



Transfer of Knowledge to Farmer Group Cooperative Through Training as an Effort to Empowerment Rural Communities

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Abstract. Community empowerment is essential in building human resources. Human resource development in rural areas can be done through community empowerment, such as Farmer Group Cooperatives (FGC). Farmer Group Cooperatives are an institutional development of Farmer Group Associations (FGA) that wish to expand and develop their business units. The main problems farmer group cooperatives face include limited capital, low knowledge, understanding, and skills of members and administrators, stagnation of the cooperative management system, needing a cooperative legal entity, and many passive members. The objectives of this research are 1) to improve the limited knowledge and understanding of cooperative administrators and members and 2). Improve the management system of the institution (Institutional Management). The research method used was training and mentoring. The results of the activities show that the training activities have had a positive impact on the transfer of knowledge in the field of cooperative management. The effect can be seen from the evaluation results and the performance of the cooperative's governance, which is getting better; the knowledge of the management and members has increased. In addition, there is a spirit of transmitting knowledge to all FGA members.

Keywords: Cooperation Management, Empowerment, Farmer Group Cooperation, Transfer Knowledge, Community, Training, Consultation.

1 Introduction

Empowerment transfers positive energy to create empowerment and independence (Firman, 2021). Empowerment programs are critical because they can strengthen weak communities, give them power and knowledge, and help them become independent in carrying out tasks in their lives (Suharto, 2014). The community needs to be empowered. The aim is to develop its potential through stimuli and awareness of

changes that empower and have the ability to improve socio-economic life (Endah, 2020). The empowerment program is an effort to strengthen communities and community institutions to advance and become independent (Setiawati & Rozinah, 2020), including village community empowerment.

Ideally, effective village community empowerment should be carried out sustainably to achieve appropriate and maximized outputs. This is important considering that the average village community's level of ability and knowledge could be more robust and that the level of participation could be higher. Thus, discontinued programs cause failure, and empowerment is not carried out optimally (Amri & Ferizko, 2020) due to the many community problems that still need to be resolved (Melynda Sari et al., 2022). Therefore, this empowerment effort must be carried out by increasing community participation in empowerment programs such as increasing skills and sustainable assistance (Widiyanto et al., 2021). So that in the long run, if the empowerment program is carried out sustainably, this community empowerment will be able to build human resources because community empowerment is a crucial element for community development (Martin & Njenga, 2022), especially at the rural level.

Therefore, efforts to empower rural communities are aimed at instilling an awareness of the importance of empowerment so that the level of community participation is stimulating (Amri & Ferizko, 2020) because, in some places, the level of community involvement in empowerment programs has been able and become an alternative approach to development in the village (Melynda Sari et al., 2022).

A village community or a group of village communities who are members of an association cannot immediately be established, so it needs treatment to empower. One is the Farmer Group Cooperative (FGC) empowerment program, which also requires treatment and attention to be encouraged to become empowered farmers. In 2022, through the infiltration of community service programs, researchers have initiated and motivated people who are members of the Farmer Group Cooperative to be empowered and develop the functions of farmer groups so that they become instruments and media in empowering farmers. Currently, in April 2024, the number of FGC members has reached 105 active members out of 665 FGA members (Gapoktan, 2022), meaning that there are still many farmer group members who have yet to join or actively become FGC members due to

From 2012 to 2024, the Sokalelah village FGC received direct assistance from researchers every three months. This is a form of responsibility for the sustainability of the program that has been produced in the village, with great hope that this FGC can live, survive, and run well. In 2019-2021, the mentoring activities were stopped due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, all farmer group members and FGC members must be given a comprehensive understanding that FGC can increase its role and ability to become a solid financial institution (financing) for its members by improving the organization's performance and management. The key to community-based village community empowerment is the active participation of local communities in thematic activities developed in the village (Firman, 2021). In reality, many abdimas activities have improved the abilities and knowledge of partners (AS & Arief, 2021).

In the next journey, based on the results of development observations from 2018 to 2023, this FGC experienced various problems and needed help to develop effectively. The issues of this FGC consist of multiple factors, including 1). Limited capital, 2).

