation of this analytical process.

Table 2. Interactive Model of Data Analysis

Stage	Implementation
Data Condensation	Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were selected, coded, and transformed into analytical categories such as stakeholder roles, communication patterns, institutional coordination, participation practices, power relations, program alignment, and sustainable development orientation.
Data Display	The coded data were organized into structured matrices and thematic networks to show relationships among categories and patterns across different actor groups
Conclusion Drawing & Verification	Initial interpretations were developed from the displayed data and then verified through triangulation by comparing interviews, observations, and documents to examine consistency across sources

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

AnThe final analysis produced an interpretive description of multi-stakeholder participation in CSR governance, with the CSR Forum understood as a collaborative arena shaped by communication, institutional roles, participation, and power relations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis identified five interrelated themes in the practice of collaborative CSR governance in South Sumatra: the institutional function of the CSR Forum, differentiation of stakeholder roles, communication patterns, power relations among actors, and the relationship between CSR programs and sustainable regional development. These themes were derived from interview data, field observations, and document analysis.

3.1 Institutional Function of the CSR Forum

The South Sumatra CSR Forum operates as an institutional arena that connects government actors, corporate representatives, community actors, academics, and media actors in the governance of CSR programs. The Forum provides a formal setting in which CSR initiatives are discussed, compared, and linked to regional development priorities. The data indicate that the Forum performs a coordination function by collecting CSR program information from corporate actors and linking it to government development agendas. In this process, companies present their program plans, while government actors position these programs within the scope of regional planning. This interaction shows that the Forum not only records CSR activities but also organizes the relationship between corporate initiatives and public development priorities.

However, interview data show that this coordination function is still strongly influenced by hierarchical direction. Informant 1 stated that the activities carried out in the Forum largely follow the direction of the leadership, while the Forum itself has not yet fully operated as an independent collaborative mechanism. As expressed by Informant 1:

"What is implemented mostly follows the direction of the leadership, and the Forum itself has not yet operated fully" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This statement indicates that the CSR Forum has begun to function as a coordination space, but its collaborative mechanisms have not yet been fully institutionalized in planning, decision-making, and evaluation processes.

Observation data show that Forum activities include coordination meetings, discussions of program priorities, monitoring of CSR implementation, community engagement sessions, and project evaluation meetings. These activities demonstrate that the Forum operates at several stages of CSR governance, from planning and coordination to implementation review. Nevertheless, the interview quotation shows that the institutional operationalization of the Forum still depends on leadership direction, which shapes how coordination, deliberation, and collaborative decision-making are practiced within the Forum.

3.2 Differentiation of Stakeholder Roles

The findings show that actors participate in the CSR Forum through different roles and levels of institutional influence. Government actors act as coordinators and facilitators of CSR alignment with regional development priorities. Corporate actors contribute through program design, budget allocation, and implementation capacity. Community actors provide local information, implementation experience, and beneficiary perspectives. Academic actors contribute through advisory and interpretive input, while media actors document and communicate CSR-related activities to the public..

This division of roles indicates that the Forum functions through a differentiated actor structure. Each stakeholder group enters the collaborative process with different resources, mandates, and access to decision-making. Government and corporate actors appear more prominent in planning and coordination. Community actors are more visible in activities related to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

The data also show that stakeholder presence is not always proportional to equal influence. Some actors participate in meetings or program activities without determining the final direction of CSR priorities. These findings indicate that participation in the CSR Forum occurs in several forms, including attendance, consultation, implementation involvement, monitoring, and influence over decision-making.

