

## MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION ON PLANNING THE ASIA AFRICA FESTIVAL IN BANDUNG CITY

**Az-Zahra Dyah Zhafira Malik\* & Annisa Nur Majdina**  
*Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia*  
*Email: Firamalik@gmail.com\**

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### Abstract

This study examines the collaborative planning of the 2025 Asia Africa Festival (AAF) in Bandung, listed under the Karisma Event Nusantara program. Using a qualitative case study and in-depth interviews, the findings reveal that cooperation among the Ministry of Tourism, Bandung's Culture and Tourism Office, and Bandung Culture community operates through multi-level governance with complementary roles. Festival success is supported by cross-actor coordination, cultural co-creation, and creative flexibility within regulatory frameworks. However, integrated inter-agency planning remains a key challenge. The study recommends strengthening participatory planning and enhancing community involvement to sustain the festival's cultural and economic value.

**Keywords:** Tourism Planning; Collaborative Governance; Community Participation; Cultural Festival; Bandung City

### A. INTRODUCTION

Culture-based tourism activities play a crucial role in strengthening a city's identity, enhancing its destination image, and expanding public participation in tourism development. As a center of creativity and culture in Indonesia, Bandung consistently leverages this potential by organizing events on a local and international scale. One of its flagship events is the Asia Africa Festival (AAF), an annual celebration organized by the Bandung City Government through the Department of Culture and Tourism (Disbudpar), as a way to revitalize the values of the Asian-African Conference and strengthen cultural diplomacy. The AAF itself has been held since 2015, continuing the spirit of the 1955 Asian-African Conference.

As a major event involving various stakeholders, the AAF requires careful planning and coordination. However, in practice, the coordination function between actors does not rest solely with the Bandung City Department of Culture and Tourism; the central government, through the Ministry of Tourism (Kemenpar), and communities also participate in the planning and implementation of this event. One community that has consistently participated in the AAF since 2015 is Bandung Culture. Government and community involvement is crucial because cultural festivals cannot run optimally without clear coordination and the active participation of each stakeholder.

Sari et al. (2020) demonstrated that collaboration between local governments and arts communities can strengthen cultural preservation and improve the quality of tourism activities, as seen in the management of the Yogyakarta Cultural Park. This finding aligns with research by

Anjani et al. (2025), which asserts that collaborative governance practices at the Kampung Cempluk Festival can increase the effectiveness of local tourism development through clear role allocation, intensive communication, and community participation. Furthermore, Rinjani & Helmi (2025), in their study of the Padang Kota Tua area, explained that multi-stakeholder collaboration models such as the hexahelix approach have proven crucial in developing cultural destinations. Another study by Monika & Muhammad (2024) demonstrated that government-community interaction plays a crucial role in managing tourism areas, particularly in the context of regulation and field control, as in their study of the Parangtritis Beach tourist area. Furthermore, Karima et al. (2024) emphasized that local community participation and the integration of cultural values are key factors in strengthening the quality of tourist attractions, as seen in the development of the Karanggayam Tourism Village.

Referring to these studies, the implementation of the AAF can be seen as a collaborative event planning practice that requires synergy between the government through the Ministry of Tourism and the Culture and Tourism Office (Disbudpar), and local communities such as Bandung Culture. However, the dynamics, challenges, and collaborative planning mechanisms of the 2025 AAF still require further in-depth study, making it relevant as the focus of this research.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Collaborative Planning**

The concept of collaborative planning provides an important foundation for understanding the shift in approaches to the planning process, from a technocratic and top-down approach to a more inclusive, participatory, and dialogue-oriented approach among stakeholders. Healey (1997) explains that collaborative planning is a process of building mutual agreement through social interaction, where diverse stakeholders come together to formulate collective action. In the context of urban tourism, this approach emphasizes that the legitimacy of a policy depends not only on the formal authority of the government, but also on the quality of dialogue and negotiation between public, private, and civil society actors.

