

**EMPOWERMENT OF SALT FARMERS THROUGH THE PEOPLE'S
SALT BUSINESS EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (PUGAR) IN
LEMBUNG VILLAGE, GALIS DISTRICT, PAMEKASAN REGENCY**

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ABSTRACT

The problem with salt farmers in Lembung Village is the income level of salt farmers and the lack of support from the government concerned in developing the empowerment of the salt industry. In addition, salt farmers have many difficulties such as capital, weather, fluctuating salt prices, income that does not meet their needs, and lack of support such as training to develop the salt industry. Even though the potential for salt in Pamekasan and especially in Lembung Village, Galis District is very large, it should be developed even better so that it can increase the income of salt farmers. The purpose of this study was to determine the Empowerment of Salt Farmers through the People's Salt Business Empowerment Program (PUGAR) in Lembung Village, Galis District. The theory used in this study uses the theory of Kieffer in Edi Suharto (2014) namely Enabling, Strengthening, Protecting, Supporting, and Maintaining. The reason for using this theory is because the implementation of the process and the achievement of empowerment goals are achieved through the application of empowerment from this theory. The type of research used in this research is qualitative research. Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews, and documents. The informants used in this study were 6 people, consisting of 2 people from salt farmers, 2 people from the Fisheries Service, and 2 people from actors/consumers. The analysis technique in this research is data collection, data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing/verification. Based on the research results, the Empowerment of Salt Farmers through the Salt Business Empowerment Program in Lembung Village is still not good, because the indicators of Possibility, Strengthening, Protection, Support, and Maintenance have not been fulfilled and are still not good. The government should, through the Fisheries Service, really empower the Salt Farmers of Lembung Village, considering its huge potential. In addition, the government through the

Department of Fisheries pays serious attention to farmers in fostering and assisting farmers in the process of their business continuity.

Keywords: *Empowerment, Salt Business, Lembung Village People*

A. PRELIMINARY

Fundamentally, the village is the lowest government organization at the district level which generally has full authority over the implementation of the main tasks and functions in carrying out and realizing certain goals. Therefore, each village is expected to be able to carry out and be responsible for the authority given by the local government based on applicable regulations. Village regulations are a requirement that must be fulfilled to run a better village household (Maulida, 2011).

Indonesia is known as a maritime country with enormous potential for marine resources, both biological and non-biological. One of the wealth of non-biological marine resources owned is salt production. Despite having large non-biological marine resources potential, ironically, Indonesia is still a fairly large salt importer. Based on data from the Ministry of Trade, the need for national salt in 2021 is recorded at 4,606,554 tons. Of this amount, 3,077,901 tons are import allocations for the industry. (Kontan, 2021). This salt import activity is motivated by the fact that local salt production has not been fully able to meet the national salt demand, which is only able to meet the need for consumption salt, while industrial salt is still very dependent on imports.

Salt production in Indonesia has been carried out by salt farmers and PT. Garam as the only State-Owned Enterprise (BUMN). Nationally, the area of land cultivated for salt production is 34,731 ha and only 20,089 ha are productive, of which 74.16% of the land is cultivated by salt farmers. Meanwhile, 60% of the national productive salt land area is located on Madura Island (consisting of Sampang, Pamekasan and Sumenep regencies) with an area of 16,421 ha of potential land and 11,625 ha of productive land. still not happy. The situation of salt farmers as in the life of coastal communities generally faces various problems that cause poverty. In general, they depend on the use of marine and coastal resources for their livelihoods, which require large investments and are highly dependent on the seasons. The climate and weather conditions are often unfriendly, the price mechanism and the salt market which tend not to favor salt farmers make this salt business shrouded in risk (Ihsannudin, 2012).

Empowerment is an effort to transform community growth as the real strength of society, to protect and fight for values and interests in the arena of all aspects of life. Empowerment has the meaning of increasing the ability or increasing the independence of the community. Community empowerment is a concept that represents a new paradigm in development that is people-centered, participatory, empowering, and sustainable (Christens, 2012). Community empowerment includes not only strengthening individuals but also social institutions. Kieffer in Firmansyah (2012) explains that empowerment includes three dimensions which include people's competence, sociopolitical ability, and participatory ability.

