




ARTICLE

Strategic-Competitiveness for Socio-Economic Development

Unlocking the Potential of Gorontalo Province in the Context of the Nusantara Capital Integrated Development (IKN)

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Abstract: The development of the Capital City of Nusantara (IKN) in East Kalimantan Province was an important turning point in Indonesia's development model. As one of its close neighbors, Gorontalo Province has great potential to contribute to developing IKN. Cohesion between Gorontalo Province and IKN is key to achieving its socio-economic development goals. However, Gorontalo Province still faces problems in economic development, public services, and MSMEs, including slow local economic development, inadequate infrastructure, low community competitiveness, high levels of poverty, and socio-economic problems. This study aims to analyze the problems and potential of the Gorontalo Provincial Government in its contribution and cohesion to the socio-economic development of IKN. Through a well-being methodology (WM) approach combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, three main dimensions are emphasized: perception, participation and community acceptability of competitive strategies to provide a holistic and participatory understanding of welfare aspects. The study found that the people of Gorontalo have a positive view of IKN, with the hope that the Gorontalo Provincial Government can strengthen its contribution through improving the quality of human resources, infrastructure and economic competitiveness to support the socio-economic development of IKN. Interestingly, most respondents were generation Z. This shows that most of Gorontalo's young generation were involved in this research. In essence, the Gorontalo Provincial Government faces challenges in its contribution and cohesion to the socio-economic development of IKN, with low levels of public participation and a lack of public understanding of the benefits of development. Therefore, intensive efforts are needed in socialization, education, and public involvement to increase participation and strengthen the IKN development process. The Gorontalo Provincial Government is advised to design an integrated competitive strategy, focusing on increasing public perception through socialization, building trust, fostering public participation, and increasing the acceptability of IKN development.

Keywords: Competitive Strategy; Integrated Development; Socio-Economics; Nusantara Capital (IKN); Gorontalo Province.

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1. Introduction

Until now, Gorontalo Province is still facing several main problems, including 1) economic development that has not been optimal, especially in utilizing the available local economic potential; 2) classic problems in public services, such as the problem of collecting public data in obtaining public goods services; and 3) the existence of MSMEs in Gorontalo which still need to be developed and equipped with a competitive advantage strategy. The existence of natural resource potential (SDA) is not yet in harmony with management efforts that provide benefits to the surrounding community, resulting in various social and economic problems.

On the other hand, the development of the Capital City of Nusantara (IKN) in East Kalimantan Province has encouraged neighboring regions to contribute and cohere in the socio-economic development of IKN. In this context, the Gorontalo Provincial Government is trying to develop competitive strategies to improve the welfare of the people of Gorontalo. This concept is important to ensure that the development does not damage the environment and society and can provide long-term benefits for all parties. This activity is part of planning effective and sustainable development programs/activities. According to [Kartono and Nurcholis \(2016\)](#), development theory covers various aspects, such as economic growth, income distribution, social welfare, and the environment. Meanwhile, sustainable development is a development concept that emphasizes environmental, social and economic sustainability. This means that sustainable development aims to meet the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs ([Mahadiansar et al., 2020](#)).

In preparing the Gorontalo Provincial Government's Competitive Strategy: Contribution and Cohesion in the Socio-Economic Development of the Capital City of the Archipelago, development theory and sustainable development are very important to implement. [Siwu \(2017\)](#) states that regional economic growth and development strategies must be based on appropriate development theories to maximize society's benefits. Besides that, [Wijaya \(2015\)](#) emphasizes the importance of planning and communication strategies in development activities to ensure more active and effective community participation. [Arsyad \(2017\)](#) emphasizes the importance of sustainable economic development to ensure that development does not damage the environment and society. This is in line with the concept of sustainable development, which emphasizes environmental and social sustainability in achieving prosperity.

According to [Suradi \(2012\)](#) in his article on economic growth and social welfare, social welfare development needs to be understood as an integral part of national development, which makes a real contribution to achieving the national development program, namely economic growth, social stability and environmental sustainability. A prosperous society is the ultimate goal of development efforts. Therefore, it becomes an important basis for formulating competitive strategy development policies carried out by the government or regional governments. [Teja \(2015\)](#) emphasizes the importance of community development in the welfare of society. [Arneson \(2018\)](#) also highlighted the importance of "Equality and equal opportunity for welfare". As well as, [Moore \(2015\)](#) which highlights the importance of community welfare in the context of global development with sustainable development goals.

