

The Active Role of Farmer Groups in Improving the Economy of Dam Village Communities

Agung Ilham Gumelar¹ Ratna Sari Dewi² Qotrun Nida³

Citizenship Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Serang City, Banten Province, Indonesia^{1,2,3}

Email: agungilhamgumelar14@gmail.com¹ ratna@untirta.ac.id² nida@untirta.ac.id³

Abstract

Technological developments have triggered changes in the way we carry out economic activities. This change is closely related to ideas, creativity, innovation and speed that most of our farmers fail to understand and follow. As a result, farmers always get the smallest profit and are left behind in the economic chain. This study aims to find out and describe how the Bendungan Village Farmers Association provides counseling on the development of agricultural technology in Bendungan Village, to find out and describe how farmers respond to ideas and innovate to increase their agricultural yields and to find out and describe the obstacles the Bendungan Village Farmers Group Association has in improving The Economy of the Bendungan Village Community. This study used a descriptive qualitative method involving the Association of Farmers' Group Management and Members of the Farmers' Group in Bendungan Village. The data collected is then analyzed and reduced so that it can be presented in descriptive paragraphs. This study found the following results: 1) Bendungan Village Gapoktan used 3 counseling methods, namely scheduled counseling and incidental counseling. 2) Not all Farmer Groups and their members are ready and follow the ideas and innovations initiated by Gapoktan through counseling. 3) The Combined Farmers Group experienced difficulties in conveying (communicating) their ideas and ideas to stakeholders and farmers in Bendungan Village.

Keywords: Active Role of Gapoktan, Community Economy, and Farmer's Economy.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

INTRODUCTION

Normatively, the Indonesian economic system is based on the 1945 Constitution and Pancasila which contains family values and principles, rejecting individual or group monopolies in economic activities that affect the lives of many people. Through article 33 paragraph 4 of the 1945 Constitution, the state emphasizes that the national economy is organized based on economic democracy or the Pancasila economic system with the principles of togetherness, efficiency with justice, sustainability, environmental awareness, independence, and by maintaining a balance of progress and national economic unity. The Indonesian economic system also prioritizes social justice for all Indonesian people.

In 1960, Walt Whitman Rostow sparked his theory about the economic stages of a country through his book entitled Stages of Economic Growth. This book sparked the idea of the stages of community development consisting of traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, the take-off stage, the movement towards maturity, and the high-level consumption stage. The understanding that arises as a result of this idea is that there is a measure of the stages that must be passed towards a developed country (Machmud: 2016: 39). As a result of this conception, Indonesia is increasingly leaving agriculture because agriculture is nothing but a characteristic of a traditional country which means it is left behind. Indonesia began to build industries everywhere and there was a decline in interest among young people and highly educated people in farming (Maulana Akbar: 2014).

The results of initial observations, the researchers found data from 711 heads of families in Bendungan Village, as many as 113 families entered as Pre-Prosperous Families, as many as 251 families including Prosperous Family 1, as many as 106 families as Prosperous Families 2, as many as 170 families as Prosperous Families 3, and only 71 families including the Prosperous Family 3 (BPS: 2021). Of the 711 family heads, 105 family heads have a livelihood as farmers who are members of 2 P3A groups, 1 women farmer group, and 5 farmer contacts.

The area of land managed by farmers in Bendungan Village is 71.10 Ha, which means that on average farmers manage 6,000 m² of rice fields, although, in fact, not all farmers manage rice fields with an even area. From these data, the average agricultural yield and income of dam village farmers is obtained as follows:

Table 1. Average Agricultural Yields and Farmers' Income in Bendungan Village

Year	Average Production Paddy Field per hectare (Tons/Ha)	Farmers Gross Income per Hectare	Farmers Net Income per Hectare
2013	6,7	Rp 24.790.000	Rp 14.790.000
2014	6,2	Rp 22.940.000	Rp 12.940.000
2015	6,2	Rp 22.940.000	Rp 12.940.000
2016	7,0	Rp 25.900.000	Rp 15.900.000
2017	5,6	Rp 20.720.000	Rp 10.720.000
2018	5,6	Rp 20.720.000	Rp 10.720.000
2019	5,6	Rp 20.720.000	Rp 10.720.000
2020	5,6	Rp 20.720.000	Rp 10.720.000
2021	5,6	Rp 20.720.000	Rp 10.720.000

Source: BPS data and Researchers (2014-2022)

From the data above, we can know that there is a decrease in the number of rice fields managed by farmers every year. Apart from that, we will also get data on the average net income for each farmer of IDR 6,432,000 per planting period, which means IDR 1,643,000 per month. The Indonesian government's lack of attention to the world of agriculture will increasingly make it difficult for farmers to improve their welfare. If that happens, there will be an increase in the number of pre-prosperous families or trapped in poverty in the future. So to prevent this, both the government and farmers will need the active role of the Farmers Group Association as an institution that can parse and solve the problems experienced by the world of agriculture in this country.

The formation of farmer organizations such as Farmer Groups and Farmer Group Associations (Gapoktan) is the main tool for distributing aid and at the same time as a forum for interaction vertically between the government and farmers and horizontally among fellow farmers. Farmer organizations are expected to be a key component in agriculture, namely playing a role in overcoming poverty, improving natural resource degradation, increasing women's involvement, health and education, and social politics (Rita N. Suhaeti, 2014: 159-160).

Through the Association of Farmers' Groups and Farmers' Groups can also become a catalyst for national development through the empowerment movement. Empowerment is a series of activities to strengthen and or optimize empowerment (in terms of ability and or competitive advantage) of weak groups in society, including individuals who experience poverty problems (Mardikanto and Soebiato, 2013: 113). Biddle and Thomas in Sarwono (2015: 224) divide the terminology of role theory into four groups, namely: people who take part in social interactions; The behavior that appears in the interaction; The position of people in behavior; Links between people and behavior. From this formulation, Sarwono

(2015: 224) states that a role is a series of formulations that limit the expected behavior of certain position holders. Meanwhile Soerjono Soekanto (2017: 243) provides a role conception as a dynamic aspect of position (status) when a person exercises his rights and obligations then he carries out a role. Roles can be divided into 3 parts, namely: Active role is the role given by group members because of their position in the group as a group activity, such as administrators, officials and so on. The participatory role is the role given by group members to their group which makes a very useful contribution to the group itself. Passive role is the contribution of group members who are passive, where group members hold back from giving opportunities to other functions in the group so that they run well.

Based on the Regulation of the Ministry of Agriculture Number 67/PERMENTAN/SM.050/12/2016 concerning Farmer Institutional Development. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture (2016) farmer groups are groups of farmers/breeders/planters formed on the basis of common interests, similar environmental conditions (social, economic, resource) and friendship to improve and develop members' businesses. While the Association of farmer groups (GAPOKTAN) is a collection of several farmer groups that join and work together to increase economies of scale and business efficiency.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture (2016) for the development of farmer groups and Gapoktan at the village level, the person responsible for the development of farmer groups is the Village Head and the operations are carried out by agricultural extension officers who work in the area through activities, namely:

1. Attend meetings/deliberations held by farmer groups.
2. Convey various information and farming technology.
3. Facilitating farmer groups in carrying out PRA, preparing group definitive plans (RDK) and group needs definitive plans (RDKK).
4. Compilation of village/kelurahan agricultural extension programs.
5. Teaching various farming skills and providing guidance on their application.
6. Helping farmers to identify farming problems.
7. Take inventory of problems that cannot be solved by farmer groups and members to be brought under the meeting at BPP.
8. Make records regarding the membership and activities of farmer groups that grow and develop in their working area.
9. Growing managerial skills, leadership, and entrepreneurial institutional farmers and other agribusiness actors.
10. Facilitating the formation of farmer group associations and their development.
11. Carry out village-level extension forums (deliberations/deliberations on farmer contacts, interviews and coordination of agricultural extension).