Healey (2003) emphasizes the importance of "institutional capacity," which relates not only to the formal structure of an organization but also encompasses informal networks and social capital that enable adjustments to address diverse interests. The relevance of this concept in Indonesia is evident in the findings of Permana and Agustine (2022) and Lama (2022), which show that the implementation of collaborative planning in the development of tourist villages and regional tourism is often hampered by the dominance of rigid government administrative procedures, which reduce the space for equal interaction between stakeholders.

In analyzing the Asia Africa Festival (AAF), this perspective is useful for examining whether the interaction between the Bandung City Government (Disbudpar), the Ministry of Tourism (Kemenpar), and the arts community has evolved from simply mobilizing participation to creating shared meaning about the city's identity, or whether the process is still dominated by narrative control from those in positions of supreme power.

### **Tourism Governance**

The concept of governance in tourism emphasizes the shift in the government's role from a sole service provider to a facilitator and regulator orchestrating various actors. Bramwell and Lane (2011) highlight that effective tourism governance requires cross-level (vertical) and cross-sector (horizontal) coordination to address sustainability and equitable benefit distribution. In event management, good governance demands a clear mechanism for assigning roles to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure the sustainability of the event's impact.

In Indonesia, this collaborative governance model is generally realized through the Pentahelix concept involving academics, businesses, communities, government, and the media. Purnomo et al. (2025) demonstrated that collaboration between these five actors is crucial for promoting sustainable tourism in Bandung, and an imbalance in the role of any one element can hinder the achievement of shared goals. This is further supported by research by Pusparani (2021), which shows that effective pentahelix collaboration, such as in several tourist villages in West Java, can increase destination competitiveness through a clear yet coordinated division of tasks.

This governance model is highly relevant for analyzing the AAF implementation structure, particularly in mapping the power relations between the Ministry of Tourism and the Bandung City Culture and Tourism Office as regulators, and communities such as Bandung Culture or local arts communities that play a role as cultural implementers but often have limited bargaining power in strategic decision-making.

### **Event Tourism and Festivals**

Event tourism is a crucial branch of tourism studies that positions events as a strategic tool for destination development. Getz and Page (2016) emphasize that events have multidimensional functions: economic, social, cultural, and political. Economically, festivals can increase tourist spending, encourage MSME activity, and expand local creative industry networks. From a socio-cultural perspective, events play a role in strengthening collective identity, preserving historical memory, and creating spaces for public interaction. Politically, cultural festivals also serve as tools for diplomacy, city branding, and representation of a region's values. Therefore, the success of a festival depends not only on the performances or aesthetics of the event, but also on the quality of governance, strategic planning, and the government's ability to create collaborative spaces.

At city-scale festivals like the Asia Africa Festival (AAF), these functions become even more complex. The AAF is not just a public entertainment venue, but also a means of commemorating the history of the 1955 Asia Africa Conference and a medium for cultural diplomacy between Asian and African countries. Event tourism literature emphasizes the importance of integration between government, local communities, and professional actors (such as event organizers and technical agencies) to produce adaptive, sustainable, and historically valuable events. Getz and Page (2016) also highlight that effective festivals are those that engage the community, balance the interests of various stakeholders, and design consistent promotional strategies. This perspective provides a theoretical basis for the AAF's success, which depends heavily on how these actors collaborate in planning, particularly in the context of multi-level governance and the involvement of cultural communities like Bandung Culture.

### **Stakeholder Analysis in Events**

Stakeholder management in a festival is inherently dynamic and involves many interests. Conventional approaches typically place stakeholders in a static matrix based on their level of influence and importance. However, Wallace and Michopoulou (2019) offer a more contextual "Stakeholder Sandwich" model to understand the relationships within event management. This model maps the festival ecosystem into interconnected layers: a "bread" layer comprised of organizers/government and sponsors as providers of structure and resources, and a "content" layer encompassing the community, artists, and participants as content contributors. These two layers then converge at the ultimate target audience, the audience or tourists as "consumers."