Anderson (2011) states that the empowerment process is carried out together. According to him, no literature states that the empowerment process occurs in a one-on-one relationship between social workers and clients in individual help settings. In various situations, empowerment strategies can be carried out individually, although in turn this strategy is still related to collectivity, in the sense of linking clients with other sources or systems outside themselves. In this context, empowerment can be done through three levels or dimensions of empowerment (empowerment setting), namely the macro level, micro-level, and the mazzo level.

Madura is an area in Indonesia that includes the largest salt producer because the land is very large, reaching 15,000 hectares of land (Sindonews, 2020). Pamekasan Regency is one of the districts in Madura. Pamekasan Regency itself in 2019 its salt production reached 125,000 tons, more than the target of 100 thousand tons. The area of salt ponds in Pamekasan Regency is currently 913.5 hectares, spread over three sub-districts, namely Galis, Pademawu and Tlanakan sub-districts.

In Galis sub-district, there are four villages that produce salt, namely Lembung, Polagan, Konang and Pandan villages, with an area of 458.6 hectares of salt ponds. In Pademawu District, the villages that produce salt are spread over eight villages, namely Dasuk Village, Bunder, East Pademawu, Tanjung, Padelegan, Majungan, Pegagan and Baddurih Villages with an area of 445,4 hectares of salt ponds. Meanwhile, in Tlanakan District, salt production is in three villages, namely Tlesah Village, Tlanakan and Branta Tinggi Village with a total salt pond area of 9.6 hectares. Of the 15 salt-producing villages spread across the three sub-districts, the village with the largest salt pond area is Lembung Village, Galis District, which is 245 hectares with total production in 2018 reaching 1,581 tons, while the least is Tlesah Village, Tlanakan District, namely 2.6 hectares with a total production of 33 tons. (antaranews, 2020).

As the main production actor who contributes greatly to national salt production, it turns out that the living conditions of salt farmers in general are still far from prosperous. The situation of salt farmers as in the life of coastal communities generally faces various problems that cause poverty. In general, they depend on the utilization of marine and coastal resources, which require large investments and are very dependent on the seasons (Widodo, 2011). Climate and weather conditions that are often unfriendly, price mechanisms and the salt market that tend not to favor salt farmers make salt farmers helpless.

Based on the results of the initial interviews, the income of salt farmers and the lack of support from the government concerned in developing the empowerment of the salt industry. In addition, salt farmers have many difficulties such as capital, weather, fluctuating salt prices, income that does not meet their needs, and lack of active assistance such as training to develop the salt industry. Even though the potential for salt in Pamekasan and especially in Lembung Village, Galis District is very large, it should be developed even better so that it can increase the income of salt farmers.

The need for high salt farmers should be able to get a decent income from the salt business. But in reality, the life of salt farmers in various areas, one of

which is Lembung Village, Galis District, is faced with a difficult and slumped situation. For the people of Lembung Village, Galis District, making salt is an important source of livelihood that is relied on during the dry season to meet their household, but the situation is not as expected. For example, a salt farmer who manages 1 plot with an area of 4 x 10 m, can produce 7-10 sacks in 7 days where the current price reaches Rp. 30.000/sack. So salt farmers get Rp. 15,000/sack (Arief, 2016). Looking at the amount of income received by Lembung Village farmers, it shows that the income they get is not enough to meet their daily needs for a year.

Various problems that occur require a variety of effective policies and programs. People's Salt Business Empowerment (PUGAR) is a program to improve the welfare and job opportunities of smallholder salt farmers and other people's salt business actors in supporting national salt self-sufficiency (Directorate General of Marine, Coastal, and Small Islands, 2012). PUGAR activities within the framework of the National Marine and Fisheries Independent Community Empowerment Program (PNPM Mandiri-KP) are carried out through the bottom-up stage, meaning that the community itself plans activities, implements and carries out monitoring and evaluation in accordance with the specified mechanism.