Several other articles also show the importance of the Community Welfare and Prosperous Society theory in development in Gorontalo Province. Furthermore, [Djako et al. \(2022\)](#) found that cash-giving directly affects people's welfare. Likewise, studies by [Nggilu et al. \(2022\)](#) emphasize the importance of managing village funds

in improving community welfare. [Ladiku et al. \(2021\)](#) emphasized that the management of village funds affects the level of community welfare. This situation reflects that Community Welfare and a Prosperous Society are important factors in the development of competitive strategies, especially those aimed at improving community welfare and creating change through the Gorontalo Provincial Government's Competitive Strategy: Contribution and Cohesion in IKN Socio-Economic Development.

In the socio-economic context, the study of human behavior in managing limited resources to meet their daily needs is referred to. According to [Amalia et al. \(2022\)](#), Economic theory is the basis for understanding market mechanisms, economic decision-making, and interactions between consumers and producers. Meanwhile, [Mulyani \(2017\)](#) states that Economic Theory also studies demand, supply, and market balance concepts. Therefore, economic theory is used to understand economic concepts, principles and policies related to the contribution and cohesion of Gorontalo Province in the socio-economic development of IKN. This theory is used to understand how IKN development can affect the economy and welfare of the people in Gorontalo Province. This view aligns with the study from [Hasan and Azis \(2018\)](#) which emphasizes that Development Economics involves planning, implementing and evaluating economic policies to reduce poverty, unemployment and social inequality. According to [Lestari et al. \(2021\)](#), sustainable economic development requires careful planning, consistent policy implementation, and ongoing evaluation.

2. Methods

This research uses a qualitative-quantitative and exploratory approach based on well-being methodology. A qualitative approach is used to understand in depth the competitive strategy of the Gorontalo Provincial Government, while a quantitative approach is used to measure its contribution and cohesion in the socio-economic development of IKN.

In an effort to understand the competitive strategy of the Gorontalo Provincial Government, its contribution and cohesion in the socio-economic development of IKN, 5 (five) variables and 26 indicators have been determined as presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Variables and Indicators

Variable (5)	Indicator (26)
Regional Economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic Growth of Gorontalo Province 2. Increased investment as an impact of investment in the Capital City of Nusantara 3. Contribution of Leading Sectors (Creative Industries, Tourism & Culture) 4. Economic Diversification and Regional Economic Stability 5. Infrastructure Development 6. Job Creation 7. Increasing Community Welfare 8. Impact on Prices of Goods and Services
Management of Natural Resource Potential (SDA)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of Natural Resource Based Industries 2. Development of Fisheries, Agriculture and Forestry Potential 3. Optimization of Mineral Resources 4. Increasing the Added Value of Processed Products 5. Sustainable use of natural resources
Government Cohesion and Regional Innovation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level of Cooperation and Coordination 2. Similarity of Vision and Mission 3. Innovation and Technology Collaboration 4. Trust and Mutual Understanding

Variable (5)	Indicator (26)
Social Dynamics and Human Resources (HR) Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving the Quality of Education and Training 2. Capacity and Skills Development 3. Impact on Employment 4. Impact on Local Wisdom
Sustainable Environmental Impact and Governance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impact on Climate Change 2. Evaluation of Implemented Policies 3. Optimization of Environmental Potential Management 4. Impact on Biodiversity 5. Impact on Water, Air and Climate Quality (Sustainable Environment)

Source: Results of Determining Variables & Indicators Through Preliminary Research. Data Processed. 2023

The research was carried out collaboratively with all districts/cities in the Gorontalo Province region. Sampling is based on certain considerations (Purposive Population). This is important to guarantee and ensure that the number of samples obtained represents various community groups and is relevant to the research objectives. Primary and secondary data were obtained through Focus Group Discussions (FGD), in-depth interviews, electronic distribution of questionnaires (e-Questionnaire/e-Q) using Google Forms, and official documentation/publications from competent entities. Based on the sample measurement method according to Slovin and Krejcie & Morgan, the determination of the sample target and the response level are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Sample and Response by Regency/City in Gorontalo Province