Stakeholder management is a key element in festival planning. Michopoulou & Wallace (2019) introduce the "Stakeholder Sandwich" model, which emphasizes that relationships

between stakeholders in events tend to be dynamic, interdependent, and vulnerable to conflicts of interest. This model highlights the need to identify the roles, influence, and interests of each actor to ensure effective role distribution. In the context of the AAF, this model is useful for analyzing the positions of government, communities, artists, sponsors, and festival participants within a collaborative ecosystem (Michopoulou & Wallace, 2019). This model emphasizes that without the "content" of strong community contributions, an event will lose its appeal. Conversely, without the "bread" of government support and sponsorship, the event will lack structure and potentially become chaotic.

In the context of the AAF in Bandung, the Stakeholder Sandwich model helps to more critically examine the role of the community. This model allows us to assess whether Bandung's creative community truly functions as the "main content" that determines the quality and character of the festival, or whether it is merely a visual complement. This analysis aligns with the findings of Mardotillah et al. (2024) on the Ulin Barong Sekeloa community, which demonstrates how traditional arts groups must negotiate for space for expression within a modern, government-managed festival.

### **Government Community Collaboration in the Indonesian Context**

Collaboration between government and communities has become a key focus in tourism governance in Indonesia. Mulyani, Pramodia, and Wijaya (2021) emphasize that developing community-based tourism requires transparency, open communication, and equal participation between government and local actors. In the context of cultural events, communities function not only as technical implementers but also as producers of cultural values, guardians of local identity, and sources of social innovation. Effective collaboration requires the government to provide formal mechanisms that accommodate community voices from the planning stage through evaluation. Without this, community participation risks becoming tokenistic and failing to generate sustainable impacts for the community.

Akbar (2022) shows that government-community relations in tourism development in Indonesia are heavily influenced by the quality of communication and the existence of governance structures that support co-creation. Frequent challenges include bureaucratic red tape, top-down decision-making, and dependence on changing regional leaders. In the context of city festivals like the AAF, cultural communities play a strategic role as creative actors, maintaining the continuity of historical narratives and local artistic expressions. However, without a structured collaborative mechanism, their role tends to be limited to the technical stages leading up to the event. This literature provides a basis for analyzing the existing collaboration space between the Department of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Tourism, and the Bandung Culture community, as well as identifying gaps that still arise in the planning of the Asia Africa Festival.

## **C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design and Location**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of the planning process for the 2025 Asia Africa Festival (AAF) as a collaborative practice between the central government, local governments, and communities. The case study method was chosen because it allows for contextual exploration of the phenomenon, including coordination dynamics, governance mechanisms, and interaction patterns between actors.

The research location is in Bandung City, with a focus on three key stakeholders involved in the planning of AAF 2025:

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- The Ministry of Tourism (Kemenparekraf) – acting as facilitator, national promoter, and liaison between AAF and the Karisma Event Nusantara (KEN) scheme.
- The Bandung City Department of Culture and Tourism (Disbudpar) acting as the main organizer, technical coordinator, and operational manager.
- The Bandung Culture Community representing local cultural actors who contributed through content co-creation and strengthening the historical value of AAF.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Data were collected through three main techniques:

#### **In-depth Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with officials from the Culture and Tourism Office (Disbudpar), representatives from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenparekraf), and Bandung Culture administrators. This technique allowed researchers to gather information related to the planning process, cross-actor coordination, decision-making dynamics, and the role of the community in organizing AAF 2025.

#### **Documentation Study**

- Documents analyzed included:
  - TOR, proposals, and AAF rundowns,
  - planning meeting minutes,
  - official KEN publications,
  - media archives and reports from previous AAF years,
  - promotional materials and government releases.

#### **Non-participatory Observation**

Observations were conducted on pre-event activities, including technical coordination meetings, the community curation process, and operational briefings, to gain a firsthand understanding of collaborative practices. The research data consisted of:

- Primary data: interviews and field observations.
- Secondary data: official documents, activity reports, scientific publications, and media coverage.

#### **Data Analysis Techniques**

The analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman (1994) approach, which included:

- 1) Data reduction grouping information from interviews and documents into themes such as actor roles, coordination mechanisms, constraints, collaboration strategies, and governance dynamics.
- 2) Data presentation using a thematic matrix, actor relationship charts, and stakeholder mapping.
- 3) Conclusion drawing to identify collaboration patterns and their implications for the sustainability of the AAF.