People's Salt Business Empowerment (PUGAR) is one of the strategic programs to empower salt self-sufficiency through production activities and improving the quality of people's salt, empowering salt farmers and increasing welfare by increasing the income of salt farmers (Directorate General, KP3K). The salt farmer group is one of the objects in this research because where a group or organization becomes an important source of power in empowerment. One of the means of empowering salt farmers is cooperatives (KUD) and farmer groups (Poktan) which are places for salt farmers to achieve their needs such as borrowing capital for their business, although these two institutions have not been realized properly (Widiarto, 2012).

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Empowerment

Community empowerment is a concept that represents a new paradigm in development that is people-centered, participatory, empowering, and sustainable (Christens, 2012). The process of community empowerment is an effort to improve, become independent and self-supporting of the community in accordance with its full and comprehensive potential in order to increase the dignity of the layers of society which in their current condition are unable to escape from inequality and underdevelopment.

Empowerment includes strengthening individual community members and their institutions. Instilling modern cultural values, such as hard work, frugality, openness, and accountability are part of the essence of this empowerment effort. There are 3 things that need to be considered in community empowerment, namely (1) this effort must be directed; (2) this program must include or even be targeted by the community; (3) use a group approach, because the community alone is difficult to solve the problems they face (Christens, 2012).

There are several experts who define empowerment based on the goals, processes and means of empowerment:

- a. Empowerment is development, strengthening potential or power, and strengthening independence (Kasim and Karim, 2011)
- b. Empowerment is a process where people become strong enough to participate in controlling events and institutions that affect their lives (Alfianti, 2014).
- c. Empowerment is the process, method, act of making empowered, namely the ability to do something or the ability to act in the form of reason, effort, or effort (Sadri, 2014)

According to Kasmel and Anderson (2011) The empowerment process contains two tendencies. First, the empowerment process emphasizes the process of giving or transferring some power, strength or ability to the community so that individuals become more empowered. The second tendency emphasizes the process of stimulating, encouraging or motivating individuals to have the ability or empowerment to determine what their life choices are through a dialogue process.

Empowerment Indicators

Kieffer in Edi Suharto (2014) explains that the implementation of the process and the achievement of empowerment goals are achieved through the application of empowerment which can be shortened to 5Ps, namely, enabling reinforcement, protection, support, and maintenance. The empowerment indicators are as follows:

- a. Possibility, creating an atmosphere or climate that allows the potential of the community to develop optimally. Empowerment must be able to liberate the community from cultural and structural barriers that hinder it.
- b. Strengthening, strengthening the knowledge and abilities of the community in solving problems in meeting their needs. Empowerment must be able to develop all abilities and self-confidence in order to support the independence of the community.
- c. Protection, protecting the community, especially weak groups from being oppressed by strong groups, avoiding unfair or unhealthy competition between the strong and the weak, and preventing the exploitation of strong groups against weak groups. Empowerment must be directed at eliminating all types of discrimination and domination that do not benefit the poor.
- d. Support, providing guidance and support so that the community is able to carry out its role and life tasks. Empowerment must be able to support the community so that they do not fall into conditions and positions that are increasingly weak and marginalized.
- e. Maintenance, maintaining conducive conditions so that there is a balance in the distribution of power between various groups in society. Empowerment must be able to ensure harmony and balance that allows everyone to have the opportunity to do business.

Empowerment Strategy

Parson in Zubaedi (2013) states that the empowerment process is generally carried out collectively. According to him, there is no literature that states that the

empowerment process occurs in a one-on-one relationship between social workers and clients in individual help settings.

