

## The Role of Village Government in Empowering Farmers in Lalowura Village, Loea Sub-District, East Kolaka District

Laode Samsul Barani<sup>1\*</sup>, Ahmad<sup>1</sup>, Irpan Sidik Tambora<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Development Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business, Halu Oleo University, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author, Email: [samsulbarani@yahoo.co.id](mailto:samsulbarani@yahoo.co.id)

---

### Abstract

This study aimed to determine the role of the Village Government in Empowering Farmers. Purposive sampling was used for sampling. Twelve samples were used in this study 12 people. Qualitative descriptive statistics were used for the analysis. The results of the study show that the village government's role in empowering farmers is considered quite effective, as can be seen from the aspect of cooperation, which plays an important role in terms of providing information that is more often carried out by the village government, providing training to farmers. From the perspective of support, it can be seen from the marketing of agricultural products, which is also considered effective by appointing collectors and retailers, while from counseling and government assistance, it has also been quite good through its role in post-harvest land management and cultivation procedures. From the perspective of farmer independence, it is also considered quite good in terms of coaching where the village government holds rice cultivation procedures. From a developmental standpoint, the village government provides socialization and training to develop planting techniques that can be applied by farmers.

**Keywords:** *Empowerment, Farmers, Village Government.*

---

### INTRODUCTION

Farmer empowerment certainly requires the optimal and in-depth role of the government in developing the community, which includes the following aspects:

a. Cooperation Aspect

The aspect of cooperation involves two or more parties, one of which is the public sector (Government), which includes a long-term cooperative relationship with parties with continuous interaction. Each actor involved in the cooperation must provide material and non-material capital to the related parties so that they can take responsibility for the output or every activity carried out by both parties. (Angraini, 2017).

b. Support Aspects

Support refers to the degree of support provided to an individual, especially during times of need, by people who have a close emotional connection to the person, while support refers to comfort, care, self-esteem, or any form of assistance that an individual receives from another person or group.

c. Aspects of Farmer Independence

The aspect of farmer independence is the ability of farmers to behave alone, which can be seen with the right attitude so that farmers can make their own decisions and are responsible for the decisions taken.

According to Novendra et al. (2021), agriculture is a culture that was first developed by humans in response to the challenge of survival, which gradually

became difficult due to the depletion of food sources in the wild due to the increase in the human population. According to (Mubyarto, 2016) agriculture in a broad sense includes smallholder agriculture or agriculture in a narrow sense called plantations (including smallholder plantations and large plantations), forestry, animal husbandry, and fisheries (in fisheries, further divisions are known, namely, inland fisheries and marine fisheries).

Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that agriculture is an activity of utilizing natural resources, both biological and animal, which can be used to meet the needs of human life. Indonesia is an agrarian country; as explained by (Mubyarto, 2016) Indonesia is still an agricultural country, meaning that agriculture plays an important role in the overall national economy.

Based on Law. No. 6/2014 Article 39 points to one in the organizational structure of the village government. The village head is the highest leader of the village government, who is assisted by village officials (Nasir, 2022). The village head is appointed and inaugurated by the regent through direct election by villagers who are citizens of the Republic of Indonesia with a term of 6 (six) years and can be re-elected for only 1 (one) subsequent term.

The village head is a tool of the village government that leads it. The village head not only takes care of the government and maintains public

order, so that the violated law can be restored to its original state and those who violate the law do not repeat the same mistakes. (Lubis & Merang, 2020). Village head in law No. 6/2014 Article 26 states that the village head is tasked with organizing the village government, carrying out village development, fostering the village community, and empowering the village community (Syam, et al., 2022). In carrying out his duties, the village head is assisted by village officials such as the village secretary with the task of organizing government, administration, and organization, and providing administrative services to all village officials and the village community concerned.

Lalowura Village is an area that has potential in the field of agriculture, which is relatively extensive, and most people work as farmers. Several programs have been implemented by the village government in the field of agriculture, such as providing assistance in the form of tractors and agricultural seeds. However, there are still several problems faced by farmers, including pests, crop failure, the application of technology, and uneven assistance provided by the government, such as the distribution of pesticides and fertilizers.

Based on initial observations, the researchers saw that the village government's role in efforts to empower farmers in Lalowura Village according to several farmers said that in terms of the cooperation aspect, the information provided by the village government could be channeled quite quickly; however, not all farmers received the information because of their work in the fields. For the aspect of support found in the field that Lalowura Village does not yet have financial institutions such as cooperatives, of course, this will hamper the marketing activities that will be carried out by farmers, besides that related to the independence of farmers in Lalowura Village shows that there are still many farmers who have low skills, this makes it more difficult for farmers in Lalowura Village to absorb knowledge about technology that can be used in agriculture.

