

EMPOWERMENT OF FARMER GROUPS IN AN EFFORT TO INCREASE HOUSEHOLD HORTICULTURAL FOOD SECURITY IN ALUE AMBANG-TEUNOM, ACEH JAYA

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Abstract

Food security is a condition in which all household have physical and economic access to obtain food for all family members, where households are not at risk of losing both accesses. Due to the conversion of agricultural land into residential land due to the tsunami in 2004, the people of Alue Ambang Village had to fulfill their food needs, especially vegetables, by supplying food from outside the village. Farmer groups can be formed as an effort to increase productivity through joint farming management. This study aims to empower farmer groups in an effort to improve food security in Alue Ambang Village, Teunom District, Aceh Jaya Regency. The research method used in this study is a qualitative research method using a descriptive approach which is carried out by observation, interviews, and documentation, using the technique of determining informants and purposive sampling locations. The total population in this study was 15 people and 5 people were used as samples. The results of the research show that the empowerment of farmer groups is by utilizing the land house yards help the community and farmer groups to meet their household food needs from farming. The running of the farmer group must have the support of various related parties such as the head of the farmer group, members of the farmer group and community leaders.

Keywords: *Empowerment, farmer groups, food security*

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is called an agricultural country because most of the population works in the agricultural sector. Extensive agricultural land and abundant natural resources are gifts for the Indonesian people. An agrarian country is a country that is able to produce various types of plants that are quite diverse. In Indonesia, agricultural commodities are very diverse, there are food crops, horticulture, to plantations that thrive. Agricultural development is an integral part of development. Industry must provide goods to farmers. Off-farm employment is necessary to sustain families in rural areas. Food production must be consistent with consumer tastes (Azaki, 2019). In line with the Law on food, the Government of Aceh through the Aceh Food Service organizes affairs in the food sector as mandated in Aceh Qanun Number 13 of 2016 concerning the Formation and Structure of Aceh's Apparatus. In carrying out affairs in the field of food, the Aceh Food Service will focus on efforts to realize availability, affordability and fulfillment of sufficient, safe, quality, nutritionally balanced and halal food consumption in Aceh at all times by utilizing local resources, institutions and culture. The availability of food in Aceh consists of various types and has quite a variety of nutritional content which are grouped into: (1) Cereals; (2) Starchy foods; (3) Sugar; (4) Oily seeds; (5) Fruits; (6) Vegetables; (7) Meat; (8) Eggs; (9) Milk; (10) Fish; (11) Oil and Fat.

To realize food availability, it is necessary to utilize existing resources, both from human resources and from natural resources. Human resources can be done by forming farmer groups in villages. Farmer groups are an example of a government program to apply agriculture in a sustainable manner. Farmer groups can indirectly be used as an effort to increase productivity through joint farming management. Farmer groups can also be used as a medium for organizational

learning and collaboration between farmers. With the existence of farmer groups, farmers can jointly solve problems in the form of fulfilling agricultural production facilities, production techniques, and marketing of products. Aceh Jaya Regency has an area of 381,400 ha located at 04°22 to 05°16 North Latitude and 95°10 to 96°03 East Longitude. The Aceh Jaya region is part of the west coast of Sumatra Island which stretches from west to east starting from the foot of Mount Geurute, bordering Aceh Besar District to Cot Paleng bordering West Aceh District with a coastline length of 221.95 km and a sea area of approx. more than 2,718.50 km² so far, 45 islands have been recorded spread across 6 sub-districts (BPS Aceh Jaya, 2016).

Alue Ambang Village is one of the villages located in Teunom District, Aceh Jaya Regency, Aceh Province. Alue Ambang Village consists of three hamlets, including: Sentosa Hamlet, Geulumpang Payong Hamlet and Teungku Hamlet in Bubon (Village Profile, 2014). The people of Alue Ambang Village work as farmers and fishermen. Sea fishing is the most common livelihood in Alue Ambang Village, but the fishermen only go to sea for 6 months, the remaining 6 months they do work such as farming, construction labor, and so on. After the conversion of agricultural land into residential land due to the tsunami that hit Aceh in 2004, the people of Alue Ambang Village had to fulfill their food needs, especially vegetables by supplying food ingredients from outside the village. Then due to the location of the village which is in the middle of a causeway and economic instability due to Covid-19, the community has to meet food needs at quite high prices. The formation of farmer groups in Alue Ambang Village had a good impact on the availability of food in the village. Then to make farmer groups continue to run, empowerment is needed which can be carried out by related agencies to community leaders in the village. This empowerment is in the form of utilizing the yard and making a planting system through hydroponics.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this research is a qualitative research method using a descriptive approach. In this study, researchers used the technique of determining informants and location by purposive sampling. The total population in this study amounted to 15 people and the samples were 5 people. Informants in this study were determined using a purposive method for key informants and key informants. According to (Tohardi, 2019) informants can be divided into three types, namely key informants, main informants and additional informants. The key informant in this study was the head of the Maju Jaya farmer group, while the main informant in this study was a member of the farmer group, and additional informants were community leaders.