In various situations, empowerment strategies can be carried out individually, although in turn this strategy is still related to collectivity, in the sense of linking clients with other sources or systems outside themselves. In this context, empowerment can be done through three levels or dimensions of empowerment (empowerment setting), namely:

- a. Micro-Level. Empowerment is carried out on clients individually through guidance, counseling, stress management, crisis intervention. The main goal is to guide or train clients in carrying out their life tasks. This model is often referred to as a task-centered approach.
- b. Mazzo-level. Empowerment is carried out on a group of clients. Empowerment is carried out using the group as an intervention medium. Education and training, group dynamics are usually used as strategies to increase awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of clients in order to have the ability to solve the problems they face.
- c. Macro-level. This approach is also referred to as a large-system strategy because the goals of change are directed at the wider environmental system. Policy formulation, social campaign planning, social action, lobbying, community organizing, conflict management, are some of the strategies in this approach. Big Systems Strategy views clients as people who have the competence to understand their own situations and to select and define appropriate strategies for action.

C. RESEARCH METHODS

In this research, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative research, this research aims to collect actual information in detail that describes existing symptoms, identifies problems or examines conditions and prevailing practices. The research location is where the researcher can capture the actual state of the object to be studied. This research was conducted in Lembung Village, Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. The location was chosen because Lembung Village is the village that produces the most salt in Pamekasan Regency and is in accordance with the title and topic chosen by the researcher. The focus is basically the main problem that comes from the experience of the researcher or through the knowledge he gains through other literature. With a focus, researchers will know exactly what data needs to be collected and what doesn't need to be collected (Moleong. 2015). Based on the problem formulation on how to empower salt farmers through the PUGAR program in Lembung Village, Galis District, Pamekasan Regency, the focus of the research to be researched is on the empowerment of salt farmers with the Keifer theory approach in Edi Suharto (2014) with indicators a) Possibility, which relates to how create or develop community potential to be optimal; b) Strengthening, to strengthen the knowledge and capabilities of the community by providing counseling and training; c) Protection, as an external effort to protect the public and avoid unfair competition; d) Support, by providing guidance and support so that the community is able to develop and; e) Maintenance, by maintaining and maintaining conducive

conditions.

The informants used in this study there are 2 categories of informants, namely the informants managing the Salt of Lembung Village and the consumer informants of the Salt of Lembung Village. The method for taking Informants who manage the Salt of Lembung Village uses purposive sampling method, while the method of taking consumer Informants of Salt of Lembung Village uses accidental sampling and information on the producers of Salt of Lembung Village about consumers as a supporter of taking informants. According to Martono (2010), the purposive sampling technique is a method of taking informants that are carried out intentionally according to the criteria of the required informants, while accidental sampling is a technique of determining informants based on chance, that is, anyone who coincidentally meets the researcher can be used as an informant, if it is seen by other people. which happened to be found suitable as a data source. The informants used in this study were 6 people, consisting of 2 people from salt farmers, 2 people from the Fisheries Service, and 2 people from actors/consumers.

D. DISCUSSION

The results of research findings that have been carried out by researchers in issues related to the empowerment of salt farmers through the PUGAR program in Lembung Village, Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. First, the indicators of possibility. Since the existence of PUGAR in terms of empowerment, seen from the perspective of PUGAR's business, there have been developments, from 2011-2014 every business start was given financial assistance, in 2014 it was impossible to give continuous grants every year and finally the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of Pamekasan Regency tried to introduce Geo Membrane technology and Thread Filter technology (TUF), because TUF was not successful and finally geomembrane was developed, finally in 2017 it was developed again into a corporate or integrated system. However, in 2020 the Pamekasan Regency Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Service will focus more on developing infrastructure such as warehouses. After the existence of PUGAR, there was indeed geomembrane technology assistance, but it received little. Farmers, if they buy geomembrane technology themselves, cannot afford it because it is expensive. The salt market is also growing, but its development is not fast just by word of mouth. The market is only around Madura and the East Java Region. So, the probability indicator is not good. The output of geomembrane technology has indeed doubled, but the salt yield from bitter geomembrane is not good. In addition, to get this geomembrane technology, you have to wait for assistance, while those who get geomembrane assistance are still few because the price is expensive. Salt marketing is actually increasing but slowly because the marketing is still traditional and has not led to online marketing.

