

Integrated Fisheries Area: A Solution to Overcome the Poverty of Fishing Communities in Sendang Biru Village, Malang Regency

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Abstract— Malang regency has a natural potential in the form of coast lines and marine products. However, this potential has not been yet managed optimally and has not yet been able to improve the welfare of the fishing communities. The rate of poverty in Malang regency is still quite high and is dominated by the fishing communities, especially in Sendang Biru village. The existence of patron client relations among the fishing communities makes them difficult to develop and frees themselves from the poverty. The local government has made various efforts to reduce the poverty in this area. One of the latest policies carried out by the Malang regional government is the Integrated Fisheries Area. This is expected to improve the welfare of the fishing communities and frees themselves from the entanglement of client patron chains that ensnare them. Ironically, the policy is still top and down, and its usefulness to improve the people's welfare has not yet been seen obviously. The problem that will be studied in this research is how the implementation of Integrated Fisheries Area in Sendang Biru village is. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative by analyzing documents in the form of articles, news and scientific articles supported by relevant informants to support the data and arguments from the Integrated Fisheries Area.

Keyword: *Fishing communities, Integrated fisheries area, Poverty, patron-client*

I. INTRODUCTION

Malang Regency has a great potential on its marine resources. However, the great maritime potential does not guarantee the life of the people of Malang Regency to be more prosperous. The rate of the poverty in Malang Regency in 2017 was around 11% of the total population of 2.5 million [1]. Most of the poor people work as the fishermen who rely on catching the fish on the sea to fulfil their needs. This condition is also experienced by coastal communities in other regions that still have low welfare level [2] [3].

The problem on the low level of welfare of the fishing communities is caused by some complex factors, such as seasonal fluctuations, limited human resources, access

capital, fish trading network, and modernization on the fish trading methods [4]. The development of fishing communities from year to year is somewhat stagnant with income and expenditure, and credit interest which makes them difficult to escape from the poverty. In order to fulfill the daily needs, they also do other jobs outside fishing activities [5]. In addition, another problem that often haunts the fishing communities is the entanglement of the patron client circle. Patron client relation is an unbalanced relationship where one party clearly has a higher position than another [6].

Various efforts to reduce the poverty have been made by various parties, such as the local government. The government policies that have been implemented to reduce the poverty rate in the coastal communities include the provision of capital subsidies that can increase the profits of the fishermen [7]. The fisheries modernization (*blue revolution*) has also been promoted by the government since 25 years ago by intensifying economic capital in the fishing communities. However, this modernization policy does not lead to any substantive progress [4]. There is also a CO-Fish program that has been formulated to increase the income of the fishing communities [8]. Besides, some strategies and efforts to maintain the life in the form of diversification in each fisheries business field have also been made.

The East Java marine fisheries resource for the north coast line including the area of 65,537 km² has a sustainable potential of 214,970.8 tons (East Java Fisheries and Marine Service, 2006). Malang Regency is one of the districts in East Java that has abundant marine potential [9]. One of the biggest potentials of this resource is located in Sendang Biru region which is the largest tuna fish production area in Indonesia [10]. In connection with the abundant fishery potential in Malang Indonesia from its periphery by strengthening regions and villages within the framework of a unitary state [11].

The policy adopted by the KKP together with the Malang regional government involves various parties to develop and to make Sendang Biru as an Integrated Fisheries Area. This Integrated Fisheries Area was launched in 2015 with various facilities being developed

until nowadays [12]. Briefly, an integrated fishery area is a selling and fishery, and fish processing activities centered on the same area. However, the policy is still top-down which may not necessarily suit the needs and potential of the local communities. This article aims to examine the implementation and effectiveness of the Integrated Fisheries Area policy in Sendang Biru village of Malang Regency.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach to examine deeply the implementation and effectiveness of integrated fisheries area development to alleviate the poverty in the fishing communities of Sendang Biru village, Malang Regency. The data collection techniques used were interviews, observation, and documentation. The interviews were conducted with several fishermen in Sendang Biru village by asking some questions about the impacts of the implementation of Integrated Fisheries Area. In addition, observations were made on the implementation of integrated fisheries areas which included physical buildings in the form of fish storage warehouses and ice blocks. The documentation was obtained from books that were relevant to the topics of the research, scientific works, news, and articles in various journals.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Patron-Client Circle of Sendang Biru Fisherman

The fishermen also establish social networks by forming interactions with other fishermen, buyers, middlemen, and even also with their employers. Many interactions that occur lead to form patron-client relations between the fishermen and their employers. The part that is called as a patron is those who have position as the employers, while the fishermen are included as the client. The patrons and clients depend on each other. The limited capital resources owned by the fishermen enforce them to owe or to lend the money from the employers.

The patron-client relations in Sendang Biru village still exist until now. In social stratification among the fishing communities, there is a structure, in which the top position is the employers, followed by middleman; and the lower stratum is placed by small fishermen. In addition, this stratification creates a patron client relationship between 'small' and 'big' fishermen, as well as the 'small' fishermen with the middlemen. The 'big' fishermen are known as having their own abundant capital. The 'small' ones who do not have boats usually look for fish by taking part in a fishing boat (of the 'big' fishermen). The employers facilitate the need for ships and crew ('small' fishermen) who are sailing to catch the fish. The leasing of the boats charged to the fishermen requires them to reduce the income earned [13]. This is similar to the conditions in the Sendang Biru. The fish caught is given to the employers, and the remaining is given among the crew members. The people in Sendang Biru sell their fish directly to the consumers, while the

'small' fishermen (subordinates) sometimes sell it themselves, or sell it to the employers and middlemen.

