

# Transforming Capacity of the Farmer Community in Improving Paddy Yields through the Empowerment of Gapoktan Program in Semangga District

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**Abstract**—Empowering farmers have an important aspect in realizing the independence of society. To accomplish this, it can be done through the capacity transformation for farmer groups (Gapoktan) as a forum to empower farmers in conducting agricultural activities. The purpose of this research is to change the capacitance for the rice farming community through the gapoktan empowerment program to increase rice yields. The method of research used is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data collection techniques are observations, interviews, and documentation. Analysis of technical data, data reduction, data presentation, and concluding. The results showed that the process of empowerment of gapoktan program in Semangga District does not run optimally, can be seen in terms of government empowerment program that has not been implemented continuously, and the presence of PPL officers rarely find that making it difficult for rice farmers to consult when there are problems related to agriculture. This needs to be done transforming the capacity to improve the community's ability to manage agricultural land. For the farmer group of gapoktan aspect of Semangga District that there are four programs created but in the process of implementation, not all programs are implemented in full including replanting program that is a program to support activities crops that can help increase farmer harvest but this program is not done by farmer groups. It shows no consistency in the implementation of the program created because what is programmed does not correspond to what is implemented and when viewed in terms of the planning of the existing program link between one program with another program.

**Keywords:** *capasitas, empowerment, farmer groups, agricultural products*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Economic development in Indonesia is centered on agriculture because agriculture has an important role in the structure of national economic development. Economics is a science that learns about how people meet the needs of their lives, whether primary, Sekunders and tertiary [1]. Through the increase of food resources agriculture in the economy of a nation can be seen from the magnitude of the percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from the agricultural field of the nation. The greater contribution of the agricultural field

to its GDP then the country is still classified or including agrarian country, likewise also if the contribution of agriculture to GDP percentage is small then the country is called the country of industry.

In rural communities the agricultural sector plays a very important role because it is the source of living the life of rural people. The availability of human resources that want and able to manage in the field of agriculture in the countryside is still widely met because agriculture is the main place of the family work field in the countryside. In 2017 Indonesians working in agriculture as many as 39.68 million people or 31.86 percent of the population of 124.54 million. Farmer groups organizations can be used as a place to discuss farmers to solve various problems that they face and able to find ways to solve problems with the government through the training as needed farmers. The farmer group also provides information for the farmers and conveys through the group approach so that by joining the farmer group, farmers can give an important role in the increase of rice harvest from farmers. Activities and problems in trying to farming can be done through the group together.

With the increase of empowerment for farmers, farmers will be able to improve their living standards and improve their health quality and become a production barn for food security in addition to the power of empowerment dynamism able to improve the utilization of the agricultural environment, to deny the productivity of crop yields, able to negotiate with the parties partners and doing the marketing activities of crops. According to the opinion [2] human resources development is a fundamental thing of national development.

Semangga District is one of the districts in which some people work as farmers. The potential of natural resources is very rich. The area is largely the development of potential villages aimed at agricultural development. In support of rice farmer business, farmer groups required. The existence of farmer group is formed based on the similarity of rice farmers ' purpose in efforts to increase their rice harvest to fulfill their daily life needs.

Shardlow [3] that a sense of empowerment, in essence, discusses how individuals, groups, or communications are

trying to control their own lives and strive to shape the future according to their wishes. farmer group program that will be shortened to the combined farmer group every start of the season has always held a meeting for the formulation of a new plan for the needs of the first column (RDKK) at the beginning of the planting season and simultaneously also with a discussion of gadu season preparation (the season is rice harvest in the dry season). Existing farmer groups have four programs namely breeding, planting, counseling and eradication of disease pests.

Based on initial observation and referring to the results of previous research, the problems that occur related to the empowerment of rice farming community in Semangga District, among others, the training that is given is not sustainable, programs that have been made by the government through the ministry of agriculture does not run to the fullest because the program is no continuation such as field school, gapoktan which in the form is not well optimized as part of the container for cooperation between rice farmers, lack of cooperation between the farmer group of communities prefer to work individually and have not had any equitable relief from the government for the farmer group.

This is evident from the capacity development of rice farmers through a large school program, but this fieldschool activities are not sustainable and there is no government commitment in running a program. Organizing the activities of the community of farmers has been formed in the farmer group, but the group is not functioning properly because the farmers more work individually.

Therefore, the transformation of capacity as a consequence pursued in improving the ability of the rice farmer community through farmer groups. Based on the opinion [4] that capacity is the optimum production ability level of a facility is usually expressed as the number of outputs at a certain time. Capacity is the level of the production capability of a facility usually expressed in the number of output volumes per time [5].

Transforming capacity for communities aims to self-reliance for rice farming communities. Community empowerment efforts increase the ability of people or groups of weakly related information access to resources, participation or involvement in development, holding the meeting the answers of the parties that affect their lives, and the ability to Make decisions with local institution support, [6]. Empowerment is a series of activities to strengthen and or optimize the empowerment (in the sense of capability and or competitive advantage) of weak groups in society including poverty individuals [7].