In addition, the analysis was strengthened by Stakeholder Analysis, namely:

- Freeman (1984) as a theoretical basis for stakeholders;
- Johnson & Scholes (1999) and Mendelow (2005) using the Interest-Influence Matrix to map actor positions based on interests and levels of influence;
- Wallace & Michopoulou (2019) to understand collaboration practices at cultural festivals.

This combined approach helps map the power, interests, and relationships between actors in the AAF 2025 planning process.

## **Data Validity and Research Limitations**

Data validity was maintained through:

- 1) Source triangulation – data was obtained from the central government, local governments, and communities.
- 2) Technical triangulation – interviews, documentation, and observation.
- 3) Confirmation of findings with informants (member checking) to minimize interpretation bias.

Research limitations include reliance on the availability of internal documentation and interview findings during the planning period. Some internal government processes are not formally documented, so data interpretation relies heavily on actor narratives and field observations.

## **D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The 2025 Asia Africa Festival (AAF) is presented not only as an annual commemoration, but as a contemporary manifestation of the spirit inherited from the 1955 Asia Africa Conference (AAC). Within the realm of public policy and international event management, this festival serves as a rich case study of the dynamics of governance, power negotiations, and community engagement strategies amidst regional political leadership transitions. The 2025 AAF holds particular significance as it coincides with the 70th anniversary of the AAC and the festival's return to the Ministry of Tourism's Karisma Event Nusantara (KEN) calendar, which demands national-level execution standards while remaining grounded in local wisdom.

This research report presents an in-depth and extensive analysis of the AAF 2025 implementation ecosystem. This analysis was conducted through data triangulation, combining primary data from in-depth interviews with the Bandung City Culture and Tourism Office (Disbudpar) and community representatives (Bandung Culture), as well as secondary data including strategic planning documents, post-event statistical reports, and media coverage. The main focus of this study is to differentiate the power structures operating behind the scenes, the collaborative mechanisms between the state and civil society, and the influence map of stakeholders that determine the success of the event.

### **Governance Structure of the Asia Africa Festival 2025**

Governance in the context of cultural festivals encompasses not only formal organizational structures but also the flow of authority, decision-making mechanisms, and resource distribution. Data analysis shows that AAF 2025 adopted a government-led governance model characterized by strong centralization, where the state bureaucracy holds dominant control over the entire festival production value chain, from planning to evaluation.

Based on interviews with organizers, the governance structure of AAF 2025 centered on the Bandung City Government, specifically the Department of Culture and Tourism (Disbudpar), which acted as the principal organizer. In contrast to a purely collaborative governance model where power is shared horizontally with non-state actors, AAF 2025 exhibited a relatively rigid vertical structure. The Culture and Tourism Office (Disbudpar) functions as a "conductor" orchestrating all elements, but their autonomy is limited by a higher political hierarchy, namely the Mayor of Bandung.

The phenomenon of "Leadership Politics" is strongly felt within this structure. Interviews revealed that although technical planning began immediately after the end of AAF 2024, the change in regional leadership (Mayor) in early 2025 forced a significant overhaul of the plan. This indicates that AAF governance has not been fully legitimized as an independent

technocratic system, but remains heavily dependent on the subjective preferences of the incumbent political leadership. In public administration theory, this situation reflects challenges to institutional memory and program sustainability, where the festival's long-term vision is vulnerable to disruption or reversal with each leadership change.

This reliance on executive authority creates a top-down mechanism for decision-making. Strategic meetings are mostly conducted internally within the Disbudpar and the Mayor's inner circle, before involving external parties. This structure is efficient in terms of mobilizing bureaucratic resources (single-man command), but has the potential to limit bottom-up innovation from the creative community.