In addition, farmers in Lalowura Village are predominantly smallholders, with various limitations in terms of capital, education, and skills. Because of these limitations, village farmers must be protected from the risks of uncertainty and natural disasters. Under certain conditions, farmers must consider ways to retain their rice fields in an abundant harvest. It starts from the

rainy season, the dry season, to the time when rice pests attack their plants. Thus, they must spend more money to overcome such complex problems.

Based on the description above, this study aims to determine and analyze the role of the village government in empowering farmers in Lalowura Village, Loea District, and East Kolaka Regency.

## **METHODS**

This study was conducted in Lalowura Village, Loea District, East Kolaka Regency. Purposive sampling was used to determine informants. Researchers used purposive sampling to make it easier to determine the informants in the study. The informants in this study were village heads, farmers, and field-agricultural extension workers.

The data collection used in this study was as follows:

### **1. Observation**

The observation technique in this study was used to observe the surrounding environment from the beginning to the end of the study. This was done to make it easier for researchers to obtain data on the role of the village government in empowering farmers in Lalowura Village, Loea District, and the East Kolaka Regency.

### **2. Interview**

An interview is a form of communication between the researcher and the subject under study by asking questions to seek information based on objectives. Interviews in this study were conducted by conducting questions and answers while meeting face-to-face between the informant and interviewer.

### **3. Documentation**

In this research, documentation is used as an additional data source, which can be in the form of photos, images, and data regarding the role of the village government in empowering farmers and the regional profile of Lalowura Village.

The data analysis method used in this study was descriptive-qualitative. Qualitative data analysis is carried out interactively and takes place continuously until completion so that the data are saturated. Data analysis was carried out to determine the role of the village government in empowering farmers in Lalowura Village, Loea District, and the East Kolaka Regency.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The government, as a dynamizer with its tools and functions, must encourage the community to move and participate in the development process, and maintain and encourage the dynamics of local development. The role of the government as a dynamizer is to provide effective and comprehensive guidance and direction to the community regardless of differences or social strata. Seeing the enormous needs of the community in the role of government, guidance, direction, and input from the government is needed to maintain the dynamics of government in the community through certain government agencies and extension workers who are assigned to the community by providing guidance and training to the community. The village government plays a role in empowers farmers through their cooperation, support, and independence. This is in accordance with the results of interviews conducted with Mr. Abdul Samad, the secretary of Lalowura village:

*"As the village government, I am certainly trying to empower the farmers in our village, one of the efforts we take is to improve the aspects of cooperation, support, and independence of farmers, so that in the future farmers are able to provide good results for agriculture in this village".*

Cooperation between the local and village governments is very important to support the progress of agricultural businesses in the village. This cooperation can be realized if the village government receives support from the local government to provide support and approval for submission of the village government's farming program.

### 1. Operation Aspect

#### a. Providing information on rice planting methods

The importance of information to advance agriculture in the village makes the Village Government take on the role of providing information to farmers in Lalowura. Information is provided directly and indirectly in various ways so that it is more easily accepted by the community as a whole.

Providing information on rice planting using the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) method is a farming method that can save the use of inputs such as seeds, water, chemical fertilizers, and chemical pesticides through farmer empowerment and local wisdom.

Providing information either directly or indirectly in various ways can make it easier to be accepted by all

levels of society. There are many ways and actions taken by the village government to provide information to farmers through socialization and agricultural meetings that are comprehensive and evenly distributed.

An interview conducted with a Field Agricultural Extension Worker (PPL) by Mrs. Damaris Sarangga said: *"So far, the information we have provided to farmers has always been done early, so that farmers are prepared beforehand. This is done considering that farmers work more in the field".*

An interview conducted with Mr. Abdul Samad regarding the provision of information to farmers stated: *"Yes, especially the method of planting good rice, we need to provide information in advance to the farmers, so usually I have conveyed it to the farmers 1 week in advance, either through the village hall or visiting the farmers directly in the fields."*

In providing information based on interviews with Mr. Abdul Samad, it can be seen that the role of the village government in providing information to the community, especially farmers, regarding agricultural information through deliberations in agricultural work meetings held twice a year or every three months makes the information provided focused on the agricultural meeting forum. The importance of information for farmers is that the village government provides more detailed, but more passive, information face-to-face to farmers. Thus, farmers better understand the information conveyed, particularly from farmers.