In [8] on the protection of farmers ' empowerment in article 1, Chapter 1 says that empowering farmers is all efforts to improve farmers ' ability to implement better farming efforts through education and training, counseling and mentoring, developing systems and marketing means of harvesting, consumer and the breadth of agricultural land, ease of access to agricultural sciences, technology and information, and institutional strengthening of farmers.

According to [8] one important strategy in development is the importance of empowering the community. Empowerment in the community is a very vital force, the power in question can be seen from the physical aspects, materials, economic aspects and income. Institutional aspects

grow individual strengths in the form of containers/groups, the power of cooperation, intellectual strength and the power of joint commitment to adhere and apply the principles of empowerment. The important meaning of community empowerment is to create independence so that people can understand and apply in the form of various development activities. Empowerment is considered important in improving the living standards, welfare, and economic development of the community.

The economic empowerment of the community aims to create the independence of the community in the economic outcomes to become more productive. Empowerment is essentially the creation of an atmosphere that allows the potential of society to thrive. Therefore, the power of society should be excavated and then developed. According to [9] it reveals that the essence of empowerment is three things, namely development (enabling), strengthening potency or power (empowering), creation of independence.

In support of the implementation of the Empowerment program, it is necessary to set the market mechanism to help the farmers in marketing the agricultural products. Government or related agencies prepare a means of marketing crops for the community so that the rice harvest can be marketed to the fullest by farmers. As the flow of products through physically and economically through traders to consumers involving many activities to] increase the value of products that move through a marketing system [10].

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research used in this study is a qualitative study with a description approach in the form of reviewing phenomena or events, people, objects, aimed at understanding social phenomena from an angle or perspective of participation. Participation is a person who is interviewed, observable, asked to give data, opinions, thoughts, and perception. In this research the authors conduct data collection by interacting with the object in a thorough manner. Analytical techniques are done in a qualitative descriptive. In conducting analysis of research data refers to several phases consisting of: data reduction, data presentation, in the final stage is the withdrawal of conclusions or conclusion drawing/ verification to look for explanations patterns. The withdrawal of the conclusion is done carefully by verifying the form of re-review in the field so that the data can be tested in validation.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Farmer groups are formed by the awareness of the farmers without compulsion. Farmer group wants to the realization of good farming, optimal farming effort can be done with gapoktan program so that the farmer group has the same view. In the effort to improve the rice result of the community can be done through the empowerment of farmer programs ranging from nursery, planting, counseling and eradication of disease pests.

### A. Seeding

Efforts to increase rice production can be increased through seedlings. Seedlings are the most important phase in the rice breeding process need serious attention. According to [11] nursery is the provision of seedlings that are

appropriate varietal and healthy seedlings. Mistakes in the use of seedlings will have an impact on the lack of the growth of rice plants that ultimately affect the decline in crop yields. The results of the research found that in the process of breeding the community did not get assistance from the government. The community prepares its seedlings by storing past crops for the upcoming planting season. Semangga District farmers expect for the planting season in the future the government can pay more attention by providing education and training in the breeding process so that the crops of Semangga District farmers can be increased from previous years. Superior seeds are easy plants that have superior properties that can demonstrate the original nature of its parent and have a high economic value, and resistant to pests and diseases [12].

In the process of breeding the farmers tried themselves without interference from the government. Seedlings are very influential for the harvest if the seedlings are planted good quality, the results obtained by the farmer's increase and vice versa if the seedlings are seedlings are poor quality, the results obtained by the farmers do not because there are no growing seeds. Seedlings are very influential in the crop yields therefore farmers expect the future of the government can provide seeds for farmers, because the seeds provided by the government are a seed that is good quality compared to the seeds that Prepared by the farmers themselves.

Community empowerment is closely related to farmer groups because the empowerment of farmer group activities can grow through construction and mentoring of farmer groups. The empowerment of farmer groups can increase the productivity of crops, good seedlings, regular fertilization and the way of a good harvest. Empowerment in the farmer group aims to form individuals and groups to become more independent in thinking, acting and deciding and doing something that is deemed appropriate to achieve solving the problems encountered in the farmer group.

### *B. Planting*

Rice planting is a crop activity or crop seed for rice production, planting is placing planting materials seed/seedlings on rice fields that have previously been prepared and planted with a certain distance. The purpose of planting to obtain maximum results in the production of rice crops, for that the farmers are required to take care of rice crops with healthy and fertile to get the results by the expectations of the farmers. [13] about the crop cultivation system article 29 reads: (1) Harvest is the result of a collection of crops. (2) Activities as referred to in paragraph (1), are intended to obtain optimal results by suppressing of results and ensuring the fulfillment of quality loss and damage standards. (3) To achieve the objectives referred to in paragraph (2), the harvest shall be made on time, appropriate circumstances, appropriate, and appropriate means. (4) In the implementation of the harvest as referred to in paragraph (3), must be prevented arising from the loss of society and/or damage to natural resources and/or environment.

