

## **Empowerment of Farmers's Economy Through Plasma Partnership of Palm Plantation And Koperasi Serapun Taka in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir District, Tana Tidung Regency, North Kalimantan**

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this research is to find out the form of economic empowerment for the plasma program community in Koperasi Serapun Taka in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir District, North Kalimantan. Using 12 informants, each of whom has a working area in Koperasi management. Farmer Group Management, Group Representative Team Management, Plasma Member Representative, namely plasma receiving farmers. The results of the study are as follows: 1. The community empowerment of the plasma program Koperasi Serapun Taka aims to prosper the community of oil palm farmers, namely by building the character of the farming community to become productive farmers in various fields, especially in the economic field. The strategies used are: aware; farmers are given enlightenment and encouragement to realize that, farmers have the right to have the capacity and enjoy something better. Capacitance; farmers can take a role in development. Empowerment; people are given the opportunity, to use the knowledge, skills and abilities they already have, to take care of and develop themselves. However, the plasma program has not yet run maximally, in accordance with expectations, because not all the people in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir District, and surrounding areas live prosperously. 2. The empowerment of farmers in the plasma program has a positive impact on the community in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir District, and surrounding areas. The influence of plasma on farmers includes: Increasing the income of farmers in each month, because each plasma farmer will get an additional salary from plasma yields. Facilitate facilities and infrastructure, especially road access which greatly helps farmers to market their crops. Jobs, because the plasma activities require labor and the people who do it are the plasma community itself. Business skills, with plasma, farmers are able and skilled to empower oil palm plantations, or private rubber plantations.*

**Keywords:** *Economic Empowerment of Farmers, Palm Oil Plantation Plasma Partnership.*

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Date of Submission: 09-12-2019

Date of Acceptance: 24-12-2019

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### **I. Introduction**

Plantation is one of the developing agricultural subsectors in Tana Tidung Regency. The leading commodity is palm oil. Meanwhile, for smallholder plantations, the commodity of oil palm has also developed. The total planting area of oil palm plantations is the largest from year to year. In 2017, the area of oil palm plantations reached 473.01 hectares with the largest planting located in Muruk Rian District (153.79 hectares), followed by Betayau District (148.90 hectares), and SesayapHilir District (104.41 hectares). After oil palm, plantation crops with the largest number of plants are rubber (91 hectares), followed by pepper (37.50 hectares) and coconut (19.50 hectares). Oil palm plantation is one of the sectors that plays an important role and deserves to be taken into account in improving the Indonesian economy. Central Statistics Agency data show the volume and value of Crude Palm Oil (CPO) exports as of September 2016 with a total volume of 25,276.46226 tons with a value of 16,020,548 USA. The data illustrate that Indonesia as an agricultural country, is still relevant to make the oil palm plantation sector as a sector that has prospects to absorb labor, provide raw materials for the CPO industry, equitable development, improve education, health and public welfare.

Palm oil commodity is one of the mainstays of agricultural commodities whose growth is very fast, and has a strategic role in the national economy. As a source of employment, the palm oil sector also absorbs labor from the upstream to downstream sectors. Based on its own, oil palm plantations consist of People's Plantations (PR), Private Large Estates (PBS) and Government Large Estates (PTPN). The Indonesian palm oil industry plays an important role in generating the country's foreign exchange, employment, regional development, and contributes greatly to GDP. The development of palm oil export commodities continues to increase from year to year, as seen from the average rate of growth of the area of oil palm during 2007 - 2017 amounting to 6.31 percent, while oil palm production increased by an average of 11.09 percent per year (Ditjenbun, 2018).

The opening of large-scale oil palm plantations, by large private investors and foreign direct investment (PMA), in Tana Tidung Regency, North Kalimantan Province, indicates that there is an expansion of oil palm plantations in Indonesia. The opening of oil palm plantations in the Tana Tidung Regency region requires a long process and time, because the entire plantation area is native peat and dense forest (virgin), with the status of Non-Forestry Cultivation Area. Residents who live around the area are farmers, and traditional fishermen who fulfill their family life from existing natural resources in the area of the oil palm plantation. Regional characteristics, and community culture are the main challenges that must be sought for solutions to overcome them, so that the existence of oil palm plantations has a positive impact on the country, region and society. Changing the wilderness, and peat land in Tana Tidung Regency, which has traditionally been cultivated by the community to become oil palm plantations (plasma farmers), certainly has consequences for investment (capital) and human resources that are reliable in quality and quantity and socialize the right partnership with the conditions and culture of the community.