Sources of data used in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained by interviewing informants and observing the condition of farmer groups. Secondary data obtained from journals and related agencies. While the data analysis technique used in this study is qualitative analysis by analyzing, describing, describing and describing various events that occurred which were obtained from interviews with informants. In this study, we wanted to analyze the empowerment of farmer groups through the use of yards and planting systems through hydroponics to increase food security in Alue Ambang Village.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Empowerment of Maju Jaya Farmer Groups

Empowerment is a process by which individuals and groups gain power, access to resources and gain control over their lives. Empowerment is considered a collaborative process in which people who are powerless over valuable resources are mobilized to increase access or control over

resources to solve personal and/or community problems (Indah, 2020). Based on the research results obtained in Alue Ambang Village, Teunom District, Aceh Jaya Regency, it was concluded that the Maju Jaya farmer group was founded in early 2013, then the Maju Jaya farmer group experienced problems during the Covid-19 pandemic and their activities stopped until 2020. Then the group tani Maju Jaya is starting to try to do activities again in 2021 until now. The impact of the population by Covid-19 has caused the community to experience economic instability in which they have to meet their food needs at quite high prices because much of the food in the village is supplied from outside the area. The high density of residential houses also causes limited land for food production,

From the results of the study it was also found that the agricultural activities carried out by the Maju Jaya farmer group were the concept of agriculture by utilizing the yard of the house, namely planting horticultural commodities and a planting system through hydroponics. Because the yard of the house that is used can provide results for the household, the yard of the house that is used for farming can help maintain household food security. If the yard is narrow, you can use a planting system through hydroponics, because hydroponics does not use soil media. Fulfillment of food needs independently is expected to reduce public spending on food fulfillment. This research is in line with research conducted by Iqbal (2016), Pekarangan is a traditional private garden, which is an integrated system with a close relationship between humans, plants and animals. Yard has a multipurpose function, because from this relatively narrow land, it can produce food ingredients such as tubers, vegetables, fruits, herbal and medicinal plant materials, handicraft materials and animal food ingredients derived from poultry, small livestock and fish. Food security is a condition in which all households have physical and economic access to obtain food for all family members, where households are not at risk of losing both accesses (FAO, 1997). From the results of the research, it was found that the condition of household horticultural food in Alue Ambang village with the empowerment of farmer groups could be fulfilled even if only on a small scale. The impact of empowering farmer groups by utilizing house yards has helped the community and farmer groups to meet their household food needs from farming.

The researcher conducted this research in the household scope because the community's food welfare starts from the household, if food for all households is sufficient and fulfilled then the community is said to have sufficient food availability. If the availability and needs of household food are not met, it can result in disease and famine. A household is said to have stable food availability if it has food supplies, and household members can eat 3 times a day according to the eating habits of the people in Alue Ambang village. The results obtained by the researchers were that the village government of Alue Ambang facilitated the establishment of the Maju Jaya farmer group starting from the formation process to the formation of farmer groups. The village government also provides assistance with vegetable seeds, spice plant seeds, or fertilizers to farmer groups for them to cultivate, and also provides assistance in the form of agricultural tools needed by farmer groups in the activities they carry out. With the assistance from the village government, the farmer groups feel greatly helped, because in farming activities the farmer groups are still lacking in capital. The existence of assistance that they can make farmer groups still able to carry out their farming activities or vegetable cultivation and so on. So that the activities of farmer groups in Alue Ambang Village can continue. The results of the research are in line with research conducted by Kasming (2019), the role of the government is an absolute necessity in an organization, both private and governmental, and is one of the main functions that must be carried

out by the leadership who is the leader of the organization. The consideration of forming a farmer group is as a forum or learning class for the community or the farmer group itself.