No.	Region (Regency/City)	Number of Population (N)	Sample Target (MoE = 5%)	Number of Respondents (n)	Response Rate (% of Response Rate)
1	Gorontalo Regency	398.801	399,60	229	57,31
2	Boalemo Regency	148.526	398,93	206	51,64
3	Bone Bolango Regency	166.200	399,04	211	52,88
4	Pohuwato Regency	149.297	398,93	203	50,89
5	Gorontalo Utara Regency	128.563	398,76	218	54,67
6	Gorontalo City	201.350	399,21	212	53,10
7	Outside the Gorontalo Province	-	-	29	-
8	No Information	-	-	1	-
Gorontalo Province		1.192.737	2.394,46	1.309	54,63

Source: Gorontalo Province in Figures for 2023 and Research Results. Data Processed. 2023.

The target population was determined to be a sample of 2,394 people. The confidence level is 95% (MoE = 5%). By the time limit set, 1,309 respondents had entered data. This means that 54.63% of people participated and represented the community in Gorontalo Province.

3. Results and Discussion

The distance between Gorontalo and Jakarta is very far, so moving the capital to the City of Nusantara, which is quite close, will benefit Gorontalo from a transportation aspect. The development gap between regions in Indonesia is also quite striking between West and East, so the concept of IKN as Indonesia-centric is ideal. Arsyad (2010) The gap between regions is a logical consequence of the development process, which is a stage in regional development. The Development Process aims to eliminate and reduce poverty, income inequality, and unemployment.

The basic problem of this study is the lack of information about the pluses and minuses of moving the capital, which impacts Gorontalo Province. This study is important in providing a new reference for understanding the capital city of Nusantara to the people of Gorontalo.

According to Rahardjo (2017) states that a study is a series of scientific activities carried out intensively, in detail, and in-depth about a program, event, and activity, both at the individual, group, person, institution, or organization level that has in-depth knowledge about the object being studied.

In the context of Gorontalo Province, implementing economic development is very important to improve community welfare and accelerate economic growth. The influence of unemployment and poverty on economic growth in Gorontalo Province was researched by Novriansyah (2018), which shows that efforts to reduce unemployment and poverty must be the main focus in formulating development policies. Apart from that, an analysis of sectoral economic performance in Gorontalo City was carried out by Paputungan et al. (2022) who also emphasized the importance of developing economic sectors that have the potential to encourage economic growth and create jobs.

In an effort to strengthen social cohesion and build an inclusive socio-economy, the Gorontalo Provincial Government needs to pay attention to the role of religion in society. Mukzizatin (2020) highlighting the importance of the competence of Islamic religious instructors in maintaining religious harmony. In this context, understanding sociological theories and their implementation in the competitive strategy formulation of the Gorontalo Provincial Government will ensure that the socio-economic development carried out does not forget the religious and cultural aspects of society, thereby further strengthening social cohesion.

Social cohesion refers to the strength that unites members of society into a social unity. According to Adriaansz et al. (2019), social capital, including values, norms and social networks, is the main factor influencing social cohesion in society. Besides that, (Tamboto & Manongko, 2019) emphasizes the importance of economic literacy in strengthening social cohesion, especially in poverty alleviation. With strong social cohesion, public participation will be created, where people will be better able to work together, support each other, and build synergy to achieve common goals. Therefore, understanding sociological theories and their implementation in the competitive strategy formulation of the Gorontalo Provincial Government is very important to strengthen social cohesion and ensure inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development. Article from Webler and Tuler (2021) discussed 4 (four) decades of public participation in risk decision making. Public Engagement involves the community in activities such as decision making, which involves insight, trust and feelings about their role in the process. This involvement influences awareness, behavior and community participation in the decision-making process. In the context of socio-economic development, community involvement becomes very meaningful and important to ensure that proposed policies meet community needs and expectations, as well as to help communities become more active in development and planning processes.