In this research, the focus of the research is community economic empowerment with the KoperasiSerapun Taka plasma program in Sesayap Village, SesayapHilir District, Tana Tidung Regency, North Kalimantan. The researchers' questions were: How important is the plasma program, in the economic empowerment of the community of Sesayap Village, SesayapHilir District, Tana Tidung Regency, North Kalimantan?. What is the form of community economic empowerment, the SerekaTekaKoperasi plasma program in Sesayap Village, SesayapHilir District, Tana Tidung Regency, North Kalimantan?.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Community empowerment**

Empowerment is a concept that was born as part of the development of people's minds, and Western culture, primarily Europe. To understand the concept of empowerment appropriately, it requires efforts to understand the contextual background that gave birth to it (Hasmawati, 2016). Social scientists in providing understanding of empowerment, have different formulas in various contexts and fields of study, meaning that there is no clear definition of the concept. However, when viewed more broadly, empowerment is often equated with the acquisition of resources, abilities and access to resources to meet their needs (Eprizal, 2014; Robeni, 2017). Therefore, in order to understand deeply the meaning of empowerment, it is necessary to study some opinions of scientists who are committed to community empowerment (Syahza, 2015; Miradj, and Sumarno, 2014).

Tarigan (2005); Ardiansyah (2009), explains that empowerment is a personal and social process. A release of personal ability, competence, creativity and freedom of action. Ife, and Tesoriero (2008); Christenson (2009), states that empowerment refers to the word "empowerment," which means to give power, give power, power, to those who are powerless. All the potential possessed by those who are powerless is grown, activated, developed so that they have the power to build themselves. Community empowerment in community development, emphasizes the community's independence as a system that is able to organize itself (Wigena et al. 2009). According to Payne (2007), empowerment is essentially aimed at helping clients gain power, strength and ability, to make decisions and actions to be taken, and relate to the client's self, including reducing personal, social and constraints in taking action. Paul (2007) states that empowerment means equitable distribution of power, thereby increasing political awareness of the power of weak groups, and increasing their influence on the development process and outcomes. Sulistiyani (2014); Sunarsih, and Iqbal (2015), explain in more detail that etymologically empowerment comes from the basic word "power" which means strength or ability. Departing from this understanding, empowerment is interpreted as a process to obtain power, strength or ability, and / or the process of providing power, strength or ability from those who have power, to those who have little or no power.

It can be concluded that, in essence empowerment is a process and effort to obtain or provide power, strength or ability to individuals and communities is weak, in order to identify, analyze, determine the needs, and potentials and problems encountered, and at the same time choose alternative solutions, with optimize resources and potential that is independently owned.

### **2.2. Pattern of Plasma Core Partnerships**

Plasma core program, in the development of oil palm plantations requires seriousness, both the farmers as plasma, who get help in efforts to develop their business, as well as the core of large or medium-sized businesses that have social responsibility, to foster and develop small businesses as business partners for the long term long. The pattern of plasma core partnership cooperation, with land ownership by farmers, in general with the pattern of profit sharing (Fitriza et al., 2012; Purwaningsih, 2008).

The principle of partnership is mutual and trusting, so that both parties are mutually beneficial and needy (Analia, 2016; Fauzan, 2016). From mutual trust and interdependence, between the company and the

farmers, a long-term, win win solution relationship is formed. If farmers need maintenance costs, the company will provide funds. Then in return, the company needs fresh fruit bunches (FFB) to produce, and smallholders meet the demand. Palm oil mills (POM) require FFB in mature, clean and fresh conditions. Therefore, farmers as partners must meet the minimum requirements, while the core company must be able to guide and provide sufficient residual business results (SHU), with efficient farm performance and POM, high plantation production, and efficient production costs.

In its development, the plasma core pattern has been refined into an integrated partnership pattern. Collaborative relationships between groups of farmers, or farmers and nucleus companies are made as is the relationship between plasma and nucleus in the Nucleus Core Enterprise Pattern (PIR). Farmers are plasma and large companies as the core. This partnership will then become integrated, with the participation of banks that provide loan assistance to finance smallholder businesses. According to Bank Indonesia (BI), the integrated partnership pattern has the following principles: a) Business relationships between large businesses and small businesses that have partnerships have a connection, b) Partnerships on the basis of profitable business relationships, c) There is an element of coaching, and development by large businesses and banks for small businesses, d) There is a commitment and a sense of togetherness between the partners, e) The rights and obligations of each partner are set out in the Memorandum of Agreement between the Bank with large businesses and large businesses, large businesses with small businesses, or banks with large businesses and small businesses.

