

Analysis of Farmers' Group Capabilities in the City of Sawahlunto

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture plays an important role in the Indonesian economy, especially in rural areas which are dominated by farmers whose income is from agricultural products. Increasing farmer welfare is the key to agricultural development. This can be achieved through increasing agricultural productivity, access to efficient markets, and developing human resources and farmer institutions. Farmer groups are a key element in agricultural development, enabling the exchange of information, training and collaboration between farmers. Farmer Group capability class assessment is an important tool in understanding the dynamics and development of this group. In Sawahlunto City, the majority of Farmer Groups are still in the beginner and advanced classes, with only a few reaching the intermediate class. Many factors influence the ability of Farmer Groups, including changes in conditions in the field, structural changes, and the formation of groups just to get government assistance. Therefore, assessing the ability class of Farmer Groups must be the basis for coaching and empowering this group, so that it can play a more effective role in agricultural development.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a social structure characterized by rural communities with an agricultural pattern. Most of their income comes from agricultural products such as food crops, plantations, livestock, fisheries and forestry. The main key to increasing farmer welfare is increasing farmer income. Increasing income can be achieved through increasing farming productivity and planting intensity accompanied by increasing farmers' access to efficient input and output markets (Zakaria, 2009).

The agricultural sector has a very strategic role in national economic development, especially as a food provider for the Indonesian people. Agriculture also makes a real contribution in providing industrial raw materials, bio-energy, absorbing labor which will have an impact on reducing poverty levels and maintaining environmental preservation.

With agricultural development, the welfare of the people (farmers) will be realized. Development is a multidimensional process that involves major changes in social structures, mental attitudes and national institutions, including accelerated economic growth, equal distribution of income, and reduction of unemployment and eradication of absolute poverty by paying attention to environmental sustainability (Zakaria, 2009).

Agricultural development which aims for the welfare of farmers, is supported by one of the current strategic agricultural development programs, namely the development of Agricultural Human Resources and Farmer Institutions. In realizing agricultural development goals, key actors and business actors are needed who are qualified, reliable, have managerial skills, have an entrepreneurial spirit and business organization. In this way, they are expected to be able to build competitive and sustainable farming businesses so that they can improve their bargaining position. One of the main actors in agricultural development is farmers, who are expected to have adequate knowledge and skills in managing agricultural businesses so that they can overcome problems not only in increasing production, but also in increasing income and developing agricultural businesses. Therefore, farmers'

capacity and abilities must continue to be improved, one of which is through agricultural extension using a group approach (Mardikanto, 2007).

Humans cannot be separated from group life (small/large). The development process uses groups as a medium to achieve development goals. In rural areas, groups such as community groups, farmer groups, youth groups, women's groups, business groups and so on are developing (Hariadi, 2011). The acceleration of group development varies, with unique patterns depending on the task, composition (structure), individual characteristics of members, climate, behavioral patterns and leadership style in each group. Many experts have stated the role of groups in development, but how to get groups that are capable of acting as a forum for farmers and also as a medium for distributing information and other services. How to get a dynamic group so that it makes it easier for service, extension and regulatory institutions to reach farmers.

Much emphasis is placed on the process of agricultural development in Indonesia through efforts to empower human resources, this effort is carried out through agricultural extension activities which are carried out, among other things, through a group approach. Therefore, agricultural extension workers form and develop Farmer Groups as a forum for learning and various activities in the agricultural sector (Hariadi, 2011).

Farming business development through Farmer Groups is nothing more than an effort to accelerate targets. There are many farmers in large numbers and spread across vast villages, so that in group development it is hoped that the horizon and insight of togetherness will emerge to solve and change the image of the current farming business into a bright and strong future farming business. The aim of forming the Farmer's Group is to further improve and develop the capabilities of farmers and their families as subjects of agricultural development through a group approach to play a greater role in development.

Farmer groups are groups of farmers that grow based on closeness and harmony, as well as shared interests in utilizing agricultural resources to work together to achieve the welfare of their members. Farmer groups will not function as expected if there is a lack of guidance and teaching and learning class training from agricultural, plantation and BPP extension officers. Therefore, to find out whether a Farmer Group is dynamic or not, it can be assessed or measured from the dynamic elements of the Farmer Group first. Elements of Farmer Group dynamics that can be measured include (a) group goals, (b) group structure, (c) task function, (d) group development, (e) group cohesiveness, (f) group atmosphere, (g) pressure in the group and (h) group effectiveness.

