

## Analysis of the Role of Farmer Groups in Increasing the Income of the Community of Jumateguh Village, Bunturaja District

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain the role of farmer groups in increasing the income of the people of Jumateguh Village, Banturaja District. The qualitative approach using descriptive methods and data collection techniques including observation, interviews, and documentation. The results shows there are three roles of farmer groups in the Jumateguh village community, namely as a forum for discussion for group members in solving a problem by finding solutions together through discussion forums, secondly as a forum for information for group members in obtaining information from extension agents regarding how to choosing good/superior plant seeds, as well as handling pests and diseases that attack plants, and the third as a production unit, namely providing production facilities and infrastructure such as tanks for spraying pesticides and insecticides on plants and tripe machines to clean grass that disturbs plants.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic country and there are many natural resources available, ranging from natural beauty that can be used as tourist attractions to natural wealth that can be processed into its own energy source, one of which comes from the agricultural sector. Currently, in Indonesia the sector that has the most number of jobs is agriculture, so that the agricultural sector has a major influence in supporting and improving the Indonesian economy. Because economic activity is essentially a process of managing factors of production in order to produce an output, resulting in a flow of remuneration from the factors of production that exist in society. Due to being the owners of the factors of production, people can generate higher incomes to help economic growth. Farmer groups are a communication organization between farmers that have existed for a long time in Indonesia. Theoretically, farmer groups can be defined as a collection of several farmers who have common interests and goals in conducting farming that have an informal attachment. The Ministry of Agriculture (2013) defines that farmer groups are groups of farmers/breeders/planters formed due to similarities in environmental conditions and the existence of friendly relations between group members in improving their farming business. Farmers form farmer groups with the aim of solving agricultural problems together and improving the economy, and these institutions are non-formal and are based on shared awareness and the principle of kinship.

Farmer groups are defined as a collection of farmer or farmer people, and are bound informally in a group area on the basis of harmony and common needs and are under the influence and leadership of a farmer contact and are formed of adult farmers, men and women, old and young (Mardikanto, 1996; Riyadi, 2002). Farmer groups function as a vehicle for counselling and activating the activities of its members. Some farmer groups also have other activities, such as mutual cooperation, savings and loan businesses and work gatherings for farming activities (Abate et al, 2013; Haykal et al, 2022; Hermanto, 2007). Farmers group is a farmer institution that directly organizes farmers in developing their farming business. This collection of farmer groups exists practically, in addition to the function of farmer groups to be an important point for carrying out and translating the concept of farmers' rights into policies, strategies and programs that are appropriate in one whole unit and as a forum for transformation and development into operational steps. Farmer groups are important as a forum for fostering farmers who are members of it, so that they can facilitate agricultural development (Arsyad et al, 2018; Bulkis et al, 2018; Mosher, 1965; Toino et al, 2015; Sulaksana & Dwirayani, 2021).

Farmer groups were formed with the aim of increasing the knowledge and skills of farmers so that they could play a role in agricultural development. Farmers' activities in conducting farming can be said to be good if the productivity of farming increases continuously, resulting in an increase in income and improves the welfare of farmers and their families (Dumbrell, et al, 2016; Fredericks, et al, 1980). Even so, it cannot be denied that there are still some people who think that the farmer groups that have been formed still do not have a role in increasing people's income, so that farmer groups are expected to be able to provide even better guidance from agricultural extension workers so that they can carry out their roles better. Farmer groups are basically non-formal organizations in rural areas with the following characteristics, including: (1) Know each other intimately and have a sense of trust among fellow group members; (2) There are similarities in principles in terms of interests and views on farming activities; (3) Have the duties and responsibilities of each member in accordance with the mutual agreement; (4) There is a common language and type of business, tradition and place of residence.