Low knowledge, understanding and skills of members and administrators, 3). The cooperative management system has stagnated, 4). Financial institutions need to be willing to provide capital loans, 5). We do not have an official cooperative legal entity; 6). Passive members and others.

Based on these problems, the objectives of this activity are: 1). Increase the knowledge and understanding of administrators and members, and 2). Improve the management system of the institution (Institutional Management), which needs to be better coordinated and organized so that many internal conflicts arise.

2 **Methode**

The method used in this activity is training and mentoring because it is proven that training benefits individuals and organizations (Cahya et al., 2021). Training is conducted through material presentation (tutor), discussion, and practice. Assistance is carried out by periodic visits and opening consultation lines both online and offline.

The stages of the activity are as follows: 1). Preparation stage, which consists of: a). Observation, problem identification, and program preparation, and b). Coordinate activity plans with FGC and related parties. 2). The implementation stage includes: a). Pree-test, b). Tutorial, c). Discussion, d). Practice, and e). Post-test. 3). The final stages of this activity are: a). To determine the effectiveness of the activities carried out periodically, an evaluation of FGC activities will be conducted; b)—regular mentoring every three months.

3 **Result and Discussion**

The target subject of empowerment in this activity is the Farmer Group Cooperative (FGC) “Subur Makmur”, located in Sokalelah Village, Kadur District, Pamekasan Regency. This farmer group cooperative has been running for 15 years. FGC Subur Makmur has helped many people, especially members of FGC. In its development, this FGC does not experience a few problems. So, it is necessary to transfer knowledge related to good FGC management. So, in 2024, a training and mentoring activity was carried out for all FGC administrators and members at the FGC secretariat in Sokalelah Village, Kadur District, Pamekasan Regency. The activities that have been carried out are as in the following table:

Table 1. Schedule Activity

N o	Description	Period
1	Further observation	January 26, 2024
2	Coordination with FGC and related partie	February 23, 2024
3	Training Implementation	April 05, 2024
4	Evaluation and further assistance	April 2024-December 2024

3.1 Observation Activities.

Observation activities were carried out on January 26, 2024. They were carried out to identify problems and prepare further programs. The results of the observations obtained various problems that are still experienced by FGC.



Image 1: Rural Observation

Observations were carried out, and discussions were held about various problems FGC faced. The discussion results were mapped and obtained several main issues: 1) Limited Capital, 2). Low knowledge, understanding and skills of members and management, 3). The cooperative management system has stagnated, 4). The absence of financial institutions willing to provide capital loans, and 5). Not having an official cooperative legal entity, 6). Passive members. The six problems were discussed further, and a solution strategy was determined that could be handled by the management side based on the competence of the implementers. It was agreed that training and mentoring activities would be carried out continuously. The training and mentoring activities focused on the following points: 1). Limited knowledge and understanding of administrators and members, and 2). The institution's management system must be better coordinated and organized, resulting in many internal conflicts.

3.2 Coordination

After observing and preparing the implementation of the activity plan, the next stage is to coordinate the implementation plan.



Image 2: Coordination with FGC

On February 23, 2024, coordination was conducted with the FGC and related parties. In this coordination, a meeting was held with the FGC management and local village officials; during the meeting, a socialization of the activity plan was implemented to solve the problems faced by FGC. The meeting also agreed on the time and place for implementing the activities and was followed up through communication.

The training was conducted on April 05, 2024. The training was attended by 23 participants, including administrators, some FGC members, and some representatives of the village apparatus. The series of activities carried out include the following:

3.2.1 Pre test

The first step in this training is the pre-test. The pre-test was conducted to determine the participants' initial level of understanding before the resource person entered the material delivery activities. The pre-test model given is in the form of multiple-choice questions so that participants can only choose the correct answer according to their preferences.

Based on the pre-test results, it is known that out of 23 participants, or 100% of the answers to the pre-test, none of them are 100% correct; the average correct answer given by the participants is only 45%.



Image 3: Pre-test

3.2.2 Tutorial

This tutorial activity is filled with delivering training materials related to partner problems, namely:

1. Limited knowledge and understanding of administrators and members
2. The management system of the institution (Institutional Management) needs to be better coordinated and organized, resulting in many internal conflicts.