Farmer groups can grow and develop among farmers because basically the Indonesian people, including Sawahlunto City, West Sumatra Province, are known as people who like to cooperate, help each other, work together and have high concern for each other. In reality, not all farmer groups develop according to expectations, in fact quite a few farmer groups have disbanded or remain in name only. If a farmer group's ability class is used, there are quite a few farmer groups that have been formed for a long time but are still in the Beginner and Advanced classes. This is certainly concerning and also a challenge for parties involved in agricultural development.

Weak institutional development is one of the characteristics of village communities. The government is trying to form institutions in villages whose members include the community itself, such as Farmer Groups. The development of Farmer Groups (Farmer Groups) is directed at (a) strengthening Farmer Groups to become strong and independent farmer institutions; (b) increasing the ability of members in developing agribusiness and (c) increasing the ability of Farmer Groups in carrying out their functions (Bali Province Agricultural Technology Assessment Agency, 2016). Almost all/most farming communities have Farmer Groups, but in reality not all Farmer Groups have succeeded in developing well.

Meanwhile, the condition of Farmer Groups from year to year can be said to have not experienced development as expected or can be said to be constant (even tending to decline). Most of the Farmer Group classes do not correspond to the actual situation, such as the Farmer Group's high ability class status (for example Intermediate or Primary), but their activities when measured by assessment scores are still low in dynamics. Even now, some Farmer Groups have disbanded, but are still registered in the Agricultural Extension Management Information System (SIMLUHTAN). This condition occurs because Farmer Groups are often used as a tool or forum to provide assistance/subsidies related to government programs, so that the formation and growth of Farmer Groups is often carried out because of projects, and when the projects end, the Farmer Groups no longer function or remain in name only.

Becoming a member of a Farmer's Group is very important for farmers, where Farmer's Groups are important for developing the agricultural sector. Through discussions in groups, farmers can support each other and share information. Groups as entities are more powerful than individuals. It is easier for the government to provide support to farmers who are members of a group than individual farmers. Apart from that, to be able to help the group development process, increase cooperation between individual members and increase group productivity, it is necessary to know the group dynamics that exist in the group (Munir, 2019).

According to Hermanto (2011) Farmer Groups are farming institutions that directly organize farmers in developing their farming businesses. Farmer groups are organizations that can be said to function and exist in real terms, apart from functioning as a vehicle for counseling and driving the activities of their members. According to Margono (2000) Farmer groups are still used as the main approach in agricultural extension activities. The group

approach is seen as efficient and can be a medium for the learning and interaction process of farmers, so that it is hoped that there will be changes in farmer behavior towards better or better quality. Thus, Farmer Groups have a strategic position in creating quality farmers. Quality farmers are characterized, among other things, by their independence and toughness in farming.

Based on the author's initial observations in the field, it is known that the independence of Farmer Groups in the management of Farmer Groups in the city of Sawahlunto has not been established and there has not been any significant increase in the level of Farmer Groups. Where the results of the Farmer Group class assessment in 2021 are known are explained in table 1 below:

Table 1
Recapitulation and Validation of Ability Class Assessment
Farmers Sawahlunto City in 2021

| No. | Mark | Class | Amount |
|---|------------|--------------|--------|
| 1. | 0 - 245 | Beginner | 51 |
| 2. | 246 - 455 | Carry on | 58 |
| 3. | 456 - 700 | Intermediate | 3 |
| 4. | 701 - 1000 | Main | - |
| Information : | | | |
| Farmer Groups Upgrading | | | 13 |
| Farmer Groups Who Have Been Downgraded | | | 1 |
| Farmer groups with fixed classes | | | 91 |
| Farmer Groups That Are Not Assessed Because They Are Inactive | | | 8 |
| Formation of New Farmer Groups | | | 7 |

Source: BPP Talawi, Sawahlunto City, 2022

Based on table 1 above, it is known that in 2021 in Sawahlunto City an assessment was carried out on 105 Farmer Groups, with the result that 86.66% of Farmer Groups did not advance to class. Only 12.38% or 13 Farmer Groups were promoted to class and 1 Farmer Group was actually lowered in class, meaning they got less marks than the previous year's assessment. Meanwhile, the Farmer Group should be a dynamic group so that it can become a tool for its members to achieve goals, both personal goals and group goals.