Based on the results of these interviews, it can be concluded that with the provision of rapid information from the village government regarding the system of Rice Intensification) planting method, agricultural production in Lalowura Village is much better with more rice production than before training from the village government.

#### b. Training Delivery Aspect

Training comprises a series of activities designed to improve the skills, knowledge, and experience of farmers. Farmer community empowerment training is also an effective instrument for improving the welfare of farming communities.

The village government's active role in advancing agriculture in Lalowura Village can be seen in the motivation and support provided by the village government to farmers and the Lalowura village community. Motivation and support are expected to increase the liveliness, creativity, and enthusiasm of

farmers in farming and agribusiness entrepreneurship. The role of the village government is to provide training in the form of a hand tractor, which is a versatile machine because it can be used to drive other implements, such as water pumps, processing equipment, and trailers.

Results of the interviews obtained from Mr. Hasmin and Mr. H. Musliadi, as farmers in Lalowura Village, said, *"Yes indeed, since the hand tractor has greatly affected the area of land that we can work on,*

*before the hand tractor in a day we were only able to work on 1 hectare of land but after the hand tractor the area of land that we can work on can be 2-3 hectares."*

Based on the results of interviews conducted with Mr. Hasmin and Mr. Salamin, it can be seen that after the training and use of hand tractors, it greatly affects the area of cultivated land of farmers in Lalowura Village, after the hand tractor farmers can cultivate 2-3 hectares of land.

Table 1. Increased Farmer Income

No.	Name	Land Area (Ha)	Total Revenue	Land Area (Ha)	Total Revenue
1.	Supriadi	10	Rp. 35,000,000	12	Rp. 48,000,000
2.	Ibrahim	3,5	Rp. 13,150,000	4	Rp. 15,000,000
3.	H. Musliadi	3	Rp. 15,000,000	4	Rp. 17,000,000
4.	Salamin	2,5	Rp. 12,500,000	3	Rp. 13,500,000
5.	Syahrudin	2	Rp. 12,000,000	3	Rp. 13,000,000
6.	Hasmin	2	Rp. 12,650,000	3	Rp. 14,650,000
7.	Muh. Sofian	2	Rp. 14,000,000	3	Rp. 15,000,000
8.	Baharudin	2	Rp. 12,000,000	3	Rp. 13,000,000
9.	Ansu	1,5	Rp. 12,950,000	2	Rp. 13,950,000
10.	Mustaming	1	Rp. 12,850,000	2	Rp. 13,850,000

Source: Interview Results of Research Informants, Year 2022

Based on Table 1 the income earned by farmers based on the area of land owned shows that there are as many as 6 farmers who have an income of Rp.12,000,000-Rp.13,000,000 and as many as 5 people who have an income of Rp.13,100,000-Rp.14,000,000. then there is 1 farmer who has an income of Rp.35,000,000. After the role of the government, there was an increase in farmers' income where there were 7 farmers who had an income of Rp.13,000,000-Rp.15,000,000 and as many as 3 people who had an income of Rp.15,100,000-Rp.18,000,000. and one with an income of Rp. 48,000,000.

## 2. Support Aspects

Community empowerment is closely related to work skills that aim to make changes to interact with groups that will be faced with both large and small groups. In community empowerment, the most important thing is whether the actors of change can facilitate the community in the form of groups that are willing to act constructively and synergize to improve the welfare of their community more fully, and not just build one or two groups. Community empowerment actors can achieve this from the perspective of support.

### a. Marketing of Agricultural Products

One of the roles of the Regional Government in Loea District, East Kolaka Regency, which is very important in empowering farmers, is through various actions by the village government in marketing agricultural products in the form of establishing marketing institutions, including collectors and retailers. Actions and ways are formed through activities carried out by the government in marketing production in various markets and places.

The results of the interview with Mr. Abdul Samad as the Secretary of the village, stated the following: *"For now, our support as the village government is by appointing collectors and retailers to buy agricultural products from farmers at reasonable prices so that farmers do not need to go all the way to the market to sell and spend extra money."*

The results of the interview above conclude that currently in Lalowura Village, they receive assistance from the village government to market their agricultural products by appointing collectors and retailers to buy agricultural products from farmers at

reasonable prices so that farmers do not need to go all the way to the market to sell and incur extra expenses.