Table 3. Stakeholder Roles and Forms of Participation in the South Sumatra CSR Forum

Stakeholder Group	Main Role	Form of Participation	Empirical Pattern
Local Government	Coordination and facilitation	Forum meetings, agenda direction, alignment with regional priorities	Holds procedural influence in structuring CSR discussions
Corporate Actors	Program planning and resource provision	CSR proposals, budget allocation, project implementation	Holds resource-based influence in determining program feasibility
Community	Articulation of local issues and program experience	Beneficiary involvement, local proposals, implementation, evaluation discussions	More visible in implementation and evaluation than in initial agenda setting
Academics	Advisory and analytical input	Research-based reflection, program assessment, policy input	Provides interpretive support, but influence depends on institutional uptake
Media Actors	Documentation and public communication	Reporting, publication, field coverage	Expands public visibility of CSR activities

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

3.3 Communication Patterns in CSR Governance

The findings reveal two dominant communication patterns in the South Sumatra CSR Forum. The first pattern is administrative communication, which appears in program reporting, meeting attendance, proposal submission, activity confirmation, and the circulation of information regarding CSR implementation. This pattern is visible in coordination meetings held at Bappeda, where the CSR Forum secretariat is located. In these meetings, corporate actors present program information, while government actors connect that information with regional development priorities.

Informant 3 described this process as a meeting space that brings several institutional actors together::

" For the implementation of the CSR Forum work program, we invite the government, companies, and the community. We often hold meetings at Bappeda because the CSR Forum secretariat is located there" (Interview with Informant 3, 12 December 2025).

This statement shows that communication within the Forum begins from a formal coordination structure. The Forum creates a meeting point where actors exchange information about CSR programs, although the communication process remains strongly tied to institutional procedures.

Administrative communication also appears in the way the Forum collects CSR data from companies. Informant 3 explained that many companies have implemented CSR programs independently, with or without reporting them to the Forum:

" Companies have already implemented their CSR programs directly. We only receive data and information from the companies, but sometimes the companies do not provide the data" (Interview with Informant 3, 12 December 2025).

This interview quotation indicates that the Forum's coordination function still depends on the willingness of corporate actors to share information. The Forum records and organizes CSR information, but the flow of data from companies does not always operate consistently.

The second pattern is deliberative communication, which emerges when actors discuss program priorities, compare local needs, negotiate program locations, and respond to implementation problems. This pattern becomes visible when the Forum attempts to collect aspirations from government, companies, and communities. Informant 1 explained that the Forum tries to request opinions and suggestions directly from each participant:

" We ask for opinions and input from the participants directly. Companies provide input, the government also provides input, so everyone has the opportunity to contribute" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This statement shows that the Forum opens space for multiple voices, although the influence of each actor still depends on institutional position, authority, and access to decision-making.

The deliberative pattern also emerges when the Forum encounters differences between government priorities, corporate interests, and community expectations. Informant 1 described that the Forum usually listens to different aspirations before seeking a middle ground:

" We listen to all aspirations, then we accommodate them and seek a middle ground in addressing the issue" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This quotation shows that communication within the Forum involves not only reporting activities but also managing differences, particularly when actors have different views regarding program responsibility, program location, or community needs.

However, interview data also show that deliberation does not always result in clear agreement. Informant 2 provided an example of a road-related issue in which companies, government, and communities interpreted responsibility differently. Companies may view the road as the government's responsibility, while government actors see that the road is also used by companies. Communities, in this situation, are positioned between these two institutional claims. Informant 2 acknowledged that the main problem lies in coordination:

" The biggest problem is the coordination of program implementation between the companies and the program itself. I admit that coordination with the companies is still lacking" (Interview with Informant 2, 28 December 2025)

This quotation provides an empirical illustration of how communication problems arise not only from the absence of meetings but also from unclear responsibilities and weak reporting among actors.

Community-related communication appears through discussions about whether CSR programs reach local needs and whether assistance continues after implementation. In the Forum's communication process, communities often enter discussions through proposals, local representatives, or implementation experiences. Their communication is based more on everyday needs than on policy language. In this context, community voices help the Forum understand whether CSR activities are received as practical benefits or as programs that still require further support. This pattern is consistent with the finding that community participation is more visible during implementation and evaluation than during initial agenda setting.