The AAF 2025 governance ecosystem involves a complex network of actors with specific role divisions. The following is an in-depth analysis of the roles, responsibilities, and contributions of each entity within this governance structure:

#### **Bandung City Department of Culture and Tourism (Disbudpar)**

Disbudpar is the central actor holding the Budget Use Authority (PA/KPA). Their role is comprehensive, encompassing conceptual planning, budgeting through the Regional Budget (APBD), administrative paperwork, Event Organizer (EO) selection, and cross-sectoral coordination. Disbudpar acts as the "face" of the city government in negotiations with central ministries and local communities. Interviews revealed that Disbudpar also acts as a curator, determining which cultural content is "worthy" of being presented to international delegations

#### **Event Organizer (Aulia Corp)**

The private sector is involved through a professional services procurement mechanism. Aulia Corp, appointed as the Event Organizer for 2024 and 2025, has a role as the technical operational implementer. However, an analysis of the working relationship shows that the EO's position here is as a "vendor" or implementer of technical directives, not a strategic partner with the freedom to develop the concept independently.

#### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemlu)**

Given the AAF's status as a diplomatic instrument, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays a vital role as a "diplomatic gatekeeper." They are not involved in the technical aspects of the event, but hold the key to the event's international legitimacy. The Ministry's primary task is to disseminate diplomatic notes, distribute invitations to ambassadors of Asian and African countries, and prepare administrative arrangements detailing the event to be distributed to invited delegations. Without validation and facilitation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the AAF would lose its political weight and become a mere public event. Coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is highly procedural and bureaucratic, focusing on state protocol.

#### **Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenpar)**

The Ministry of Tourism acts as an "Enabler" and guarantor of quality standards through the Karisma Event Nusantara (KEN) program. Their role is more supportive, providing promotional support through national and international media channels (owned media), as well as assistance in curating concepts to align with national event standards. While not directly contributing significant cash injections to regional coffers, the KEN label provides prestige and exposure crucial for city branding.

#### **Bandung City Tourism Promotion Agency (BP2KB)**

A governance innovation is evident in the role of BP2KB. This institution serves as a flexible arm of the government to address the rigidity of regional financial regulations. Because the Department of Culture and Tourism has legal limitations on directly accepting private sponsorship funds, BP2KB acts as the entity that seeks and manages sponsorship funds from

third parties. This is an adaptive mechanism to bridge the funding gap between the limited regional budget (APBD) and the high production costs of the festival.

### **Supporting Regional Work Units (SKPD)**

This governance structure is also supported by a network of technical agencies, such as the Transportation Agency (Dishub) for traffic engineering, the Public Order Agency (Satpol PP) and the Police for security, the Fire Department (Damkar), the Health Department (Dinkes), and the Environmental Agency (DLH). Coordination between these agencies is orchestrated by the Culture and Tourism Agency through intensive coordination meetings leading up to the event, demonstrating a Whole-of-Government work pattern at the operational level.

### **Cultural Communities (Bandung Culture)**

Cultural communities are positioned downstream in the process (merely as implementers), where the potential for community creativity is often hampered by administrative and protocol constraints. Thirty communities from five cities/regencies participated in the 2025 AAF carnival. Each community showcased unique and creative displays curated by the Culture and Tourism Office (Disbudpar) and the event organizer (EO).

### **Form of Government-Community Collaboration**

The collaborative relationship between the government and communities in AAF 2025 is more accurately described as instructional mobilization rather than a strategic partnership. Referring to Arnstein's (1969) theory of "A Ladder of Participation," communities are positioned at the level of tokenism (specifically informing), where they are involved only to learn about and implement decisions that have been made, rather than to contribute to policy direction. Coordination mechanisms are top-down and occur in the final phase (approximately two months before the event), where meetings serve more as technical briefings for conveying operational instructions than as forums for discussing ideas.

The government enforces strict controls through a rigorous curation process to ensure cultural content complies with diplomatic protocol and standards of "appropriateness" in the eyes of foreign delegations. Communities are positioned as content providers, forced to adapt their creativity to the rundown and duration unilaterally set by the bureaucracy. There is little room for negotiation for communities to propose alternative concepts that might conflict with the aesthetic preferences of state officials.

Despite the asymmetrical nature of participation, this collaboration persists due to a reciprocal relationship. For the government, communities are vital assets, providing cultural attractions voluntarily or at low cost. Conversely, for communities like Bandung Culture, the festival offers prestigious exposure that validates their existence. However, this relationship is fragile, as communities must shoulder the logistical burden independently with minimal support, operating solely out of pride in upholding the city's cultural heritage.