The success of a partnership pattern depends on its application (Paul, 2007; Agustina, 2016). Soenarko (2013) said, the key to partnership is a process, which requires an increase in the intensity of core and plasma relationships, based on trust with one another that is tangible and measurable. In a partnership there must be a commitment that satisfies both parties, and fosters interdependence. Benchmarks for the success of the partnership can be seen from the performance of the production estate, which shows the productivity of the plantation increases, the cost of production is controlled, the quality of FFB rises, the stability of the supply of raw materials is guaranteed, there is a strong farmer institution, and there is a smooth loan installment.

The partnership pattern developed must be aimed at creating farmers' independence, there is a sense of caring, a sense of togetherness, and the sustainability of the partnership partnership as a whole, not partially. Each partnership actor should be able to optimize the performance of the partnership, beginning with a comprehensive data collection of each business activity, and sharing information with all parties who are partners, namely the Company, Farmers / Farmers / Groups, Government, Banking and other Intermediary Institutions (Andi et al., 2016; Rudiyanto, 2014).

### **III. Research MethodesAndData Analysis**

#### **3.1Research Paradigms and Approaches**

The philosophical view in this study, is constructivism or interpretivism which is a perspective, and is an approach for qualitative research. The purpose of a qualitative approach is an assessment that starts with a process, and meaning that is not rigorously studied. This view assumes that individuals seek understanding of the world, where they live and work. Individuals develop subjective meanings, from experience on various meanings, and researchers look for complex meanings rather than narrowing of meaning in a category. The research objective is to get as much information as possible on the interactions that are constructed in the environment. The core of social constructivist which becomes the philosophy of qualitative research aims to look for meaning, or meaning and understand and interpret other meanings, from human interactions about the world.

Ontologically, this paradigm sees its object in a natural context, not partial, photographing social realities that are not only objective realities (realities that are outside of the person being investigated), but also subjective realities (realities within the researcher) that concern his will and awareness. Methodologically, this research assumes that objective and subjective realities have a reciprocal relationship that influences one another. In epistemology requires the unification of the subject of researchers with supporting subjects of research objects.

#### **3.2Data source**

In accordance with the characteristics and definitions of qualitative research, which seeks to find out the meaning behind the event, the data that will be collected in the form of statements, feelings, subjective perceptions of members of the Smallholder Oil Palm Farmers KoperasiSerapun Taka. The primary data source is information that was chosen intentionally (based on purposive) based on the documents of the members of the Smallholder Oil Palm Farmers Cooperative and observations. In this study there were 12 (twelve) informants, who came from: the management of the KoperasiSerapun Taka, 3 people consisting of the Chairperson of the Cooperative, the Cooperative Secretariat, and the treasurer. Farmers Group Management 2 people, Management

Group representative team) 2 people, Representative Members of Plasma 2 people as Members (Farmers receiving plasma). Kaltim tara Bank Representative 1 person. Government Representative 3 people.

## **IV. Result And Discussion**

### **4.1. Koperasi Serapun Taka As Plasma Palm Plantation**

The Koperasi Serapun Taka aims to improve the welfare and prosperity of the community, as well as to increase the productivity of land and agriculture in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir District. The results of the interview found that, the benefits of plasma farmers becoming members of cooperatives are, the availability of jobs for members who want to work to become plasma farmers. The role of the Koperasi Serapun Taka in the process of achieving the goals of cooperatives has been well implemented, although it still needs to be improved. In interviews that have been conducted revealed that there is still a gap between PT. TH Felda Nusantara with members of the Koperasi Serapun Taka. One of the informants even said that the Koperasi Serapun Taka failed (unsuccessfully) to prosper its members, because this cooperative was fully bound to PT. TH Felda Nusantara. That the existing plasma partnership model does not need to be replaced, it even needs to be maintained.

The Koperasi Serapun Taka, in general, has been able to achieve its goals in improving welfare, and prospering the community, and to increase land and agricultural productivity in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir District. This plasma partnership model benefits farmers, therefore it still needs to be maintained. On the other hand, information obtained from Rosyan Siregar, Manager of Oil Palm Plasma Plantation of PT. TH Felda Nusantara, that the development of smallholder oil palm plantations in Sesayap is very good. The existence of the company PT. TH Felda Nusantara, as a Plasma Palm Plantation, has greatly benefited farmers and the community of Sesayap Hilir. PT. TH Felda Nusantara, quite concerned with the surrounding environment, is marked by the Baper Zone 200 meters from the river bank, forests and bushes are still intact as land that must be cared for and maintained.