The community economy is all economic activities and community efforts to fulfill their basic needs, namely clothing, food, housing, health and education. Thus it can be understood that community economic empowerment is an effort to increase the ability or potential of the community. In economic activities to meet the needs of life and improve their welfare and can potentially be in the process of national development (Daniel Sukalele: 2014). The village economy is a village area that has economic activities with farmers as the foundation. The profession of a farmer in this case is not just someone who works in the fields. Village areas make farmers the backbone of the economy, because the center of the source of activity in the economic system (transactions, consumption, production, distribution) comes from farmers (Suleman, et. All: 2020). However, oftentimes farmers also experience difficulties in dealing with marketing mechanisms, prices for crops that do not match the costs during the maintenance period of the plants (Ajeng: 2015).

Farming income is the difference between costs incurred and revenue earned. Revenue is the result of multiplying the total number of products by the selling price unit, while expenses or costs are the value of using production facilities and others incurred in the production process. Production is related to revenue and production costs, this income is received by farmers because it still has to be reduced by production costs, namely the entire cost used in the production process (Suratiah: 2015). Based on the description above, the researcher will analyze and describe how the Bendungan Village Farmer Group Association provides counseling on agricultural technology development in Bendungan Village, how farmers respond to ideas and innovate to increase their agricultural output and what are the obstacles to the Bendungan Village Farmer Group Association in improving the Community's Economy Dam Village.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses descriptive qualitative method. Qualitative research methods describe an object, phenomenon, or social environment that will be included in narrative writing (Anggito and Setiawan, 2018). The data collected is in the form of text or images, not numbers, because the data obtained comes from observations, interviews, notes or documents in the field (Moeleong: 2018: 3). Data collection was carried out using data collection techniques, namely observation, interviews, documentation, and combination (triangulation) (Sugiyono (2015: 309). Miles and Huberman stated that the data analysis process in this study used an interactive model of analysis which consisted of three components of data analysis, namely data reduction (data reduction), data presentation (data display), and drawing conclusions (data conclusion: drawing/verifying) (Sugiyono (2015: 338).

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Agricultural Technology Development Counseling

The results of the interviews and observations of the researchers found that data on the implementation of Agricultural Technology Development counseling by Gapoktan of Bendungan Village was carried out by:

1. Scheduled counseling and incidental counseling. Scheduled extension is extension that has been planned by the Association of Farmers Groups and documented in the annual Agricultural Extension Program. This counseling is carried out in 2 ways, namely first, counseling by way of seminars held by Gapoktan at the house of the chairman / Gapoktan members who are willing. Second, by way of workshops on agricultural land because it requires practice in the field.
2. Incidental counseling is counseling that is held unscheduled. This activity is carried out when facing new agricultural technology information or facing new agricultural problems that arise in the field.

Scheduled counseling will take place 2-5 times a year while incidental counseling is held at most 2 times because of certain things only. Scheduled extension activities include: Extension of New Agricultural Equipment, Extension of Planting Methods and Use of Fertilizers for Rice and Horticultural Plants (Chili, Corn and Others). While incidental counseling such as overcoming pest problems that have just appeared on Dam village farmland or old pests but pests that are difficult to handle or resistant to fertilizers used by farmers (Results of interview with Gapoktan head of Bendungan Village on 21 January 2023).