The level of ability of the Farmer Group will provide an overview of the ability of the Farmer Group, which is a combination of the strengths or abilities of the group members, which will further increase the effectiveness and optimization of agricultural development activities in the future. Thus, the ability of Farmer Groups is very relevant and significantly influences agricultural development efforts, especially in achieving the targets and objectives of agricultural extension, namely to increase farming productivity and seek changes in the attitudes and behavior of farmers so that they are better able to improve their own welfare.

Five Class Assessments of Farmer Group Capabilities as a basis for implementing Farmer Group coaching, from various aspects, is the direction for Farmer Group coaching which is carried out in a structured manner by agricultural instructors in an effort to increase productivity which is supported by the management capabilities of Farmer Group management, so as to achieve a significant increase in income. Encourage the achievement of Farmer welfare.

The assessment of Farmer Group capability classes is carried out by Agricultural Extension Officers every year, from this process it will be possible to evaluate the development of Farmer Groups carried out by Agricultural Extension Officers who are coordinated by the Agricultural Extension Center and the Agency in charge of Extension. The results of this assessment will become the basis for planning the implementation of extension services in the following year.

Mapping the performance and capabilities of Farmer Groups is needed in line with technological advances and the needs of the business and industrial worlds. This strategy is carried out so that therapy for Farmer Groups is in accordance with the Farmer Group's ability class, becomes efficient and successful in achieving agricultural development programs that can run smoothly and have an impact on the welfare of farmers and their families.

Problem the capacity of Farmer Groups is a fundamental problem in the framework of agricultural development, meaning agricultural development In essence, it is directed at efforts to improve farmers' welfare

which can be more realized with the existence of Farmer Groups with the suitability of the group's capabilities so that the agricultural development program implemented can achieve the desired targets. So, it can be said that the higher the ability of Farmer Groups, the faster the agricultural development process will be. The Farmer Group class assessment guidelines are still far from perfect, therefore constructive criticism and suggestions are highly expected for future improvements. In connection with this, the author is interested in conducting research with the title: "Analysis of Farmer Group Capabilities in the city of Sawahlunto".

METHODS

A. Place and time of research

This research was carried out in Sawahlunto City. The choice of location was carried out purposively to see the development of the capabilities of Farmer Groups in Sawahlunto City. This research was carried out from December 2022 to April 2023.

B. Types of research

This type of research is research with quantitative methods used to answer the third problem formulation, namely how to compare the results of the Farmer Group Capability assessment carried out by the researcher in 2022 with the report on the results of the Farmer Group Capability assessment carried out by the extension officer, which was analyzed using the t test with the previous test. Normality.

C. Data source

According to Arikunto (2006) data sources are "research in the subject from which data can be obtained". To make it easier to identify data sources, the author classifies them into 3 levels, better known as the 3 Ps (person, place, paper) as follows:

1. *Person*, in the form of a person. Person is a data source who can provide data in the form of verbal answers through interviews or written answers through questionnaires. The data source here is the Farmer Group Management in Sawahlunto City,
2. *Place*, in the form of a place. Place is a data source that provides displays in the form of still and moving conditions. The location of this research is the Farmer Group Management in Sawahlunto City, West Sumatra Province.
3. *Paper*, in the form of symbols. Paper is a data source that presents signs in the form of letters, numbers, images or other symbols. Which become the data sources here are various documents related to the implementation of Farmer Group Capabilities in i Sawahlunto City.