The growth of farmer groups can be seen from the existence of farmer groups that have been formed on the basis of common interests and goals in an area consisting of one village and hamlet or more, which has members consisting of 20-25 and according to environmental conditions and the type of community farming. Farmer groups in carrying out their activities, especially obtaining approval from all group members. The activities in question are: type of business, procuring facilities and infrastructure that can support increased agricultural productivity and manage post-harvest results properly and correctly. Farmer groups as a forum for information and cooperation between group members have a very important role in agricultural activities because farmer group members can solve all problems in farming together. Consequently, the development and empowerment of farmer groups must be carried out further so that they can develop properly.

Jumateguh Village is one of the villages in Bunturaja District, where the majority of the population works in the agricultural sector. The potential of the village of Jumateguh in agriculture is that rice and corn, both types of plants, can improve the economy of the people in the area. The community of Jumateguh Village has formed several farmer groups to cultivate these two types of plants. The formation of this farmer group aims to increase and be able to develop the ability of farmers so that they can increase the productivity of their farming activities to become better and more superior so that in the end the income of the people in the area can increase. As previously explain in background of the problems that have been described by the researchers, the researchers in this study formulated the formulation of the problem, namely: What is the role of farmer groups in increasing people's income in the village of Jumateguh, Bunturaja District?

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The research location was carried out in the village of Jumateguh, Bunturaja sub-district. This research was conducted on September 16-20 2022. The subjects in this study were the ladies and gentlemen of the Fridayeguh village farmer group, Bunturaja District. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods meaning that qualitative research is descriptive research that tends to use analysis where in qualitative research the theoretical basis is used as a guide so that the research focus is in accordance with the facts on the ground. Then the data collection techniques used including: (1) Observation is a technique or way of collecting data by making observations of ongoing activities (Sukmadinata, 2001). This technique requires observation from researchers either directly or indirectly to the object of research. Observations in this study were conducted to find out how the role of farmer groups in increasing the income of the people of Jumateguh Village, Banturaja District; (2) The interview is a conversation with a specific purpose between the two parties with the aim of knowing directly how the group's role in increasing income is still in Jumateguh Village, Ubunturaja District. In this study, researchers used a type of qualitative research by observing and interviewing. To make it easier to collect data, the researchers used additional research instruments in the form of documents from the heads of farmer groups and documentation in the form of pictures/photos when researchers conducted interviews. The length of time used for the interviews was 5 days starting from September 16-20 2022. The data that the researchers had obtained in the field, was analyzed including the relevant tools used in the research, so that the researchers could collect data, then the data that had been collected was analyzed back to the final conclusion.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Result

Siempat Nempu Bunturaja sub-district has 6 villages, one of which is the village of Jumateguh which is located 2 Km from the west of the sub-district of Bunturaja, which has a border to the north of Sibanban village, and to the east of Gurutuha village, to the south of Jumantuang village, and to the west by Laeparira village. Jumateguh Village consists of 4 hamlets, namely Jumateguh 1 Hamlet, Jumateguh 2 Hamlet, Jumateguh 3 Hamlet, and Jumateguh 4 Hamlet with a total area of  $\pm 16.5 \text{ KM}^2$ . Based on data from the profile of the village of Jumateguh, the population in the village of Jumateguh in 2021 is recorded at 930 people, with a male population of 336 people and a female population of 594 people. In addition to being Christian, the village of Jumateguh also has a Muslim community, but over time, there is only one religion and belief that is adhered to by the people of Jumateguh Village, namely Christianity. This is evidenced by the existence of two mosque buildings in the area of Jumateguh Village. Education in the village of Jumateguh can be said to be quite good, this can be seen from the existence of two Elementary School (SD) buildings and Early Childhood Education (PAUD) buildings.

The availability of large and fertile land can make various types of agricultural crops grow and can be developed. The agricultural sector is a sector that plays a very important role in improving the economy of the people in the village of Jumateguh, the availability of sufficient natural resources and large and fertile land is a supporting factor for the agricultural sector in improving the economy of the people of Jumateguh Village, where the majority of the people work as farmers with a population of  $\pm 850$  and only a few work in other fields such as teachers, offices, midwives and drivers. In the village of Jumateguh, several farmer groups have been formed for several types of plants. In this study, there were two farmer groups to be examined by researchers, namely the rice farmer group and the corn farmer group.