Figure 1. Extension of Rice Thresher Agricultural Technology

Farmers' responses to ideas and innovations in Agricultural Technology Development

Most farmers gave a positive response to the existence of Gapoktan in Bendungan Village in facilitating agricultural technology development counseling, but not all farmers were ready to implement farmer ideas and innovations. One of Gapoktan's ideas that farmers accepted was to initiate the planting of chilies and other horticultural crops in the fields (Sawah Darat) in the last 4 years. The benefit is that farmers have additional land to plant so that it becomes additional income for farming families. To this day there is 1 farmer group that grows chilies and horticultural crops in dry rice fields which can produce about 4 quintals of chili from 200 m² of land managed by each farmer. So, each farmer has a total gross income of IDR 14,000,000 to IDR 22,000,000. This income is related to market prices and when farmers sell so that the net income of each farmer is in the range of IDR 10,000,000 to IDR 11,000,000 during the cycle. Another advantage is that chili plants can be harvested many times depending on the farmer's care (Results of an interview with Chili Farmers in Bendungan Village on January 23, 2023). Meanwhile, other farmers who still prefer to plant rice in their fields experience difficulties when they have to rent a rice thresher. This is caused by the additional costs that must be incurred by farmers to bring tools to their fields which are far from road access. So that many farmers still rely on traditional methods of harvesting rice (Results of interviews with members of farmer groups in Bendungan Village on 22 January 2023).

Most of the farmers who manage agricultural land in the Cilalay Block and Haraghag Block give a positive appreciation of the Gapoktan initiative in solving the problem of transportation of agricultural needs and crops because they are far from road access. The Gapoktan of Bendungan Village has initiated a raft of motorcycle taxis that follow the right side of the Dam irrigation route for 1.8 km to reach their agricultural land (Results of interviews with Members of the Farmer Group in the Cilalay Block of Bendungan Village on 25 January 2023).

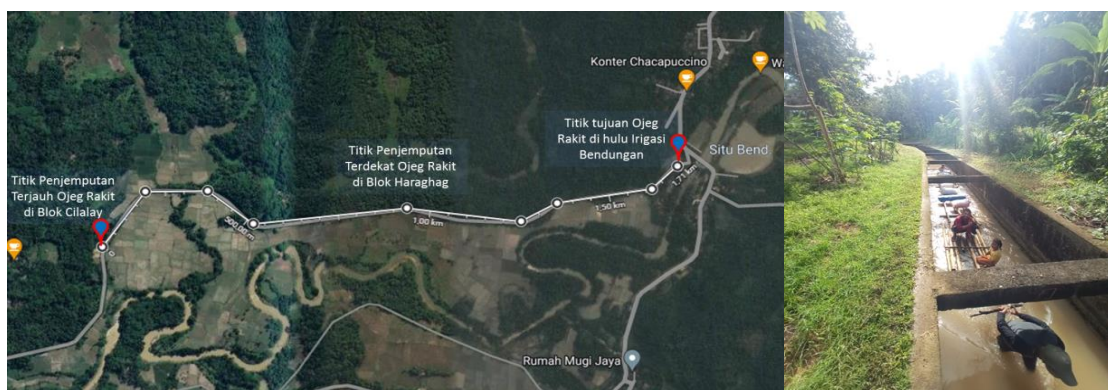


Figure 2. Map of Raft Ojek Routes in Bendungan Village

Barriers to Gapoktan in Improving the Economy of the Bendungan Village Community

The results of this research observation, the researchers found information that there was interrupted communication between the Association of Farmers Groups and the Bendungan Village Government on the theme of empowerment and increasing the welfare of the Bendungan village community. This was acknowledged by the head of the Bendungan Village Gapoktan who stated that he experienced difficulties when he had to communicate with the Village Government, especially the Village Head, when he was going to hold Socialization, Counseling or Agricultural Workshops. In fact, there are many activities if the village government is willing and able to facilitate Gapoktan activities so that farmers can get more information and concrete examples to solve agricultural problems and increase agricultural yields. For example with workshops and exhibitions of agricultural products, management of agricultural products or inviting and meeting several local or outside village entrepreneurs who can help develop business units for farmer groups and Gapoktan in Bendungan village (Results of interview with Gapoktan head of Bendungan Village on 21 January 2023).