In essence, developing the Capital City of Nusantara (IKN) is one of the national strategic agendas expected to become the center of new economic growth and encourage equitable development in Indonesia. From a regional perspective, IKN development is also expected to benefit Gorontalo Province, one of the closest provinces to the IKN area. The Gorontalo Provincial Government has the potential to contribute to and cohere with the socio-economic development of IKN. Gorontalo

Province has diverse natural resources, such as agriculture, plantations, fisheries, and tourism. Apart from that, Gorontalo Province also has a strategic geographical position, namely, located in the middle of Indonesia.

However, to contribute to and be cohesive in the socio-economic development of IKN, the Gorontalo Provincial Government needs to develop an appropriate competitive strategy. This competitive strategy needs to include aspects of community perception, community participation, and community acceptability of development, both carried out in Gorontalo Province and implemented in IKN.

Through this study, we attempt to explore the problems the Gorontalo Provincial Government faces in its efforts to contribute and cohesion to the socio-economic development of IKN. This research question is important to better understand the problems and potential faced by the Gorontalo Provincial Government in its contribution and cohesion efforts in the socio-economic development of IKN. The answers obtained become the basis for the Gorontalo Provincial Government in developing appropriate competitive strategies.

Data analysis shows that the five variables get an average score above 5, so they can be considered to have a high significance level according to public perception, participation, or acceptability. This means that no more variables still require further attention to improve their quality or effectiveness. This analysis process describes the extent to which the community assesses each variable and allows decision-making to focus on areas that are considered less significant or strengthen strategies in areas that have received a positive assessment.

Table 3. Analysis of Respondent Data Input Results for Variables

Total Respondents (1,309) and Description	Variable (X1) Regional Economy			Variable (X2) Management of Natural Resources Potential			Variable (X3) Government Cohesion and Regional Innovation			Variable (X4) Social Dynamics. & HR Development			Variable (X5) Sustainable Environmental Impact & Governance		
	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	A	P	P	A
	1	8	5	9	6	9	8	6	8	7	8	8	8	8	8
2	8	8	7	8	7	7	7	8	7	8	8	7	8	8	8
3	9	9	8	9	9	9	8	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	9
Dst.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
1307	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	5
1308	2	7	3	1	7	4	1	1	1	1	1	3	5	5	5
1309	7	5	2	9	9	7	5	3	3	6	5	5	6	5	4
PPA Score (Mean)	5,47	5,61	5,28	5,52	5,61	5,39	5,26	5,46	5,29	5,52	5,62	5,42	5,53	5,60	5,42
Stand. Dev. (SD)	1,64	1,68	1,66	1,67	1,67	1,62	1,67	1,67	1,67	1,66	1,70	1,66	1,64	1,71	1,64
Variable Score	5,45			5,51			5,35			5,52			5,51		

Source: Research Results. Data Processed. 2023.

In detail, public responses to the five variables are presented in Table 3.

The data in Table 3 shows that the five variables have an average score above the significance reference standard (SAS), set at 5. Even though the scores are not too high, all variables are still in the "significant" category. This indicates that the community has a positive perception, participation, and acceptability towards aspects of the Regional Economy, Management of Natural Resources Potential, Government Cohesion & Regional Innovation, Social Dynamics & Human Resource Development, and Sustainable Environmental Impact and Governance in Gorontalo Province. Even though the scores did not reach a very high level, this success

indicates that these variables received a positive assessment from the community. This can be used as a basis for the Gorontalo Provincial Government to further explore and understand the factors that contribute significantly to regional development that is cohesive with the socio-economic development of IKN.

The PPA assessment scores' standard deviation (SD) on a scale 9 are all below 2. This means that the assessment data tends to have low variation, with most respondents giving scores that are almost uniform or close to the average. In the context of a low rating, the public has a relatively consistent perception or view of the object of study. Homogeneous assessments like this can be caused by mutual satisfaction or agreement (if the average value is high and vice versa) regarding certain aspects of the research. In other words, a value of 5.3 - 5.5 in the SAS 5.0 range indicates moderate conditions, or the level of satisfaction is still relatively small. In this context, it is important to carry out further analysis to identify the causes of dissatisfaction and find relevant solutions. The intensity of communication, participation, and interaction through collaborative governance between the Gorontalo Provincial Government and the community can increase the sustainability and effectiveness of development in Gorontalo Province. Interpretation of the statistical data for each variable is described below.