Research data sources are an important factor that is taken into consideration in determining data collection methods, which consist of primary data sources and secondary data sources (Indriantoro, 1999). The explanation of the two data sources is as follows:

- 1) Primary Data Source: is a source of research data obtained directly from original sources (not through intermediaries) using the Questionnaire Method, namely collecting data by distributing questionnaires to respondents to be filled in according to the statements contained therein. According to Hasan (2005) primary data is data obtained or collected directly in the field by the person conducting the research or the person concerned who needs it. Primary data is obtained from informant sources, namely individuals or individuals such as the results of interviews conducted by researchers.
- 2) Secondary Data Source: is data obtained from other sources related to research. Secondary data is data obtained or collected by people conducting research from existing sources. This data is used to support primary information that has been obtained, namely from library materials, literature, previous research, books, and so on (Hasan, 2005).

RESULTS

A. General Description of Research Locations

Sawahlunto City is located about 100 km east of Padang City and the landscape of Sawahlunto City has very varied heights, namely between 250 meters to 650 meters above sea level. The northern part of the city has relatively flat topography even though it is located in a valley, especially the area traversed by Batang Lunto, where around this river settlements and public facilities were built during the Dutch East Indies government.

Sawahlunto City is bordered by:

To the north: Tanah Datar Regency

South: Solok Regency

West: Solok Regency

East: Sijunjung Regency

Astronomically, the city of Sawahlunto is located between 0° 33'40" - 0° 48'33" South Latitude and 100° 41'59" - 100° 49' 60" East Longitude. Sawahlunto City has an area of 273.45 Km² or only around 0.65% of the area of West Sumatra Province. Talawi District is the District with the largest area, namely 99.39 Km² (36.35%),

Next is Barangin District with an area of 88.55 Km² (32.38%), Lembah Segar District is 52.58 Km² (19.23%), and Silungkang District which has the smallest area with an area of only 32.93 Km² (12.04).

All sub-districts or villages in Sawahlunto City are classified as non-coastal areas. Topographically, Sawahlunto is located in a hilly area with an altitude of between 250 - 785 meters above sea level, with air temperatures ranging from 22°C - 33°C. Most of the Sawahlunto City area is located at an altitude of 100-450 meters. Air temperature ranges from 22 degrees to 33 degrees Celsius. The area of Sawahlunto City is 27,345 hectares or around 0.65 percent of the area of West Sumatra Province. Most of the The Sawahlunto City area is a mixed plantation, namely 10,057 hectares. Forest is the second largest land area in Sawahlunto City with a land area of 4,322 hectares. The area of bushes/alang-alang is 3,909 hectares, villages/settlements 3,068 hectares, rice fields 2,094 hectares and offices/industries 975 hectares.

There are four sub-districts in Sawahlunto City, namely:

1. Subdistrict Silungkang
2. Lembah Segar District
3. Barangin District
4. Talawi District

Sawahlunto City is known as a coal mining town. This city died after coal mining stopped. Currently, the city of Sawahlunto has developed into an old, multi-ethnic tourist city, making it one of the best old cities in Indonesia. In this city, which was founded in 1888, there are many old buildings left by the Dutch. Some have been designated as cultural heritage by the local government in order to encourage tourism and declare Sawahlunto a "Cultural Mining Tourism City".

B. General Description of Farmer Groups in Sawahlunto City

A Farmer's Group is a group of farmers or farmers, consisting of adult male or female farmers as well as cadet farmers or young farmers who are informally bound in a group area on the basis of harmony and common needs and are in the sphere of influence and leadership of a farmer contact (Setiana, 2005).

There are several things that are the same as those found by researchers with those described by supporting literature, where the formation of Farmer Groups in rural areas is generally due to the common interests of a group of people or farmers who want to achieve common goals and there are also Farmer Groups that are deliberately formed with the aim of being able to develop them. As a learning tool for group members.

Each Farmer Group basically has the function of carrying out activities to achieve increased production in their respective farming businesses. Awareness of being in a group can arise if the problems faced by community members are the same. The results of the author's survey in the field show that the main motivation for members' participation in Farmer Groups is driven by the desire to improve business abilities and fulfill primary needs, especially to obtain sufficient agricultural and livestock production facilities, where farmers unite and form a group based on common needs, namely increase agricultural productivity. The farmer's desire to form a Farmer's Group is achieved after the farmer fulfills the basic requirements for forming a group. The formation of Farmer Groups opens up members' horizons to accept and implement government programs with joy. The existence of Farmer Groups in Sawahlunto City has provided many benefits to farmers in carrying out their farming businesses.