Meanwhile, the Head of Bendungan Village admitted that he did not understand the wishes and plans made by the Association of Farmers, especially the implementation of activities that would absorb the Village budget. The Village Head emphasized that he did not mean that he did not support Gapoktan's plans or did not intend to help farmers to improve their welfare. However, the portion of the Village budget that looks large actually has a limit on the portion of its use set by the district government. Thus, it is impossible to carry out all the wishes of the farmers while there are still priority needs of the villagers in general (Results of an interview with the Head of Bendungan Village on 26 January 2023). As a result of this disconnection, the pace of development and growth of farmer groups and the Association of Farmer Groups of Bendungan Village has been hampered. This is related to 2 points in the operational development of farmer groups and Gapoktan at the village level According to the Ministry of Agriculture (2016), namely teaching various farming skills and providing guidance on their application and developing managerial, leadership, and entrepreneurial institutional skills for farmers and other agribusiness actors.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, it can be concluded: the Bendungan Village Farmer Group Association organizes Agricultural Technology Development Counseling in 2 ways, namely Scheduled Counseling and Incidental Counseling (unscheduled time) related to new tools and ways of managing agriculture. Activities in development counseling include the use of new technology for agricultural equipment, how to process agriculture and solving agricultural problems. Most of the Bendungan Village farmers gave a positive appreciation of the active role of the Bendungan Village Gapoktan in developing agricultural technology and solving agricultural problems. Obstacles to Gapoktan in improving the economy of the Bendungan Village community are the disconnection of Gapoktan communication with the Village Government and Stakeholders who can be invited to work together to develop Farmer Groups and Gapoktan in building business units and improving the quality and skills of farmers in Bendungan Village.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akbar Maulana. (2014). Peranan Gabungan Kelompok tani Dalam Melaksanakan Program Pengembangan Usaha Agribisnis Pedesaan (PUAP) Di Kecamatan Undaan, Kabupaten Kudus. Semarang : Universitas Diponegoro.
- Anggito, Albi dan Setiawan, Johan. (2018). Metode Penelitian Kualitatif. Sukabumi: CV Jejak.

- Ayu Puspitasari, Ajeng. (2015). Farmer's Prosperity: How to Increase Farmer's Bargain Power (in Islamic Perspective). *Procedia-Social Behavioral Sciences*. 211: 455-460.
- Badan Pusat Statistik. (2022). *Kecamatan Banjarsari Dalam Angka Tahun 2021*. Lebak : BPS Kabupaten Lebak.
- Kementrian Pertanian. (2016). Peraturan Kementrian Pertanian Nomor 67/PERMENTAN/SM.050/12/2016 Tentang Pembinaan Kelembagaan Petani.
- Machmud, Amir. (2016). *Perekonomian Indonesia : Pasca Reformasi*. Jakarta : Erlangga.
- Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Republik Indonesia. (2003). *Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 Amandemen ke 4*.
- Mardikanto, dan Soebiato. (2013). *Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Dalam Perspektif Kebijakan Publik*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Moleong, Lexy. J. (2018). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Cetakan ke 38. Bandung : Penerbit Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Rita N. Suhaeti. (2014). *Arah Kebijakan Pasca Revisi Undang-Undang Perlindungan dan Pemberdayaan Petani*. Bogor : Pusat Sosial Ekonomi dan Kebijakan Pertanian.
- Sakulele, Daniel. (2014). *Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Masyarakat Kecil di Era Otonomi Daerah*.
- Sarwono, Sarlito Wirawan. (2015). *Psikologi Sosial: Individu dan Teori-teori Psikologi Sosial*. Jakarta : PT. Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Soekanto, Soerjono. (2017). *Peranan Sosiologi Suatu Pengantar, Edisi Baru*. Jakarta : Rajawali Pers.
- Sugiyono. (2015). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung : Alfabeta.
- Suratiyah, K. (2015). *Ilmu Usaha Tani: Edisi revisi*. Jakarta : Penebar Swadaya.