### **4.2. Empowerment of Koperasi Plasma and Taka**

In a simple process the empowerment of the Koperasi Serapun Taka can be explained as follows:

The first stage is awareness. At this stage the target to be empowered is given enlightenment in the form of awareness, that they have the right to own something. For example, the target is the plasma farmer group. They are given the understanding that they can become, and that can be done if they have the capacity to escape their poverty. Programs that can be carried out at this stage for example provide knowledge that is cognition, belief, and healing. The basic principle is to make the target understand that they need (build demand) to be empowered, and the empowerment process starts from within them (not from others).

The second stage is capacitance. This is what is often referred to as capacity building, or in simpler language enabling or enabling. To be given power or power, the concerned must be able to first. For example, before farmers are given autonomy to manage land, farmers who should be given a capability or capacity building program to make them competent (skillful) in managing the given autonomy. The capacity building process consists of three types, namely people, organizations, and value systems.

The third stage is the giving of power itself or empowerment in the narrow sense. At this stage plasma farmers are given power, power, authority, or opportunity. This gift is in accordance with the quality of the skills they have.

### **4.3. Economic Growth of Plasma Farmers**

The positive impact on the communities surrounding the development of oil palm plantations is reflected in the creation of income and employment opportunities for local communities. Likewise, business opportunities arise, such as: opening food and beverage kiosks, transportation services, home industries, and banking services. All this will eventually lead to, and bring up traditional markets in residential and rural areas. All of this will lead to income and welfare of the farming community will increase.

## **V. Conclusions**

The conclusions of the study are as follows: 1). The community empowerment program of the Koperasi Serapun Taka aims to prosper the community of oil palm farmers, by building the character of the farming community to become productive farmers in various fields, especially in the economic field. The strategies used in the empowerment of plasma farming communities are:

(a) Awareness; awareness aims to form a participatory farming community, which begins with developing farmers' awareness, which is the stage where farmers are given enlightenment and encouragement to realize that, farmers have the right to have the capacity and enjoy something better (b) Capacitance; capacity building is the ability in the form of knowledge, skills and skills, insights, so that the farming community is open-minded, and provides basic skills, so farmers can take a role in development. This capacity building process can be realized

through dialogue, education and learning with the community.(c) Financing; empowerment where the community is given the opportunity, or authority to use the knowledge, skills and abilities they already have, to take care of and develop themselves. However, the plasma program has not yet run maximally, in accordance with expectations, because not all the people in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir Subdistrict, and surrounding areas live prosperously. Therefore the plasma empowerment program still needs to be continued and improved so that the economic conditions of all plasma farming communities become prosperous.

2). Empowerment of farmers in the KoperasiSerapun Taka plasma program has a positive impact on the community in Sesayap Village, SesayapHilir District, and surrounding areas. The effect of plasma on farmers includes:

(a) An increase in farmer's income each month, because each plasma farmer will get an additional salary from plasma yields, even though this income is not fixed, because it depends on the production results achieved. (b) Facilitate facilities and infrastructure, especially road access which greatly helps the farming community to market their crops. (c) Employment, because plasma activities require labor and the people working on it are the plasma community itself. (d) Business skills, with plasma, farmers are able and skilled to empower oil palm plantations, or private rubber plantations.

Researchers suggest the following matters:

To the regional government of Tana Tidung Regency, North Kalimantan Province, the results of the study showed the success of the plasma program in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir District. But the results of the study also showed there were still economic gaps. Therefore, the government is advised to conduct an evaluation of the plasma program that is already running, so that economic prosperity will be evenly distributed in the Sesayap Village, the Sesayap Hilir District, and surrounding areas.

To all the management of the Koperasi Serapun Taka, to work more effectively, be transparent, and also to improve the quality and quantity of production yields, thus the income of plasma farmers will increase.

To all members of the Koperasi Serapun Taka, upgrading knowledge about plasma is needed, so that each member is able to carry out their duties and obligations properly. And can apply new technology, in the field of agriculture, especially palm oil farming.

To the community members of Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir Subdistrict, and surrounding areas, it is expected that every family can become a member of the Koperasi Serapun Taka, so as to obtain a plasma estate of 2 HA.

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Markus."Empowerment of Farmers's Economy Through Plasma Partnership of Palm Plantation And Koperasi Serapun Taka in Sesayap Village, Sesayap Hilir District, Tana Tidung Regency, North Kalimantan". IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM), Vol. 21, No. 12, 2019, pp. 73-78.