The following is the formation of farmer groups in the village of Jumateguh, Bunturaja District, including: (1) The rice farmer group was formed on November 3 2008 and was named Kapoktan farmer group with 25 members. The management of this collective advanced farmer group is following: Chairman (Piter Simamora), Secretary (Danner Purba), Treasurer (Rosdiana Purba); (2) The corn farmer group was formed on November 5 2008 and was named the Cinta Tani farmer group with 25 members. The administrators of the Cinta Tani Desa farmer group is following: Chairman (Sudi Purba), Secretary (Masda Situmorang), Treasurer (Saut Sigalingging).

**Table 1.** Income of the Kapoktan Farmers Group in 2021

Name	Land area (Ha)	Before (Rp)	After (Rp)
Jarekson	2,5	25.000,000	25.500,000-26.000,000
Jepri	1	10.000,000	10.000,000-11.000,000
Basar	1,5	15.000,000	15.500,000-16.000,000
Pasaribu	2,5	25.000,000	25.500,000-26.000,000
Purba	2,5	25.000,000	25.500,000-26.000,000
Panjaitan	2	20.000,000	20.500,000-21.000,000
Sihombing	2	20.000,000	20.500,000-21.000,000
Sitorus	2,5	25.000,000	25.500,000-26.000,000
Tampu	1	10.000,000	10.000,000-11.000,000

**Table 2.** Community Income of the Cinta Tani Farmers Group in 2021

Name	Land area (Ha)	Before (Rp)	After (Rp)
Simamora	1	10.000,000	10.000,000-11.000,000
Tambunan	1	10.000,000	10.000,000-11.000,000
Silalahi	2	20.000,000	20.500,000-21.000,000
Situmorang	2,5	25.000,000	25.500,000-26.000,000
Pakpahan	2	20.000,000	20.500,000-21.000,000
Lapu	1,5	15.000,000	15.500,000-16.000,000
Tanjung	2	20.000,000	20.500,000-21.000,000
Pandiangan	1	10.000,000	10.000,000-11.000,000
Pardosi	1	10.000,000	10.000,000-11.000,000

### 3.2. Discussion

Government has an efforts in agricultural development by forming new institutions such as farmer groups. There are several problems faced in improving the welfare and economy of the community, including how to do it to guide farmers so that they are willing and able to increase the production of their farming business. In addition, the government in increasing agricultural production is usually in the form of a farmer group where this farmer group is a group of farmers who have the same interest in agriculture. The formation of this farmer group aims to allow farmers to cooperate with one another so that agricultural activities can run more efficiently and face obstacles and challenges so that they can generate a lot of profits. With the formation of farmer groups, farmers jointly solve agricultural problems which previously could not be solved alone.

According to Minister of Agriculture (2013) Regulation no 82/Permentan/OT.140/8/2013 is mentioned concerning Guidelines for Forming Farmer Groups and Combined Farmer Groups, there are procedures for forming farmer groups, namely farmer groups consisting of a minimum of 20 members with the same vision and mission, coordinate with PPL in charge of the region. Furthermore, a meeting is held once a week to be exact every Thursday between all group members and the Agricultural Extension Officers in the Friday area to provide explanations related to agricultural institutions. After the farmer group was formed, the management was elected, and the secretariat of the farmer group was established by making an official report on the formation of the farmer group which was signed by the head of the selected farmer group and known by extension officers and the village head. Then, the extension worker inputted farmer group data into the ministry of agriculture database, namely the Agricultural Extension Management Information System. Farmer groups in carrying out an activity in accordance with what has been mutually agreed upon, as for the activities referred to such as the type of business, procurement of goods that support production facilities and managing post-harvest results. Guidance and empowerment of members of farmer groups is needed in order to develop more optimally.

Jumateguh Village is one of the villages in Bunturaja District which has several farmer groups including the Kapoktan farmer group for rice plants, the Cinta Tani farmer group for corn plants. Observation and interview activities have been carried out by the author on the objects in this study, namely the heads, administrators and the community members who are members of farmer groups, the results provide answers to the formulation of the problems

raised in this study. The data that has been obtained from observation and interviews is used to determine the role of farmer groups in increasing people's income in the village of Jumateguh, Bunturaja District.