Based on the assessment of Farmer Group capability classes in 2022, the number of Farmer Groups that have grown is 316 with the number of farmers joining the new Farmer Groups being 5,379 farmers.

Dynamic developments and conditions in the field will greatly influence the grades and ability classes of Farmer Groups. Changes in the values and ability classes of Farmer Groups are then something that must be prepared to be faced and followed up as best as possible in the development of Farmer Groups. It is hoped that the results of the annual FARMERS' GROUP PAKEM assessment can become a reference for developing Farmers' Groups in an effort to improve the quality and independence of Farmers' Groups. In addition, with accurate mapping of Farmer Group capability classes, it is hoped that this can be used as input in preparing strategies for empowering Farmer Groups based on their capabilities.

Conditions for assessing the ability class of Farmer Groups in Sawahlunto City in 2022 based on the results of the Farmer Group class assessment as a form of description of the condition of Farmer Groups in Sawahlunto City can be seen in the table:

Table 1
Farmer Group ability class assessment in Sawahlunto City in 2022

| No | Subdistrict | Group Capability Class | | | | Not | Active | Total |
|----|-------------|------------------------|----------|-------|------|--------|--------|-------|
| | | Beginner | Carry On | Madya | Main | Active | | |
| 1 | TALAWI | 46 | 61 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 114 | 121 |
| 2 | GOODS | 29 | 51 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 83 | 89 |
| 3 | L. FRESH | 17 | 32 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 50 | 54 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| 4 | SILUNGKANG | 18 | 32 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 52 | 52 |
| Amount | | 110 | 176 | 13 | 0 | 17 | 299 | 316 |
| Percentage | | 34.81 | 55.70 | 4.11 | 0.00 | 5.38 | 94.62 | 100.00 |

Source: UPTD Agricultural Extension Implementation Center for Sawahlunto City, 2023

There are Farmer Groups that will not be active in 2022 so an assessment of the Farmer Group's ability class will not be carried out, which can be seen in the table :

Table 2
Data on Inactive Farmer Groups in 2022

| No | Subdistrict | Village/Subdistrict | Farmers |
|----|--------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | TALAWI | Kumbayau | Kumbayau Pearls |
| | TOTAL: 7 | Tanjung Rock | Prosperous Livestock |
| | | Tumpuak Tengah | Lantiak Balang |
| | | Tumpuak Tengah | KWT Tanjuang Indah |
| | | Tumpuak Tengah | Bukik Sulah Works |
| | | Tumpuak Tengah | Tatayeh Sakato |
| | | Tumpuak Tengah | Luak Bingkuang |
| | | Kumbayau | Kumbayau Pearls |
| 2 | GOODS | Kolok Nan Tuo | Moving Forward Together |
| | TOTAL: 6 | Santua | KWT. Cambodia |
| | | Durian II | New Shoots |
| | | Scan it | KWT. Orchid |
| | | BBS | Blessings Andalas |
| | | BBS | Lush Together |
| 3 | FRESH VALLEY | Tengah Kubang | We are Saiyo |
| | TOTAL: 4 | Tengah Kubang | KWT Bunga Tanjung |
| | | Cold water | Double Sari |
| | | North Kubang Sikabu | Lubuk Nago |
| 4 | SILUNGKANG | - | - |
| | TOTAL: 0 | | |

Source: UPTD Agricultural Extension Implementation Center for Sawahlunto City, 2023

CONCLUSION

The results of research regarding the Analysis of Farmer Group Capacity in Sawahlunto City in 2022 show that there is no significant difference between the research results and the extension scores, indicating that the implementation of the Farmer Group Capacity Assessment is in accordance with the principles in conducting farmer group assessments. Apart from that, the development of the Farmer Group Capability classification in Sawahlunto City has not experienced any significant changes. Aspects of the ability to plan, organize, carry out activities, control and report, and develop Farmer Group leadership have indicators that do not show significant differences between research results and extension values. However, there is a significant difference between the research results and the instructors' scores on aspects of planning ability, especially in indicators that include business planning.

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