Academic-related communication appears in discussions about research, evaluation, and program mapping. Informant 1 repeatedly linked CSR governance with the need for mapping data, research, and collaboration with universities::

" The CSR Forum has a role in mapping company data and mapping community problems in the regions. Another role is mentoring, training, and education for MSMEs and communities" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025)

Pernyataan ini mengindikasikan bahwa keterlibatan akademisi tidak hanya relevan sebagai nasihat formal, tetapi juga sebagai This statement indicates that academic involvement is relevant not only as formal advice but also as support for generating data, evaluating programs, and interpreting community problems more systematically.

The same informant also mentioned the potential involvement of universities through LLDIKTI. He explained that the Forum has encouraged companies to support evaluation and research before CSR assistance is distributed:

" There needs to be research before assistance is provided, so that company funds are not wasted. We want companies to support researchers and university partners" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This quotation shows that academic communication is associated with evidence-based CSR governance. Research, in this case, is positioned as a way to connect CSR resources with the actual needs of communities.

The data also reveal that evaluation remains an unresolved issue in CSR communication. Informant 1 explained that every CSR program implemented by companies should be followed by an evaluation to understand what has been done and what problems remain:

" Every work program or company activity that has implemented CSR needs to be evaluated. The evaluation should examine what has been done and what obstacles have been found" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This quotation shows that communication at the evaluation stage remains an important concern in the Forum. Evaluation is not merely a technical report but a communicative process in which actors reflect on program implementation and identify remaining obstacles.

Overall, communication in the South Sumatra CSR Forum operates in two interrelated forms: administrative communication (meetings, reports, proposals, and CSR data) and deliberative communication (when actors discuss aspirations, negotiate program responsibilities, and respond to field-level issues). Interview quotations show that the Forum has created a communication space among government, companies, communities, academics, and media actors. At the same time, the data indicate that communication remains uneven because corporate reporting is not always complete, community voices are more visible after program priorities have been formed, and academic involvement in research and evaluation has not yet become a fully institutionalized practice.

3.4 Power Relations among Actors

The findings indicate that the collaborative process is shaped by unequal access to authority, resources, and decision-making spaces. Government actors hold procedural authority because they coordinate the Forum agenda and connect CSR programs with regional development priorities. Corporate actors hold resource-based power because they control CSR budgets, technical capacity, and program implementation. Community actors hold experiential knowledge of local needs, but their influence depends on access to planning and evaluation spaces.

Interview data show that government authority remains central in situations involving conflict or unresolved program responsibilities. Informant 1 explained that the Forum can discuss issues at the regional level, but final decisions still tend to return to the government:

" The decision still returns to the government, because the government has authority over that area. This is related to development for the community, so the government makes the decision" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This statement indicates that the Forum provides space for discussion, but the authority structure still places government actors in a stronger procedural position.

Power relations also emerge through control over CSR information and program resources. Informant 1 noted that many companies implement CSR programs directly, with or without reporting them to the Forum:

" ompanies have already implemented their CSR programs directly. We only receive data and information from the companies, but sometimes the companies do not provide the data" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This quotation shows that corporate actors hold resource-based influence not only through their financial capacity and program implementation but also through their control over CSR information shared with the Forum. When companies do not consistently report their activities, the Forum's ability to map, coordinate, and evaluate CSR programs becomes limited. In this situation, information itself becomes part of the power relations among actors.

The position of community actors reflects another layer of these unequal relations. Communities bring direct experience of local problems and understand the daily impacts of CSR programs, but their influence depends on whether their voices are heard before program priorities are decided. Informant 5 described this condition by stating:

" We are rarely involved in the initial planning stage. Usually, the company comes to us with a program plan that has already been prepared, and our role is only to receive it. We do not really have the authority to determine priorities from the beginning" (Interview with Informant 5, 14 October 2025).

This statement shows how community participation is often experienced from below: communities may receive programs, participate in implementation, or provide feedback after activities are underway, but they do not always take part in defining problems and priorities from the beginning.