In the process of empowerment then needed a meeting mechanism between gapoktan, PPL and farmer groups. So that with the use of gapoktan as a combined farmer group, gapoktan members can be empowered because of the group, often there are activities exchange information, discussion, cooperation, exchange the experience so that Knowledge and

way of thinking farmers to be dynamic is not static, gapoktan members are also better able to receive innovations, for example, able to receive superior seeds that can produce a more abundant rice, [14]. The planting process done by the farmer group of Semangga District has been relying on the experience and knowledge that the farmers have. Farmers should get interference from the government in the process of planting so that production yields can be increased.

### *C. Security Counseling*

Understanding of the counseling is the activity of replanting empty parts due to the pest of rice crops or former seedlings that died/damaged until the amount of rice crops are planted. Replacement of the dead rice plants as soon as possible with the new seedlings do not pass a week after planting. Safe counseling is done at seven days after planting (HST) when the seed is determined [14].

The results of the research found that the rice planting process that is dead/attacked by pests is not done by the farmers, because the cultivation system of Semangga District farmers use a direct seed sprinkler system (Tabela). Farmers do not conduct the counseling process. Because of the lack of education and mentoring provided by the government and related agencies rice farming so that the farmers are still not optimal in conducting the rice counseling process. This is a factor of the decline of crops obtained from farmers because it does not carry out counseling on rice seedlings that die/infected with pests.

One of the declining factors of rice harvest because the farmers of Semangga district did not perform the process of counseling on rice seedlings that die/attacked rice crops so that the rice plants that grow is not a mass. Farmers desperately need mentoring and education from the related service in managing rice farming. To increase human resources from the farmers of Semangga District, it is necessary to pay attention from the government and related agencies of rice farming, so that the rice production of the farmers can increase by what the farmers expect.

The attitude of less commitment from various parties in purposes community empowerment is a separate obstacle in creating the independence of the people's lives of rice farming. This is in line with the opinions [15] that the value of commitment and involvement of all parties from the farmer group, village government, PPL, and also the local government in implementing a program is a separate indicator in the success of a program.

### *D. Eradication of disease pests*

Pests are animals that interfere with or damage crops so that the growth and development of plants are disturbed. Pests can damage crops directly or indirectly. Disturbance or pest attack can occur during seed, seeding, harvesting, to warehouse storage. Crop pests and diseases can cause losses such as reducing crop production, reducing crop quality, and increasing production costs due to the cost of eradication of pests,[16].

The farmers in Semangga District in the event of the pest of rice crops are trying themselves without the assistance of the government. Based on the results of interviews above that for the help of medicines in dealing with rice pest attacks there is no government assistance. People buy their medicines by using their own money. For assistance there is

a PPL officer in Semangga District but the mentoring is done not run routine and give an uneven mentoring so that only a few people and some groups are getting mentoring. The rest of their efforts with the knowledge and abilities they possess. Plant maintenance efforts through pest and disease control can be implemented with integrated covering the control strategy of various components that support each other with existing technical indicators.

In the process of pest control of the farmers of Semangga district as long as it strives independently, the mentoring of PPL is there but not all farmers get mentoring. The factor of the decline of rice production is one of the mentoring made by PPL does not maximum done so that it affects the production of rice. Farmers hope that the planting season in front of PPL can further improve the performance of their work in conducting mentoring to the farmers so that the rice production can increase.

The process of agricultural work in Semangga district, that the farmers who belong to the gapoktan group has programs ranging from breeding, planting, counseling and eradicating rice pest but the program does not run optimally. Programs that have been made are not all carried out in the process of rice farming among them is the extension program, rice Farmers Semangga District does not perform the process of counseling on rice seedlings that die/infected rice crop pests so that the rice crops grow uneven because there are seeds that do not grow/die. It is the cause of rice harvest from Semangga District. This is in line with the opinion of [17] the growth and development of the farmer group is conducted through the empowerment of farmers to change the farmer's mindset to improve the plant and increase the ability of the farmer group in carrying out its function.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis of the discussion, it can be concluded that the programs made from this gapoktan as a form of the agricultural development program is already good according to the conditions and occupations of the farmers, but some programs not done in the implementation process, among others, the extension program is a program made from gapoktan through mutual agreement. As a form of the program where tabel planting system when done occurs rice seedlings that do not grow than through this counseling can replace the rice seedlings that are damaged/dead. But the fact that happened in the field of farmers in Semangga district did not perform the process of rice counseling, resulting in low yields. The target of the gapoktan program there are four programs but the program not run there are some programs that are not run by gapoktan, there is no complete commitment from gapoktan in increasing the rice harvest resulting in the low rice harvest community.

Empowerment of the rice farmer community through the gapoktan program of Semangga District does not run optimally due to low level of community education, the mentoring does not go well and the work process of farmers Semangga District is more experience and ability and to operate an uncomprehensive system of gapoktan program work.

As a logical consequence in the efforts to increase the income of rice farming communities in Semangga District, it

is necessary that the empowerment of farmers groups through the transformation of rice farming community capacity. It aims to improve the ability of the community of rice farmers to manage the agricultural land of cera good to produce rice productivity in realizing food independence for the community. The top-level transformation of the rice farming community is believed to be a strategy for developing community skills. The process of transforming capacity is carried out through education and training and ongoing mentoring for the community to be more professes in the management of agricultural land where a mixture of and education given to the community.

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