Based on these problems, the training materials provided are described as follows:

1. Technical material for strengthening cooperative capital sourced from members.
2. Cooperative material.
3. Administrative management material
4. Financial management/bookkeeping material
5. Financial recording application material

In implementing this activity, participants were explained the material classically. Participants were very enthusiastic about listening to the material presented by the mentors. The material was delivered interactively and occasionally interspersed with direct questions and answers, discussions and dissection of some instances. After having an initial understanding, participants were invited to practice. This practice is used to determine the participant's level of ability, knowledge, and skills regarding the material that has been obtained. In this practice, participants in groups participants are accompanied by students from the Management Department of Faculty of Economic and Business, Universitas Trunojoyo Madura. This practice activity is combined with tutorial activities, meaning that this activity is not separate or another part of the tutorial.

The obstacles in this training are FGC's level of understanding of accepting and implementing the training material, the level of school they go to, and their experience, which are some of the causes of their slow absorption of the material. So, the implementation team had to be really patient in providing direction and training.

3.2.3 Post test

A post-test is an instrument used to measure the trainees' knowledge level. In this post-test, the questions given are the same as those done during the pre-test because the pretest-posttest uses the same test to assess intra-individual changes that may be caused by the intervention (Zhengguo Gu et al., 2021) that has been carried out. The post-test results showed that most participants had understood the material's content. Statistically, 96% of the participants had a perfect post-test score of 90 on average.

Overall, the activity was carried out according to the agenda that had been planned at the beginning. In the implementation of the farmer group cooperative service program (FGC) in Sokalelah village, Kadur district, Pamekasan regency, many things have been obtained by the Sokalelah farmer group, including increasing community knowledge related to cooperatives so that they understand the importance of cooperatives in helping the community's economy. So that the impact of this knowledge can increase community resources in FGC "Subur Makmur". In addition to increasing community resources in FGC, they can also improve business capital through training and mentoring activities carried out by researchers.

At the end of the training, a discussion was held for follow-up plan activities; the results of the discussion at the end of the training, FGC hopes that the training is not

just once and hopes that there will be a follow-up in the form of assistance and that the tutor is willing if invited to provide more training for the development of the Sokalelah farmer group cooperative so that the Sokalelah farmer group cooperative can get out of the various obstacles faced so far. In addition, the management and members of the Farmer Group Cooperative (FGC) realize the importance of monitoring from experts in running the cooperative for the better and more developed.

FGC is very happy to feel helped by the activity because the problems above can be resolved easily with the training provided by researchers. FGC requested that this activity be sustainable in helping FGC's development.

3.2.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Consultation

As a form of sustainability of the research, periodic evaluation and mentoring will be carried out in April 2024-December 2024. This sustainability program is carried out through 2 mechanisms, namely:

1. Online Consultation

This activity was carried out to provide an opportunity for FGC to convey various obstacles faced in the field related to institutional organization and management and different matters to be consulted on. The consultation was carried out via cellphone via communication media (WA Group).

2. Offline Consultation

This activity is conducted directly face-to-face; the implementation team visits and helps evaluate the FGC journey and find solutions to the various obstacles.



Image 4: Consultation

The assistance is mainly related to institutional management, funding techniques, and legal entity management, such as 1) registration at the notary office and 2) registration of legal entities at the cooperative office.

4 Conclusion

Based on the activities that have been carried out, training activities on FGC have positively impacted the transfer of knowledge in the field of cooperative management. This positive impact can be seen from the evaluation results and the performance of collaborative governance, which is increasingly organized and orderly, and the knowledge of administrators and members has increased. In addition, there is enthusiasm for passing on the understanding of the importance of joining this FGC to all members of the FGA. All administrators and members hope there will still be regular training and mentoring from researchers.

Acknowledgments. To all colleague who have helped in this research process, thank you. To the research partners, relevant institutions involved in data collection and informants who have been willing to provide research information are thanked.

Disclosure of Interests. Our guarantee that there is no conflict of interest in this study. Our have not accepted external funding that could potentially influence the integrity of the research findings and their publication.

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