Power relations within the Forum do not always appear as open conflict. They are often visible in everyday practices, such as who determines the meeting agenda, who controls program data, who has access to early discussions, and whose proposals are more likely to shape CSR priorities. Informant 1 also described how different actors may interpret responsibilities differently, particularly regarding infrastructure issues. Companies may view certain facilities as the government's responsibility, while government actors argue that companies also benefit from or use those facilities. Communities then find themselves between these institutional interpretations. These findings show that tensions in CSR governance often arise from unclear responsibilities, incomplete coordination, and unequal access to decision-making rather than direct confrontation among actors.

This pattern shows that collaboration in the CSR Forum is not a flat interaction among equal actors. It is a negotiated process in which authority, resources, knowledge, and public visibility shape actor influence. Government actors influence decisions through procedural authority, corporate actors influence programs through financial and technical resources, while community actors influence the process through local experience and feedback. Therefore, the Forum operates as a collaborative arena, but the level of influence among actors remains uneven across the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation.

3.5 CSR Programs and Sustainable Regional Development

The Forum connects CSR programs with several development sectors, including education, economic empowerment, community development, environmental management, data mapping, mentoring, and evaluation. The data show that CSR becomes part of regional development discourse when programs are discussed within the Forum rather than implemented separately by companies. In this setting, CSR is no longer understood only as corporate assistance but as a set of resources that enters public development discussions through meetings, program mapping, coordination, mentoring, and evaluation.

Government actors frame CSR programs through regional development priorities, while corporate actors link their initiatives to institutional capacity, budget availability, and corporate program agendas. Community actors experience CSR at the implementation level, where the relevance of a program is measured through direct benefits, sustainability, and its relationship with everyday needs. Academic and media actors contribute through interpretation, documentation, and public communication. This distribution of actors shows that CSR and sustainable development are connected through various forms of participation rather than through a single institutional pathway.

Interview data indicate that several CSR programs have been linked to practical development sectors, such as scholarships, economic assistance, business capital, infrastructure support, and MSME mentoring. Informant 1 explained that CSR activities include::

" "scholarships, development assistance, capital assistance, company mentoring for MSMEs, and partnership programs" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This statement shows that CSR programs are already present in several development areas. However, the same data also show that the existence of programs does not automatically produce sustainable outcomes. CSR sustainability depends on what happens after assistance is provided.

A central issue in the relationship between CSR and sustainable regional development is program sustainability. Informant 1 emphasized that assistance becomes more meaningful when followed by training, mentoring, and evaluation. He stated that before assistance is provided:

" there must be training and education, so that the money provided is not wasted and can truly be used by the community in a sustainable manner" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025).

This quotation provides an empirical basis for understanding sustainability as a process that extends beyond the mere distribution of assistance. Sustainability emerges through preparation, capacity building, the use of assistance, and follow-up after implementation.

The Forum also connects CSR with sustainable development through data mapping. Informant 1 described the Forum's role in mapping company data and identifying community problems in various regions. He stated that the CSR Forum has a role in:

" mapping company data, mapping community problems in the regions, and providing mentoring, training, and education for MSMEs and communities" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025)

This finding shows that data mapping becomes an important bridge between CSR resources and local development problems. Without mapping, CSR programs tend to follow corporate assumptions, administrative routines, or short-term requests rather than field-based needs.

Further findings indicate that program alignment with regional priorities does not automatically represent sustainable development outcomes. A program may be listed under education, health, environment, or economic empowerment sectors, but its contribution depends on whether the program continues, whether communities consider it relevant, and whether actors evaluate its impact after implementation. Informant 1 acknowledged this issue by stating that CSR programs require evaluation to examine:

" what has been done and what obstacles have been found" (Interview with Informant 1, 28 December 2025)

This statement shows that evaluation is part of the governance cycle, not merely a final administrative report.