In the Strengthening Indicator, capacity building is very important, this is because it is to increase the ability of salt farmers in the salt production process so that they can run effectively in utilizing the existing potential. In Lembung Village, Galis District, Pamekasan Regency, capacity building was carried out in the People's Salt Business Empowerment (PUGAR) program, namely counseling

and technical training for salt farmers. Capacity building is a process of increasing the ability of individuals, groups, organizations to understand and play their functions effectively and efficiently so as to increase production capacity and the ability of the community to utilize their potential. In the PUGAR program capacity building through counseling and technical training to salt farmers.

Capacity building in the PUGAR program through counseling and technical training to salt farmers exists but is still rare and lacking. Counseling is in the form of providing information to salt farmers about the correct production process. The training was conducted on a trial basis in a field and if there were results that were not as expected by the farmers, there would be an evaluation, so that they could produce a high-quality salt harvest. However, sometimes many salt farmers in lembung village still do not understand about counseling and training. So, the indicators of strengthening are not good, because the strengthening is carried out with counseling and training is not optimal, the training is indeed true but its implementation is rare. In addition, some salt farmers in lembung village who participated in the counseling and training still did not understand about counseling and training.

In terms of protection indicators, in 2010 efforts to empower salt farmers began to be planned through a special program, namely the People's Salt Business Empowerment (PUGAR) program from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (KKP) to improve the welfare of salt farmers and in 2011 it was officially realized in Galis District. The requirements to become a member of the People's Salt Business Group (KUGAR) must be salt farmers. Salt farmers who have working land either directly by the owner, or work for the results or a rental system. So, the group members are really salt farmers working in the salt production process.

Various laws and regulations issued by the Central Government aim to protect, improve the quality and quantity of salt which leads to the welfare of salt farmers. These laws are the *Undang-Undang Nomor 13 Tahun 1959* concerning the *Undang-Undang Penetapan Hukum Darurat Nomor 25 Tahun 1957* concerning the Abolition of the Salt Monopoly and the Production of People's Salt; the *Undang-Undang Nomor 7 Tahun 2016* concerning the Protection and Empowerment of Fishermen, Fish Cultivators, and Salt Farmers; the *Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 9 Tahun 2018* concerning Procedures for Controlling Imports of Fishery Commodities and Salt Commodities as Raw Materials and Industrial Auxiliary Materials; the *Peraturan Menteri Perdagangan Republik Indonesia Nomor 20/MDAG/Per/9/2005* concerning Provisions on the Import of Salt; the *Peraturan Menteri Perindustrian Republik Indonesia Nomor 34 Tahun 2018* concerning Procedures for Providing Recommendations for the Import of Salt Commodities as Raw Materials and Industrial Auxiliary Materials; and the *Peraturan Menteri of Kelautan dan Perikanan Republik Indonesia Nomor 3/Permen-KP/2019* concerning Community Participation in the Protection and Empowerment of Fishermen, Fish Cultivators, and Salt Farmers.

The activities in the PUGAR program are regular meetings once a month, the meeting is deemed insufficient, in addition to the less clear discussions that are discussed and the members who come are also few, and many who are not active

in the meetings. Despite the laws and regulations, salt farmers do not feel protected. There is still a lot of unhealthy competition or the salt mafia. In addition, the salt farmers who are members of PUGAR do not agree on the price of salt produced by Lembung Village so that the price of one farmer is different from one another, this makes the competition for Lembung Village Salt farmers unhealthy, and there is a price war between Lembung Village farmers.

Hence, the protection indicator is not good, because even though there are regulations issued by the government to protect salt farmers whose main purpose is for welfare, in the field the farmers do not feel protected because farmers do not feel prosperous, besides that these regulations do not eliminate unfair competition and salt mafia which is very detrimental to salt farmers.

In the support indicator, there are several facilities and infrastructure assistance from the government to facilitate salt farmers in the salt production process, both production equipment and salt harvesting equipment. Salt farmers who are members of PUGAR receive facilities and infrastructure assistance, but this assistance is still rare and lacking. The assistance from the service also seems not to be on target, those who get assistance are people who are already prosperous and already in existence. In addition, there is no consumer assistance for lembung village salt. Consumers bargain for the price of salt at a low price, consumers only think about the benefits and do not think about the welfare of farmers. In addition, consumers have never given advice to farmers.