3.1. Regional Economy

The regional economic variable score value is 5.45. This value shows that respondents generally perceive the regional economy positively. This can be seen from the frequency distribution of respondents' answers, where 99.2% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. This means that most respondents think the regional economy is in good condition.

The SD value for the PPA Regional Economic variable is below 2.0. This value shows that there is quite a large variability in respondents' perceptions of the regional economy. This value shows that the respondents' answers to this variable are homogeneous. Only around 1% of respondents answered disagree or strongly disagree.

3.2. Management of Natural Resources Potential

The Natural Resources Potential Management variable has an average value of 5.51. This value shows that respondents generally also positively perceive the management of natural resource potential in Gorontalo Province. This can be seen from the frequency distribution of respondents' answers, where 99.2% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

The SD value of the PPA for the Natural Resources Potential Management variable is below 2.0. This value shows that the respondents' answers to this variable are also quite homogeneous. This value shows that there is quite a large variability in respondents' perceptions of the management of natural resource potential in Gorontalo Province. Only around 1% of respondents answered disagree or strongly disagree.

3.3. Government Cohesion and Regional Innovation

Government Cohesion and Regional Innovation variables have an average value of 5.35. This value shows that respondents generally have a positive perception of government cohesion and regional innovation in Gorontalo Province. This can be

seen from the frequency distribution of respondents' answers, where 99.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

The SD value for the PPA variables of Government Cohesion and Regional Innovation is below 2.0. This value shows that the respondents' answers to this variable are homogeneous. This value shows that there is quite a large variability in respondents' perceptions of government cohesion and regional innovation in Gorontalo Province. Only around 1% of respondents answered disagree or strongly disagree.

3.4. Social Dynamics and Human Resource Development

The Social Dynamics and Human Resource Development variables have an average value of 5.52. This value shows that respondents generally also positively perceive social dynamics and human resource development in Gorontalo Province. This can be seen from the frequency distribution of respondents' answers, where 99.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

The SD value for the PPA for the Social Dynamics and Human Resource Development variables is below 2.0. This value shows that the respondents' answers to this variable are homogeneous. This value shows considerable variability in respondents' perceptions of the region's social, cultural, and innovation dynamics. Only around 1% of respondents answered disagree or strongly disagree.

3.5. Sustainable Environmental Impact and Governance

The Impact and Sustainable Environmental Governance variables have an average value of 5.51. This value shows that respondents generally also positively perceive the impact and sustainable environmental governance in Gorontalo Province. This can be seen from the frequency distribution of respondents' answers, where 99.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.

The SD value for the PPA variable Impact and Sustainable Environmental Governance is below 2.0. This value shows that the respondents' answers to this variable are homogeneous. This value shows considerable variability in respondents' perceptions of the region's social, cultural, and innovation dynamics. Only around 1% of respondents answered disagree or strongly disagree.

In general, respondents have a positive perception of all the variables measured. Respondents also assessed that Gorontalo Province has good conditions regarding regional economy, management of natural resource potential, government cohesion and regional innovation, social dynamics and human resource development, sustainable environmental impacts and governance. This situation can mean that development in Gorontalo Province has gone well and evenly in various fields. However, this situation is strictly the result of analysis based on participation data from 1,309 respondents. Therefore, further research should be carried out with a larger sample size to obtain a more comprehensive picture.

In the perspective of comparison between variables and when viewed from the distribution of respondents' scores, each variable's average score (mean) and standard deviation (stand. dev.) are different. This means that respondents have differences in approach and understanding of each variable. This is proven when Variable X1 (Regional Economy) has the highest mean score (5.61), while Variable X5 (Social Dynamics and Human Resource Development) has the lowest mean score (5.39). Variable X2 (SDA Potential Management) has a Stand. Dev. Highest (1.71),

while variable X4 (Government Cohesion and Regional Innovation) has the lowest standard deviation (1.64).