The Role of Farmer Groups in Increasing Community Income in Jumateguh, Bunturaja District, including: (1) As a forum for discussion for group members. The group discussion is solving a problem by finding solutions together through meeting and discussion forums which also present extension agents in terms of plant maintenance such as farmer groups. Kapoktan group members are taught to match rice, provide fertilizer on time, and how to eradicate insects on target. The Cinta Tani farmer group together with the group members was taught about proper harvest and post-harvest handling. Before the corn is harvested, first check the corn kernels by applying a little pressure on the corn kernels using your finger, if there are no nail marks left, then the corn is ready to be harvested. Dry corn husks are also a sign to farmers that the corn is old and ready to be harvested. In the case of post-harvest, the members of the farmer group were told to immediately dry the corn that had been shelled with a machine using a drying mat such as a tarpaulin and to prevent the corn that had not yet dried from standing water so that the corn did not grow or become moldy. The length of time it takes to dry the corn depends on the weather, if the weather is always cloudy and raining then usually the drying process can reach 5-7, but if the weather is sunny then the corn that is drying in the sun can only dry 3-4 days; (2) As a forum for information for group members, That is getting information from extension workers regarding strategies for selecting good/superior plant seeds, as well as handling pests and diseases that attack plants; (3) As a production unit, Namely providing production facilities and infrastructure such as tanks for spraying pesticides and insecticides on plants and tripe machines to clean weeds that are disturbing the plants. The government in increasing agricultural production is usually in the form of a farmer group where this farmer group is a group of farmers who have the same interest in agriculture.

Strengthening farmer groups requires an effort that is not easy and requires quite a long time and has sufficient finances. Strategic policies in strengthening farmer groups are needed to strengthen the empowerment of farmer groups including: (1) Creating conducive conditions so as to minimize fights in the group; (2) Increase the creativity of group members so they can take advantage of available business and capital opportunities; (3) Help find problems in the group and solve these problems together through discussion so that these problems do not affect their farming; (4) Each member of the group is able to improve their ability to identify business potential in order to become a business unit that can guarantee market demand; (5) Motivating farmers to be willing and able to facilitate business capital by holding savings and loan activities.

The previous strategy can be implemented in several ways, including: (1) Provide guidance to all farmers to cooperate well with their group members in the economic field; (2) Increasing access to capital for farmers to manage, increasing the supply of farming products, and always increasing the results of farming activities so that people's income also increases; and (3) Conducting various training activities that have been specifically designed for farmer groups so as to improve the quality of their human resources.

Observations have also been made by researchers to find out what factors can hinder and support farmer groups in increasing the income of farmers who are members of farmer groups. The supporting factors are the assistance of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides from the government which are very important for farmer groups. As for the inhibiting factor for farmer groups in increasing people's income is the weather. Weather is one of the inhibiting factors for us farmers because bad weather will have an impact on plants, if the weather rains continuously it can cause plants to be submerged (Ofori et al, 2019; Wang et al, 2021). The

selling price of farmers to buyers can be a factor that can hinder and support farmer groups in Jumateguh village, Banturaja sub-district in increasing people's income. If the selling price is high, the amount of money received can increase whether or not the harvest is high, but if the price falls and the yield is small, the income from the sale of the crop will be very small. From the results obtained in this study, researchers can conclude that farmer groups in the village of Jumateguh, Bunturaja District, play a role in increasing the income of the people in the region.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it is known that there are three roles of farmer groups in the Jumateguh village community which is: (1) as a forum for discussion for group members in solving a problem by finding solutions together through discussion forums; (2) As a forum for information for group members in obtaining information from extension workers. Regarding how to choose good/superior plant seeds, as well as handling pests and diseases that attack plants, and the third as a production unit, namely providing production facilities and infrastructure such as tanks for spraying pesticides and insecticides on plants and tripe machines to clean up disturbing grass plant.

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