Therefore, the support indicator is not good, because salt farmers actually get assistance with both facilities and infrastructure, but the assistance is still rare and not comprehensive, so not all farmers need this assistance. In addition, it was felt that the assistance was still not right on target, those who received assistance were people who were already prosperous and already present. The salt consumers of lembung village also don't care about farmers because they feel they have never helped the salt farmers of lembung village.

On the maintenance indicator, the form of maintenance is carried out in the form of PUGAR coaching in Lembung Village carried out by the staff of the Pamekasan Regency Marine and Fisheries Service. Providing guidance to salt farmers is aimed at fostering and directing farmers to continue the successful implementation of the PUGAR policy together to ensure the delivery of administrative documents and disbursement of assistance in a timely manner, because it is feared that the implementation of the PUGAR policy is not appropriate.

However, after being asked by the salt farmers, it turned out that the service had indeed gone down in the field to provide guidance and went out in the field but rarely, and even then the service only went down to the village hall, not to the ponds and homes of the salt farmers. Maintenance from salt farmers is also lacking, salt farmers do not check the salt ponds every day, and the farmers don't have long salt ponds for only 3-4 hours

Salt farmers are also lacking in equipment maintenance due to lack of money, for example, if the windmill is damaged to repair it takes a long time. The form of maintenance of salt consumers in Lembung Village is also lacking, consumers only buy from one farmer who has subscribed, consumers only lean to

one side so that the salt business condition of Lembung Village is not healthy.

Thus, the maintenance indicator is not good, because the agency has indeed gone out in the field to do coaching and went out in the field but rarely, and even then the service only goes down to the village hall, not to the ponds and the homes of salt farmers. Salt farmers are also lacking in equipment maintenance due to lack of money, for example if the windmill is damaged to repair it takes a long time. The form of maintenance from the salt consumers of Lembung Village is also lacking.

E. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research above, the Empowerment of Salt Farmers through the People's Salt Business Empowerment Program (PUGAR) in Lembung Village is not good and is described as follows; (1) Enabling Indicators. The probability indicator is not good, in fact, the output from geomembrane technology has indeed doubled, but the salt yield from bitter geomembrane is not good. In addition, to get this geomembrane technology, you have to wait for assistance, while those who get geomembrane assistance are still few because the price is expensive. For salt marketing, it is actually increasing but slowly because the marketing is still traditional and has not led to online marketing; (2) Strengthening Indicators The strengthening indicators are not good, because the strengthening is carried out with counseling and training is not optimal, the training is indeed true but its implementation is rare. In addition, some salt farmers in lembung village who took part in the counseling and training still did not understand about extension and training; (3) Protection Indicator. The protection indicator is not good, because even though there are regulations issued by the government to protect salt farmers whose main purpose is for welfare, in the field the farmers do not feel protected because farmers do not feel prosperous, besides that these regulations do not eliminate unhealthy competition and the salt mafia. which is very detrimental to the salt farmers; (4) Support Indicator. The support indicator is not good, because salt farmers actually get assistance with both facilities and infrastructure, but the assistance is still rare and not comprehensive, so not all farmers need this assistance. In addition, it was felt that the assistance was still not right on target, those who received assistance were people who were already prosperous and already present. The salt consumers of lembung village are also less concerned about the farmers because they feel they have never helped the salt farmers of lembung village; (5) Maintenance Indicators. In terms of maintenance indicators, it is not good, because the agency has indeed gone out in the field to provide guidance and went out in the field but rarely, and even then the service only goes down to the village hall, not to the ponds and the homes of salt farmers. Salt farmers are also lacking in equipment maintenance due to lack of money, for example if the windmill is damaged to repair it takes a long time. The form of maintenance from the salt consumers of Lembung Village is also lacking.

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