### **Stakeholder Analysis Results (Influence-Interest Matrix)**

To comprehensively map the actor landscape involved in AAF 2025, this analysis utilizes the Power/Interest Grid theoretical framework popularized by Mendelow (1991) and Bryson (2004). This framework is effective for identifying stakeholder management strategies in the public sector by mapping actors based on two dimensions:

- Power: The actor's ability to influence strategic decisions, resource allocation, or the event's success.
- Interest: The actor's perceived level of concern or impact on the outcome of the event.

Furthermore, this analysis also considers the Pentahelix concept (Government, Academics, Community, Business, and Media), which serves as a standard reference for tourism development

in Indonesia, to ensure representation of all elements of the ecosystem.

### Stakeholder Classification and Identification

Based on interview data and documents, the following is an in-depth classification of AAF 2025 stakeholders:

Table 1. Clarification

Category (Pentahelix)	Stakeholder Specific	Main Roles and Interests	Source of Power
Government	Mayor of Bandung	Determines the city's political vision and image. Interested in political legacy.	Highest executive authority and veto power.
	(Bandung City Culture and Tourism Office) Disbudpar	Project Owner & Budget Officer (PA). Interested in operational success and budget absorption.	Budget control (APBD) and technical regulations.
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Kemlu)	Maintains diplomatic protocol. Interested in Indonesia's image in the eyes of foreign delegations.	Diplomatic access and international legitimacy.
	Ministry of Tourism (Kemenpar)	Supervisor of quality standards for national events. Interested in national tourism promotion.	National Economic and Social Agency (KEN) labeling and national promotional support.
	Police & Security Forces	Guarantees security and order. Focuses on smooth traffic and anticipating unrest.	Crowd permitting authority (intelkam permit).
Community	Performing Arts Community (Bandung Culture, etc.)	Provides key carnival content and preserves local culture. Interested in existence, pride, and networking.	Social capital, creative human resources, supporting crowds, unique cultural content, and authenticity.
	General Public/Audience	Event consumers. Interested in free entertainment.	Crowd size as an indicator of success.
Business	Event Organizer	Field technical	Technical expertise in

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	(Aulia Corp.)	implementers. Interested in profit and portfolio.	event management.
	Sponsors and BP2KB	Supports non-APBD funds. Interested in brand awareness.	Additional financial resources.
	MSMEs / Bazaar Tenants	Fills the Asia Africa Corner. Interested in sales turnover.	Provider of visitor consumption services.
Media	Media Partners & Communications and Information	Disseminators of information. Interested in news content.	Control of public opinion and promotional reach.

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Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

## Strategic Matrix Visualization (Mendelow's Matrix)



Figure 1. Strength and Attraction  
Source: Researcher-Processed Data (2025)

Based on the power and interest levels of each actor, the AAF 2025 stakeholder management strategy map can be described through the following four quadrants:

The first quadrant is Minimal Effort (Low Power, Low Interest), which is occupied by the general public, non-visitors, and the mass media. This group represents the general public, who may only be affected by traffic congestion or simply skim through festival news without any in-depth involvement. They lack the power to influence the course of the event and have no significant stake in the cultural content presented. The management strategy for this group is monitoring, where organizers simply conduct passive monitoring and disseminate one-way information through billboards or social media to mitigate potential public complaints, particularly regarding traffic engineering.

The second quadrant is Keep Informed (Low Power, High Interest), which is the position of cultural communities (such as Bandung Culture), MSMEs, and small-scale sponsors. This group has a very high level of interest because the festival is a central platform for their existence, a source of pride, and a source of economic income. However, research results indicate that their bargaining power tends to be low, often positioned as objects of top-down instruction rather than equal partners in planning. The strategy that must be implemented is to keep informed, where organizers need to maintain motivation through intensive communication, symbolic appreciation,

and adequate technical facilitation to prevent participation fatigue, which can degrade the quality of event content.