The average score shows how high or low the value given by respondents to each variable, while the standard deviation shows how far the values are spread from the average value. The higher the standard deviation, the greater the variation in the values. Therefore, interpreting the meaning of the score provides an idea of how consistent or heterogeneous the respondents are in providing assessments on each variable.

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that the Gorontalo Provincial Government is still facing several problems in its contribution and cohesion efforts for the socio-economic development of IKN. It is known that the level of public participation is still low, so it is predicted that this could become an obstacle for the Gorontalo Provincial Government to involve the community in planning and implementing IKN development. The phenomenon of respondents not providing answers or not answering questions further strengthens the argument that the Gorontalo Provincial Government is required to better understand service needs and respond to community aspirations. On the other hand, inadequate infrastructure and economic availability also hinder efforts to attract investment and create jobs.

Realistically, the low level of public participation in Gorontalo shows that the public still has a low perception of the importance of public participation in socio-economic development. Several factors, including a lack of socialization and education about public participation, can cause this. The public does not yet understand "public participation" and how to participate in development. This situation can lead to a lack of public trust in the Gorontalo Provincial Government. The community also feels that the Gorontalo Provincial Government is not responding enough or will not listen to their aspirations. The prolongation of this situation has an impact on low community participation. Meanwhile, it is suspected that the Gorontalo Provincial Government has not provided the widest possible opportunities for the community to be involved in planning and implementing development.

Ironically, the phenomenon of respondents not providing answers or not answering questions also shows that the public still has a low perception of the importance of IKN development. Possible causes for this include: 1) the community does not yet understand the goals and benefits of IKN development, including what they will gain from IKN development; 2) the community has not seen the benefits of IKN development for them directly, such as what and how IKN development can increase their income and welfare; and 3) the community is worried that the development of IKN will impact environmental damage and cause social conflict.

4.1. Recommendation

Based on the analysis and conclusions, the Gorontalo Provincial Government should immediately develop an integrated, comprehensive, and medium-term competitive strategy to increase its contribution and strengthen its cohesion in the socio-economic development of IKN. This competitive strategy includes the following aspects:

1. Increasing public perception can be done by increasing socialization and education about public participation, increasing public trust in the government, and increasing public understanding of the goals and benefits of IKN

development. The Gorontalo Provincial Government should immediately initiate a public education program about public participation through various media, such as mass media, social media, and direct counseling. This is necessary to increase public understanding of the objectives and benefits of the Gorontalo Provincial Government's contribution and its cohesion in the socio-economic development of IKN. This activity will encourage increased public confidence in the activities of the Gorontalo Provincial Government by running a clean, transparent, and accountable government.

2. Increasing community participation can be done by providing ample opportunities for the community to be involved in planning and implementing development, improving facilities and infrastructure for the community to participate, and increasing community resources to participate. The Gorontalo Provincial Government and the Regency/City Government should facilitate and provide ample opportunities for the community to be involved in planning and implementing development through various mechanisms, such as deliberations, meetings, and public participation forums. This effort becomes more complete when the dissertation is done by improving facilities and infrastructure and supporting facilities for the community to be more motivated to participate, such as internet access, information centers, transportation facilities, and/or other support that can motivate and increase public participation. Encouraging public participation is part of increasing community resources to play a more active role, such as providing training and assistance to the community to improve human resources, such as skills, knowledge, and access to finance.
3. Increasing the acceptability of development can be done by increasing the competitiveness of the Gorontalo community and increasing cooperation with the central government and the private sector to attract investment in Gorontalo. The Gorontalo Provincial Government and stakeholders will immediately develop an agenda for increasing the competitiveness of the Gorontalo community through various programs, such as education, training, mentoring, and developing MSMEs. This is also reinforced by increased cooperation between the Gorontalo Provincial Government and various entities at the Central and Regional levels, as well as the private sector, to increase investment in Gorontalo.

By implementing appropriate competitive strategies, it is hoped that the Gorontalo Provincial Government can increase its contribution while strengthening its cohesion in the socio-economic development of IKN. Because, through appropriate contributions, it will benefit Gorontalo and Indonesia as a whole.

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