Table 6. Integrated Analysis of CSR Programs and Sustainable Regional Development

Development Sector	Empirical Data	Actor Involvement	Analytical Meaning
Education	CSR assistance appears in the form of scholarships and educational support.	Corporate actors provide assistance; government actors link programs with regional priorities; academic actors contribute through research and advisory input.	Education-related CSR shows how corporate resources enter public development concerns, but its sustainability depends on whether assistance is linked to mentoring, evaluation, and knowledge-based planning.
Economic Empowerment	CSR programs include capital assistance, MSME support, partnership schemes, equipment, and business-related assistance.	Companies provide capital, equipment, and mentoring; communities use the assistance; the Forum records and coordinates program information.	Economic CSR moves beyond direct assistance when followed by training, mentoring, and data-based identification of community needs. Without follow-up, assistance tends to be short-term.
Community Development	CSR activities include direct assistance, social support, and	Government actors frame community needs through development priorities; companies deliver programs;	Community development becomes visible when CSR reaches local needs, but community influence remains limited when priorities are formed

	programs connected to local welfare.	communities experience the benefits directly.	before community voices enter the process.
Environmental Management & Infrastructure	CSR discussions include local infrastructure, environmental issues, roads, and flood-related coordination.	Government actors hold procedural authority; companies are linked to operational impacts and resource contributions; communities experience the practical consequences.	Environmental and infrastructure issues reveal overlapping responsibilities among actors. Tensions often arise from unclear responsibilities and weak coordination rather than direct conflict.
Data Mapping	The Forum identifies the need to map company data and community problems across regions	The Forum collects information; companies control program data; academics can support research and mapping; communities provide field-level information.	Mapping becomes a bridge between CSR resources and actual development problems. Incomplete data weaken the Forum's ability to coordinate and evaluate CSR programs.
Mentoring & Training	Informant 1 emphasized the need for training and education before assistance is distributed.	Companies provide resources; academics and relevant institutions can support capacity building; communities participate as program users.	Mentoring transforms CSR from one-time assistance into a capacity-development process. The absence of mentoring limits the long-term contribution of CSR programs.
Evaluation	The Forum identifies evaluation as necessary to assess what has been implemented and what obstacles remain.	Government, companies, the Forum, academics, and communities contribute different forms of information for evaluation.	Evaluation connects program implementation with institutional learning. Without evaluation, CSR remains difficult to assess in terms of sustainability, relevance, and sustainable development outcomes.

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

The table above shows that CSR contributions to sustainable regional development cannot be understood solely from the existence of programs across several sectors. Education, economic empowerment, community development, and environmental management become meaningful when connected with data mapping, mentoring, and evaluation. Interview data show that CSR programs in South Sumatra have reached practical forms of assistance, such as scholarships, capital support, MSME partnerships, and development assistance. At the same time, the same data reveal that these programs still require stronger follow-up through mapping, training, mentoring, and evaluation.

In this context, the CSR Forum functions as a space where CSR resources are connected with development problems, but the quality of this relationship depends on actor involvement throughout the program cycle. Government actors bring development priorities, companies bring resources, communities bring field experience, academics bring analytical interpretation, and media actors bring public visibility. The Forum becomes meaningful when these different forms of knowledge and resources meet within the same process. However, the data also show that the relationship remains partial when corporate reporting is incomplete, community participation appears late in the program cycle, and evaluation has not yet been consistently institutionalized.

This analysis indicates that CSR contributions to sustainable regional development are shaped by four empirical conditions:

1. Program relevance to local needs;

2. Sustainability of assistance;
3. Stakeholder involvement in planning and evaluation; and
4. Availability of data and evaluation mechanisms.

The South Sumatra CSR Forum has created an institutional space to connect CSR programs with development sectors, but the actual contribution of CSR depends on how coordination, mentoring, mapping, and evaluation are practiced in concrete program implementation..