The third quadrant is Keep Satisfied (High Power, Low Interest), which is filled by the Police and supporting Technical Agencies (such as the Transportation Agency and Public Order Agency). Actors in this quadrant have unique characteristics: they tend to be less concerned with the artistic aspects or cultural message of the festival, but hold a crucial "emergency button." The police, for example, have absolute authority over crowd permits. If security or traffic engineering requirements are not met, they have the power to cancel the event. Therefore, the Keep Satisfied strategy is implemented through intensive coordination from the early stages (two months before the event) to ensure all technical and security requirements are met to avoid the use of their veto power.

The fourth quadrant is Key Players (High Power, High Interest), which is completely dominated by state actors, namely the Mayor of Bandung, the Bandung City Culture and Tourism Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Kemlu), and the Ministry of Tourism (Kemenpar). This group is the primary determinant of the event's success because they control the budget (APBD), political vision, and international diplomatic access. The research found that the festival is quite "Mayor-centric," where changes in regional leadership directly impact the direction of strategic planning significantly. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also plays a vital role as a gateway for legitimizing the presence of foreign delegates. The management strategy for this group is Manage Closely, which requires intensive collaboration, regular reporting, and continuous alignment of visions to ensure the satisfaction of these top decision-makers.

### **Identifying Challenges in AAF 2025 Governance and Collaboration**

Based on interviews and previous stakeholder mapping, several structural and operational challenges impacted the quality of collaboration in the 2025 AAF planning process. These challenges reflect the complexity of multi-level governance between the central government, local governments, and communities, and indicate that the collaboration has not yet fully achieved the ideal form of co-governance (Healey, 1997; Bramwell & Lane, 2011).

### **Absence of Integrated Cross-Agency Planning Documents**

Interviews with the Culture and Tourism Office confirmed that the AAF lacks a medium-term planning document such as a roadmap, master plan, or multi-year plan. Planning is annual and relies on evaluations from the previous year. The implications are:

- work plans tend to be reactive,
- coordination between agencies (Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Culture and Tourism Office) lacks a single reference,
- changes in regional leadership have the potential to abruptly change concepts and strategic decisions.

This situation places the AAF governance ecosystem in a state of structural uncertainty, particularly in synchronizing the national agenda (KEN) with city government priorities.

### **High Dependence on Communities for Cultural Content**

Although communities are positioned as "implementers," the Department of Culture and Tourism relies heavily on them as the primary providers of cultural content. However, support for communities remains minimal:

- preparation facilities are limited (only practice rooms and catering)
- cultural content production costs are borne by the community
- performance durations are very short, limiting space for creative expression.

This demonstrates a resource asymmetry in collaboration. The government relies on the creative capacity of communities, but communities lack a strong enough position to influence the direction of planning.

### **The Planning Process Remains Top-Down**

The analysis in section 4.2 shows that collaboration is at the level of tokenism (Arnstein, 1969). Joint community meetings are held at the final stage (within two months) and are more focused on conveying instructions. This pattern is reinforced by a government bureaucracy that prioritizes protocol, security, and diplomacy over community artistic innovation. This top-down approach hinders the potential for co-creation and reduces opportunities for mutual learning, the core of collaborative planning (Healey, 2003).

### **The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy's Role Focuses More on Branding Than Technical Issues**

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy plays a significant role through the KEN label, which strengthens the legitimacy of the AAF. However, their support focuses more on promotion and publicity, rather than funding or technical assistance. As a result:

- Technical responsibility rests entirely with the Culture and Tourism Office and the Event Organizer (EO),
- A gap in expectations exists between national branding and local capacity.

This creates a challenge in aligning national standards with the reality of regional budgets and resources.

### **Local Political Uncertainty**

Changes in regional leadership leading up to the 2025 Asian African Conference (AAF) led to revisions to the event concept, the emergence of new actors, and adjustments to protocols. This uncertainty disrupted planning consistency and increased the burden of coordination between institutions.

### **Implications of Collaboration for Bandung's City Branding**

Collaboration in the 2025 Asian African Conference (AAF) had positive implications for Bandung's city branding. However, critical analysis shows that these benefits were not fully optimized due to limitations in the collaboration structure and unequal relationships between actors.