It is different with the 'small' fishermen who have boats but having less capital. They usually lend money as the capital from the middlemen. This loan is replaced with the fish they get. The high number of middlemen does not make it difficult for the 'small' fishermen to lend the capital and to sell their fish, when they do not get capital from one of the middlemen. The middlemen often lend the money for the capital and buy the fish from the fishermen who are already known by them. This will facilitate the fishermen and middlemen in bargaining the price of fish obtained.

Although the patron-client relation is considered as a traditional network, it can function to unite non-relative individuals and as a means of creating a vertical integration [14]. As the patron-client relation in the fishing communities in Sendang Biru, they also need each other. The fishermen really need help and support from the employers and middlemen in fulfilling their daily needs.



Figure 1: Patron-Client Relation of Sendang Biru Fisherman

Exchanges done by the employers, 'small' fishermen and middlemen can be seen in basic subsistence livelihoods, subsistence crisis guarantee, protection, and collective patron services that can help the people in general. In reality, the fishermen interact and depend on the employers in the capital fulfillment. The employers provide capital and support to the fishermen. This continuous assistance and support make the fishermen feel afraid if they want to oppose their employers. Even a lot of debt they have made makes them have to be in a circle of endless debt.

B. Implementation of Integrated Fisheries Area

The poverty that befalls the fishing communities does not occur without any causes. The high income uncertainty greatly affects the level of welfare and inequality that occurs in the communities. Abundant potential nearby should be able to improve the economics income and welfare of the fishermen communities, but in facts, it is not. The fishermen have difficulty to develop, especially related to the consumption and distribution patterns [15]. The employers and middlemen are those who are able to help them in getting capital for the 'small' fishermen in Sendang Biru. This difficulty and dependency make the 'small' fishermen are always placed in the lower level of the community structure and tend to experience the poverty.

The Integrated Fisheries Area is an effort carried out by KKP and Malang Regency Government to make the local people to be more empowered and can change the

mindset of the fishing communities not to always depend on the patrons which can make them difficult to develop.

Establishing an integrated fisheries area requires support and cooperation from various parties. The parties involved in the development of an integrated fisheries area include the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, OJK-KKP, and PLN Malang. So far, it has been realized the construction of simple rental apartments that provides 124 rooms by cooperating with the Ministry of Public Works and Housing. In addition, cold storage and ice factories have also been built to help preserve the fresh fish caught by the fishermen [12].

Even so, if the existing development progress is reviewed carefully, it has not yet been very beneficial for the fishermen who are trying to improve their welfare. It was proven that in 2017, a rental flat and cold storage was built which was quite far from Sendang Biru village. Thus, the fishermen still use traditional fish preservation methods. Even if the harvest season arrives, the demand for ice blocks reaches 200,000 tons / day which takes place in April-December throughout the year [12]. Currently, the government has built up the fish storage warehouse equipped with cooling tools, so that the fish will remain fresh and not stale or decayed. Thus, it will help the fishermen during the 'dry' season to keep them productive.

Ironically, the development of this integrated fisheries area is not widely known by Sendang Biru fishermen. Based on a survey conducted since August 2018 on Sendang Biru fishermen, it is shown that 8 out of 10 fishermen did not know about the development of this integrated area. They only know that there are market renovation and southern ring line (JLS) construction which makes them easy to sell the fish. Every day those who sell the fish in the Sendang Biru fishery market must pay Rp. 8,000. The facilities that they get are market cleaners and parking attendants. This market has been established since 7 months ago, and makes them to have a decent place to sell the fish. In addition, the construction of the market, supported by easier accessibility with the presence of JLS has resulted in increased income. This increase in income is balanced with the increase in the selling price of the fish. Although the selling price they offer is different than before, the buyers actually still come to Sendang Biru to buy the fish directly from the fishermen. Besides being profitable in increasing income, the market and JLS constructions successfully invite heterogeneous buyers from various regions.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, along with the local government of Malang Regency as well various related parties should work together to apply the concept of this integrated fisheries area effectively. So far, many efforts have been made to implement an integrated fisheries area by building a flat consisting of 124 rooms, and cold storage. However, these buildings' location is quite far from the target in Sendang Biru. The majority of the fishing communities are not aware of the

existence of such program. They only know that there are construction of southern ring line (JLS), and market renovation that can add income to the fishing communities. This proves the existence of top-down development that has not been yet maximally and effectively empowered. The fishing communities are still dependent on the patron-client relation, even though this program has been established. In addition, if it is examined more deeply in the integrated fisheries area development program, this has a positive effect on the fish warehouse built by the government. Therefore, with the helplessness of the Sendang Biru fishing communities in performing various other works, it does not make them have to leave their main job as the fishermen. They can continue to sell fish that has been stored in the new warehouse.

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