3.6 Emerging Multi-Stakeholder Participation Model

The research findings identify an emerging multi-stakeholder participation model in collaborative CSR governance. This model is formed through four interrelated dimensions: institutional coordination, stakeholder participation, communication practices, and power relations. These dimensions do not stand separately; they interact in shaping how the CSR Forum connects corporate resources, government priorities, community needs, and public development agendas.

- **Institutional coordination** emerges in the Forum's role as a meeting point between corporate CSR programs and regional development priorities. Through this coordination process, CSR initiatives are discussed, organized, and connected to broader development issues.
- **Stakeholder participation** emerges through the involvement of government actors, corporate representatives, communities, academics, and media actors at various stages of CSR governance, including planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. However, each actor participates with different levels of access and influence.
- **Communication practices** emerge in the ways actors exchange information, convey program interests, negotiate priorities, and construct shared understandings of development problems. Communication within the Forum does not merely circulate information; it shapes how problems are defined and how responsibilities are divided.
- **Power relations** emerge through differences in authority, resources, institutional access, and bargaining positions among stakeholders. Government actors hold procedural authority, corporate actors control CSR resources, communities bring field experience, while academics and media actors contribute through interpretation and public communication.

This model shows that collaborative CSR governance is not formed merely by the presence of multiple actors in a single Forum. It emerges from the interaction between coordination mechanisms, participation patterns, communication processes, and unequal actor influence throughout the CSR program cycle.

Tabel 7. Model Analitis Tata Kelola CSR Kolaboratif

Dimension	Empirical Indicators	Analytical Meaning
Institutional Coordination	Forum meetings, CSR program alignment, agenda coordination	The Forum connects corporate initiatives with regional development priorities
Stakeholder Participation	Actor involvement in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation	Participation occurs at different stages and with different levels of influence
Communication Practices	Reporting, discussion, negotiation, public communication, field interaction	Communication constructs how problems, priorities, and responsibilities are defined
Power Relations	Differences in authority, resources, knowledge, and access	Actor influence is shaped by unequal institutional and material positions

Sustainable Development Orientation	CSR programs in education, health, environment, economic empowerment, and community development	CSR becomes part of regional development when programs are connected with local issues and evaluated across sectors

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

Overall, the findings show that the South Sumatra CSR Forum operates as a collaborative governance arena shaped by institutional coordination, differentiated stakeholder roles, communication practices, and power relations. The Forum creates a formal mechanism for CSR coordination, while interactions among actors determine how CSR priorities are formulated, implemented, and evaluated within the context of sustainable regional development.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that collaborative governance in the South Sumatra CSR Forum is shaped by the interaction of actors with different levels of authority, resources, knowledge, and institutional access. The Forum has created a formal space where government actors, corporate representatives, communities, academics, and media actors meet to discuss CSR programs and connect them with regional development priorities. These findings are consistent with the collaborative governance perspective, which views collaboration as a process of interaction between public and non-public actors in addressing shared public problems [1,4]. However, the findings also show that the presence of multiple actors does not automatically result in balanced participation. Government and corporate actors occupy stronger positions in planning and coordination, while community participation is more clearly visible during activities related to implementation, monitoring, and beneficiary involvement.

This study identifies an emerging multi-stakeholder participation model consisting of four interrelated dimensions: institutional coordination, stakeholder participation, communication practices, and power relations. Institutional coordination emerges in the Forum's role in connecting corporate CSR programs with regional development agendas. Stakeholder participation emerges through actor involvement in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, although each actor participates with different levels of influence. Communication practices shape how actors exchange information, negotiate priorities, clarify responsibilities, and interpret development problems. Power relations emerge through differences in authority, resource control, access to information, and bargaining positions among stakeholders. These findings support recent studies that describe CSR governance as a multi-actor process shaped by institutional design, coordination, stakeholder engagement, and power relations [13–16]