### **History-Based Branding, but Vulnerable to Cultural Industrialization**

AAF successfully strengthened Bandung's image as a historic and creative city. However, the intensity of commercialization through KEN (National Conference of Asian African Conference) and sponsorships has the potential to shift the historical meaning of the Asian African Conference (AAA) into a staged heritage. When cultural authority is vested in organizers and bureaucracy, rather than the community, the festival risks losing cultural depth and providing only shallow symbolic representation.

### **KEN Increases Visibility, but Does Not Strengthen Local Capacity**

The KEN label increases promotional appeal, but does not automatically strengthen regional planning capacity. Without clear technical and financial support, KEN functions more as a national branding instrument than a tool for strengthening local governance.

### **Content Authenticity Depends on the Community, Not the Government**

Cultural authenticity in AAF arises primarily from community contributions, not government intervention. However, because the community is not strategically involved, these contributions are involuntary in authenticity. This creates the risks of:

- Community fatigue (cultural fatigue)
- Loss of sustained participation
- The emergence of cultural tokenism.

### **City Branding Lacks a Long-Term Strategy**

Bandung has successfully leveraged the AAF as a symbol of city identity. However, without a 3-5-year strategy, the resulting brand values are temporary. City branding requires narrative consistency across political leadership, yet the AAF remains heavily influenced by annual political dynamics.

### **Potential for Branding Improvement Through Co-Governance**

While current collaboration is not ideal, the existing actor structure holds significant potential for transformation to a more inclusive governance model. If deliberation is opened from the conceptual stage, and if communities gain a more strategic position, the AAF could develop into a flagship international event that not only showcases culture but also practices inclusive cultural governance.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

This research shows that planning for the 2025 Asia Africa Festival (AAF) took place within a multi-level governance framework that brought together the roles of the Ministry of Tourism as a national facilitator and promoter, the Bandung City Culture and Tourism Office as the central technical decision-maker, and the Bandung Culture community as a producer of cultural values. This collaboration created a relatively effective working ecosystem during the implementation phase, characterized by intensive operational coordination, a clear division of technical roles, and community support as providers of authentic festival content. However, this effectiveness has not been matched by inclusive and structured strategic planning.

The research findings show that AAF governance remains top-down and heavily dependent on the capacity of the Culture and Tourism Office, both in terms of conceptualization, content curation, and controlling the political agenda. While cultural communities contribute significantly to the festival's authenticity, their participation is largely tokenistic, with no authority to influence the festival's policy direction or vision. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Tourism's role through the Karisma Event Nusantara (KEN) initiative has increased national visibility, but has not sufficiently strengthened planning capacity and technical support at the regional level. This lack of coordination between institutions results in reactive planning, not based on a multi-year plan, and being vulnerable to local political changes.

From a city branding perspective, AAF has consistently reinforced Bandung's narrative as a city of history and creativity. However, the benefits of this branding have not been optimal due to the absence of a medium-term sustainability strategy, the risk of staged heritage due to excessive commercialization, and the festival's reliance on community contributions that have not been adequately supported by the government. These challenges indicate a governance gap that needs to be addressed to ensure the sustainability of AAF's cultural, social, and economic values.

Based on these findings, this study recommends several strategic steps. First, the development of an integrated cross-institutional planning document, such as a 3-5-year roadmap that binds the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Department of Culture and Tourism behind a shared vision. Second, the participatory planning process needs to be strengthened by opening up deliberations from the conceptual stage so that the community acts not only as implementers but also as co-designers of cultural content. Third, strengthening community capacity and providing technical and financial support needs to

be prioritized to prevent cultural fatigue and ensure continued participation. Fourth, developing a more equitable co-governance model between the government and communities can strengthen cultural legitimacy while enhancing Bandung's city branding as an inclusive cultural city.

Through strengthened collaborative governance and long-term strategic planning, AAF has the potential to become a flagship international event that not only celebrates historical heritage but also practices participatory, adaptive, and sustainable cultural governance.

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