Table 1 Activities of the Maju Jaya Farmers Group

No	Name of activity	Time	Information
1	Land clearing	Routine	Every day (morning & evening)
2	Planting and plant care	Routine	Every day (morning & evening)
3	Harvest	Routine	When harvest time comes
4	Farmer group meetings & discussions	Routine	Every time there is a plan of activities and problems
5	Harvest management	Routine	Every harvest
6	Training	Incidental	According to the needs

3.2 Maju Jaya Farmer Group Empowerment Support

From the results of the study it was found that the empowerment of the Maju Jaya farmer group in Alue Ambang Village received support from several parties such as the head of the farmer group, members of the farmer group and community leaders.

a. Farmer Group Leader

The head of the farmer group guides the members, maintains cooperation and controls the activities of the farmer groups that have been drawn up. The group leader is seen as an agent for the effectiveness of a group, because of his strategic role in influencing or mobilizing members in his group to achieve group goals. The head of the farmer group strives for the farmer group to remain active and exist in order to maintain enthusiasm and unity by creating activity programs that have positive value for farmer groups and village communities. The head of the farmer group strives for consistency in its members to continue farming activities to support food availability as an important indicator of household food security.

b. Farmer Group Members

Farmer group members fully support every farmer group activity. The support provided can be in the form of ideas or their energy. Support in the form of ideas in the form of new ideas or developing ideas that already exist in their activities, for example the use of plastic aqua bottles that are simply thrown away, farmer groups try to cultivate vegetable plants using these aqua bottles, then they use unused flower pots for planting. plant vegetables. That way they already get vegetables that can be consumed as their food needs. Support in the form of labor can be seen in the participation of group members during farmer group activities, namely in community service activities for clearing land, caring for plants, harvesting, or training.

c. Public figure

The support of community leaders for farmer groups is urgently needed so that the activities of the Maju Jaya farmer groups can run well, and community leaders can help solve the problems of the Maju Jaya farmer groups because community leaders can be used as intermediaries when conflicts occur within farmer groups. This is very much needed by the Maju Jaya farmer groups so that the farmer groups remain in one direction so that they are not divided when conflicts occur between members of the Maju Jaya farmer groups.

3.3 Factors Inhibiting the Empowerment of Maju Jaya Farmer Groups

From the research results it was found that there were several inhibiting factors in the Empowerment of Maju Jaya Farmer Groups in Alue Ambang Village, such as the low knowledge of farmers, limited capital, lack of facilities and infrastructure, and weather factors.

a. Low Knowledge of Farmers / Human Resources

The low level of knowledge can be seen from the low educational status of elementary and junior high schools. Not only that, some of the farmers are no longer young, so these farmers still think traditionally and find it difficult to innovate.

b. Limited Capital / Assistance

Assistance provided by the village government is plant seeds and fertilizer assistance. However, the village government does not always provide assistance in each of their activities due to limited village budgets.

c. Lack of Facilities and Infrastructure

Lack of agricultural land makes it difficult for farmer groups to develop their farming business. Because agricultural land is one of the supporting factors in farming. Limited agricultural tools also make it difficult for farmer groups to carry out their activities.

d. Weather Factor

Weather is also one of the inhibiting factors because erratic weather affects the crops that will be or have been planted by farmers. Plants to be planted must see the weather first, this aims to choose what plants are suitable for planting. This has become an obstacle for farmer groups and communities in running their farming businesses.

3.4 Maju Jaya Farmer Group Empowerment Support Solutions

Solutions that can be provided by researchers in the Empowerment of Maju Jaya Farmer Groups in Alue Ambang Village are comparative studies and training.

a. Conduct Comparative Studies

With this comparative study, it is hoped that it can increase the insight and knowledge of farming as well as motivation for the Maju Jaya farmer groups and they can apply it to their activities. The breadth of insight allows farmer groups and communities to consider their household food security efforts more maturely. According to (Sujono, 2020) a comparative study is carried out by visiting a place that is considered successful to study the level of success.

b. Training

This training is intended to regenerate and strengthen as well as provide motivation to the Maju Jaya farmer groups to continue to innovate and be empowered to engage in farming business. This training was also conducted to increase the understanding of the Maju Jaya farmer groups regarding effective and efficient farming and to find out the procedures for applying appropriate technology in farming. The target of this activity is to increase the capacity of farmer groups in an effort to increase household food security.

4. CONCLUSION

Food security is a condition in which all households have physical and economic access to obtain food for all family members, where households are not at risk of experiencing hunger. From the results of the study it was found that the agricultural activities carried out by the Maju Jaya farmer group were the concept of agriculture by utilizing the house yards, namely planting horticultural commodities and a planting system through hydroponics. The situation of household

horticultural food in Alue Ambang village with the empowerment of farmer groups can be fulfilled even if only on a small scale. The impact of empowering farmer groups by utilizing house yards has helped the community and farmer groups to meet their household food needs from farming. A household is said to have stable food availability if it has food supplies, and household members can eat 3 times a day, which is in accordance with the eating habits of the people in Alue Ambang village. The operation of farmer groups must have the support of various related parties such as the chairmen of farmer groups, members of farmer groups and community leaders.

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