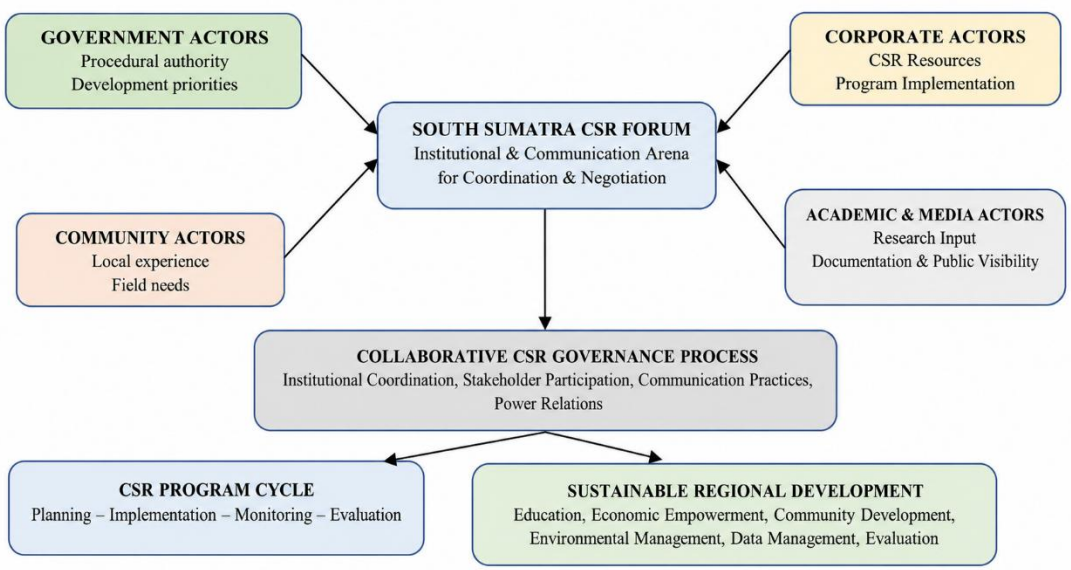


Figure 1. Multi-Stakeholder Participation Model in Collaborative CSR Governance (Source: Authors' Analysis based on interviews, observations, and document analysis).

Figure 1 illustrates how the South Sumatra CSR Forum operates as an institutional and communicative arena. Government actors bring procedural authority and regional development priorities, while corporate actors bring CSR resources and program implementation capacity. Community actors contribute local experience, field needs, and feedback, while academic and media actors provide research input, documentation, and public visibility. These actors interact through a collaborative CSR governance process consisting of institutional coordination, stakeholder participation, communication practices, and power relations. The model also shows that CSR programs move through a program cycle, from planning and implementation to monitoring and evaluation, before contributing to sustainable regional development.

The findings also show that the contribution of CSR to sustainable regional development cannot be understood solely from the number of programs implemented or the sectors covered. CSR programs in education, economic empowerment, community development, environmental management, and social assistance become more meaningful when linked to data mapping, mentoring, training, and evaluation. These results are consistent with studies that position CSR as part of sustainable development and public governance, in which corporate resources are linked to community needs, policy priorities, and long-term development outcomes [17–20].

This study contributes to the CSR and collaborative governance literature by positioning the CSR Forum as an institutional and communicative arena, rather than merely an administrative coordination body. This study shows that CSR governance is shaped not only by corporate resources or government planning, but also by communication patterns, stakeholder participation, and unequal power relations among actors. In this sense, the CSR Forum becomes a space where public authority, corporate interests, community experience, academic interpretation, and media visibility come together in the governance of sustainable regional development.

This study is contextually limited to the South Sumatra CSR Forum and does not claim to represent all CSR forums in Indonesia. Nevertheless, these findings provide an empirical basis for understanding how collaborative CSR governance operates in regional settings. Future research may compare CSR forums across provinces, examine longitudinal changes in stakeholder participation, or analyze how data mapping and evaluation mechanisms influence the sustainability of CSR programs over time.

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