The explanation given by Mr. Abdul Samad regarding the marketing of production products through collectors and retailers is as follows: *"Agricultural products can be sold to collectors and retailers appointed by the village government. This is certainly very helpful for farmers in marketing their products, so that they no longer need to go directly to the markets to sell agricultural products. As for the price, we simply follow the development of the price of the community's basic needs in the market".*

The results of interviews with Mr. Salamin and Mr. Muh. Sofian, related to marketing agricultural products, said the following: *"With the existence of collective traders, we can sell agricultural products at IDR 5,500/kg, of course, this is much more profitable than we have to go down to the market because we have to spend more on transportation because the distance is far".*

Based on the results of these interviews, it can be concluded that with the existence of collectors, farmers in Lalowura Village can sell their agricultural products for Rp. 5,500 to collectors, and the selling price is considered very profitable for farmers compared to having to go to the market and spend more.

#### **b. Counseling and Mentoring**

This counseling and mentoring includes (a). Cultivation procedure (b). postharvest and (c). Processing.

##### **1) Cultivation Procedure**

Cultivation procedures are very important and must be performed by extension officers. In accordance with the interview conducted by Mr. Abdul Samad, as the Secretary of Lalowura village is as follows: *"We, as the party involved in conducting counseling to farmers, are responsible for all aspects that support the smooth running of the counseling that we do to farmers. We conduct this counseling down to meet directly with farmers six times a month by providing material related to agricultural issues such as how to cultivate, good post-harvest".*

The results of the interviews explained that the village government plays a big role in being responsible for supporting the implementation of this extension program. To strengthen the answer from the village government, another interview with Mr. Ibrahim as a farmer in Lalowura Village said: *"We*

*often get counseling conducted by Field Agricultural Extension Officers (PPL) in Lalowura Village, even this is very helpful for us because in the counseling we are taught how to grow crops, cultivation procedures and we are even given solutions to what is a problem with our rice."*

I can conclude that in this case, the village government has conducted counseling through field agricultural counseling (PPL), in which farmers are given material related to the problems of the farmers themselves so that they can obtain solutions to their complaints.

##### **2) Post-harvest**

Post-harvest handling of agricultural products aims to reduce the level of damage to agricultural commodity crops by increasing the shelf life and usability of agricultural commodities to support efforts to provide raw materials, increase added value and income, and preserve natural resources and the environment.

As stated by Mrs. Damaris Sarangga as Field Agricultural Extension Worker (PPL) is as follows: *"In conducting counseling, we also teach farmers about post-harvest procedures, because this is very important for farmers to prevent damage to their crops."*

The results of the interview above can explain that in the counseling conducted by the village government in collaboration with the Field Agricultural Extension Officer, farmers are also taught post-harvest procedures.

##### **3) Processing**

Techniques so that farmers are empowered by providing counseling and assistance to farmers starting from planting rice to processing the harvest, which can be done by extension officers so that the work of farmers is always supervised. In accordance with the interview conducted with Mr. Abdul Samad as the secretary of Lalowura village, as follows:

*"After we conduct counseling, we go directly to provide assistance or supervise the processing of crops to farmers to see if the material taught in counseling can be practiced by farmers and if it can be practiced then it will be a record for us to always conduct counseling."*

The field agricultural extension worker explained that the purpose of this assistance was for farmers to work in accordance with what has been taught. Based on all the interviews, it can be concluded that the

village government has provided assistance to farmers from the planting stage to the results, and this proves that this assistance has been able to increase farmers' yields so that farmers have begun to diligently follow what is suggested by the Field Agricultural Extension Officer.

### 3. Aspects of Farmer Independence

The formulation of farmer independence is the process of preparing the local government's future steps, which are intended to build a vision and mission to achieve these goals in the context of agricultural empowerment. In the context of empowering farming communities carried out by local governments to create a climate and atmosphere for empowering farmers,

#### a. Farmer Development

Coaching is a very important element in the process of empowering farming communities, for both village officials and the community. This training specializes in providing rice cultivation materials to farmers in Lalowura Village.

The goal is for village officials and community members to know and understand what to do and be willing to actively participate in every community empowerment program. The activities of fostering community life are carried out by the village head through the values of local wisdom and social capital that have always been embraced by the villagers, namely the spirit of *gotong royong*, which has now begun to erode and be revived.

The purpose of empowerment is to improve attitudes and behaviors by fostering community life. In practice, the village head uses the concept of awareness and willingness within the community to change for the better. This coaching has quite a lot of scope, but what is clear is that coaching means community empowerment, namely changing something so that it becomes new and has a higher value, and also contains the meaning of renewal, which is an effort to make something more in accordance with the needs, becomes better and more useful.

Community empowerment in agriculture means improving the quality of the social and economic life of the community, which is reflected in increased income and community welfare, including rice farming communities. The results of the author's interview conducted by Mr. Abdul Samad, as the village secretary stated:

*"Guidance to farmers so far has been carried out by holding good rice cultivation procedures so that the agricultural products have good results as well and this activity is carried out in the context of education to farmers who focus on carrying out community socio-economic development programs through agricultural activities."*

From the results of interviews conducted by researchers, it was found that the village government assigns tasks to field agricultural extension workers (PPL) in providing rice cultivation materials, including seed preparation, seedbeds, tillage or land, planting with the provisions of certain patterns and spacing, maintenance, watering, weeding HPT control, and harvesting, so that farmers can increase production.

#### b. Development of Farmers

Efforts made in developing human resources through farmer empowerment activities of the Center for Agricultural and Rural Self-Help Training (P4S), namely the development of human resources in the Center for Agricultural and Rural Self-Help Training (P4S), includes socialization and training in the development of planting techniques. Based on an interview with Mr. Abdul Samad, the secretary of Lalowura village said the following:

*"Empowering farmers in Lalowura Village, namely we provide socialization and training in the development of planting techniques continuously, namely once a month in carrying out empowerment to farmers at the Center for Agricultural and Rural Self-Help Training (P4S) in Lalowura Village."*

Empowerment in developing human resources is carried out through the socialization and training stages. Socialization activities such as introducing the Center for Agricultural and Rural Self-Help Training (P4S) and introducing the use of liquid fertilizer are carried out to provide knowledge to farmers related to activities at the empowerment of farmers of the Center for Agricultural and Rural Self-Help Training (P4S).

The schedule of socialization activities in the farmer empowerment program of the independent agricultural and rural training center (P4S) is scheduled continuously, where socialization and training activities are conducted once a month. In addition to introducing the program and the benefits of empowering farmers at the Center for Agricultural and Rural Self-Help Training (P4S), it is also necessary to provide advanced knowledge to farmers. Based on an interview with Mr. Abdul Samad as the Village Secretary said,

"In empowering farmers, an independent agricultural and rural training center (P4S) is held in Lalowura Village, which provides socialization and training in the development of farming businesses continuously, namely once a month in carrying out empowerment to farmers of the independent agricultural and rural training center (P4S). Thus, farmers who are members of the independent agricultural and rural training center (P4S) can improve the local economy of the farming community in Lalowura Village".

In addition to empowering the development of farming businesses through the Center for Agricultural and Rural Self-Help Training (P4S), the village government also conducts counseling attended by farmers who are members of the Center for Agricultural and Rural Self-Help Training (P4S) program.

Empowering refers to protection. In the process of empowerment, it must be prevented that the weak become weaker, due to the lack of empowerment of the farming community in the face of the strong. Partiality means that all efforts made must be directed or precisely aimed at the farming community that is in need.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the village government's role in empowering farmers is considered quite effective, as measured by aspects of cooperation, support, and independence of farmers. Cooperation carried out by the village government can provide information that is more often carried out by the village government, providing training to farmers. From the aspect of support, it can be seen from the marketing of agricultural products, which is also considered effective by appointing collectors and retailers, while from counseling and assistance, the government has also been quite good through its role in post-harvest land processing and cultivation procedures. From the perspective of farmer independence, it is also considered quite good in terms of guidance where the village government conducts rice cultivation procedures. In terms of development, the village government provides socialization and training in the development of planting techniques that can be applied by farmers.

## REFERENCES

- Anggraini, S. (2017). Development of Clean and Green Sidoarjo Farmer Empowerment Program in Sidoarjo Regency. *Public Policy and Management*, 5(1), 1-16.
- Lubis, & Merang. (2020). The Role of Village Government in Empowering Farmers in Sidoarjo Village. *Journal of Economics*, 8(2), 111-121. <https://doi.org/10.31629/juan.v8i2.2679>
- Mubyarto. (2016). Economic Conditions of Farming Communities in Wumbubangka Village, North Rarowatu Subdistrict, Bombana Regency. *Journal of Geography Education Research*, 1.
- Nasir, M. (2022). Political Development: Structuring the Administration of Local Government. *International Journal of Qualitative Research*, 2(2), 135-142.
- Novendra, M. D., Lesawengam, L., & Kandowangko, N. (2021). Introduction to Agricultural Science. *Journal of Scientific Society*, 1(1), 1-7.
- Syam, R., Ras, A., Raf, N., Rahim, H., & Suparman, M. D. A. (2022). The Role of Village Institutions in Participatory Development Planning. *International Journal of Qualitative Research*, 1(3), 201-210.