

Implementation of Administrative Management in the Development of Agribusiness Partnerships of Farmer Groups at the Agricultural Extension Center (BPP) of East Dumai District, Dumai City

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Abstract. This Community Service Program (PKM) was motivated by the limited understanding and skills of farmer groups in managing administrative systems, which are essential prerequisites for developing agribusiness partnerships. Farmer groups under the supervision of the Agricultural Extension Center (BPP) of Dumai Timur District, Dumai City, have not yet implemented well-organized data recording and administrative management, resulting in low institutional readiness to establish agribusiness partnerships. This program aimed to apply administrative management practices to strengthen farmer group institutions and support the development of agribusiness partnerships. The methods used included extension activities through lectures, interactive discussions, and hands-on practice in preparing and managing farmer group administrative records. The results indicate an improvement in farmers' understanding of the importance of administrative management in agribusiness partnerships, enhanced skills in organizing and maintaining administrative records, and the emergence of collective awareness of institutional governance. Furthermore, the program contributed to behavioral changes within farmer organizations, increased leadership roles among group administrators, and initiatives to develop more structured and sustainable agribusiness partnerships.

1. INTRODUCTION

Farmer groups are the main subjects of agricultural development and play a strategic role in increasing productivity, farmers' income, and overall welfare. As farmer organizations formed based on shared interests, farmer groups function as learning classes, platforms for cooperation, and production units that promote the improvement of agricultural human resource capacity (Shaliza et al., 2023; Ministry of Agriculture, 2016). The existence of strong and empowered farmer groups is an essential prerequisite for realizing sustainable agricultural development oriented toward improving farmers' quality of life.

Currently, agricultural development can no longer be understood in a partial manner, but must be viewed as an agribusiness system encompassing upstream, on-farm, and downstream subsystems. In this context, agribusiness partnerships become an important strategy to strengthen farmers' bargaining position within the agricultural value chain (Murdijanto & Kundarto, 2012). Agribusiness partnerships require mutually beneficial cooperation between farmer groups and other parties, such as business actors, financial institutions, and government agencies, based on both written and unwritten agreements (Falah et al., 2018; Mastur, 2019).

Various studies indicate that well-managed agribusiness partnerships are able to significantly increase farmers' income and profits (Azmie et al., 2019; Pintakami & Asdasiwi, 2020).

However, the success of agribusiness partnerships is largely determined by the institutional readiness of farmer groups, particularly in terms of administrative management and data availability. Administration is a crucial element in modern organizations because it functions as a tool for managing cooperation in order to achieve shared goals (Marliani, 2018). Orderly and systematic administration enables farmer groups to possess accurate data related to membership, production, finance, and group activities, which serves as a fundamental basis for establishing partnerships with external parties. Without adequate administrative support, farmer groups will face difficulties in gaining trust and accessing agribusiness cooperation opportunities.

Based on objective field conditions, farmer groups fostered by the Agricultural Extension Center (Balai Penyuluhan Pertanian/BPP) of Dumai Timur District, Dumai City, still face limitations in understanding and skills related to data recording and group administrative management. These limitations hinder the development of agribusiness partnerships, as farmer groups are not yet able to present the data and administrative documents required by potential partners. This condition indicates a gap between the demands of agribusiness development and the existing institutional capacity of farmer groups.

Therefore, Community Service Activities (*Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat/PKM*) are important to be implemented as an effort to strengthen the institutional capacity of farmer groups through the application of administrative management. This activity not only serves as an implementation of the university's tridharma, but also as a process of transforming and disseminating science and technology to the community. Through PKM activities, it is expected that farmer groups' understanding of the importance of administration in developing agribusiness partnerships will increase, positive social interactions between academics, extension workers, and farmers will be established, and social change will occur in the form of improved readiness of farmer groups to engage in sustainable agribusiness cooperation.

In addition to internal administrative aspects, the readiness of farmer groups to develop agribusiness partnerships is also closely related to their ability to build trust with business partners. This trust is generally built through data transparency, clear organizational structures, and consistent administrative record-keeping. Farmer groups with good administrative management tend to be more accessible to agribusiness partners because they are considered to have adequate organizational capacity and lower cooperation risks. Thus, the application of administrative management functions not only as a recording tool, but also as a strategic

instrument to strengthen the bargaining position of farmer groups within the agribusiness system.

On the other hand, the role of the Agricultural Extension Center (BPP) of Dumai Timur District, Dumai City, is crucial as a node for assistance and capacity strengthening of farmer groups. BPP functions as a center for learning, consultation, and facilitation for farmers in developing agricultural enterprises and group institutions. However, limitations in resources and the intensity of assistance mean that not all fostered farmer groups have been able to optimally implement administrative management. Therefore, the involvement of higher education institutions through PKM activities is expected to strengthen the role of BPP in assisting farmer groups, particularly in aspects of administrative management that support the development of agribusiness partnerships.

Through this PKM activity, the expected social change is not only an increase in technical knowledge and skills of farmer groups, but also the growth of collective awareness regarding the importance of professional organizational management. The application of administrative management is expected to encourage farmer groups to become more independent, accountable, and long-term cooperation-oriented agribusiness institutions. Thus, this PKM activity is expected to contribute to strengthening farmer institutions, enhancing local agribusiness competitiveness, and promoting sustainable agricultural development in Dumai Timur District, Dumai City.

2. METHOD

This Community Service Activity (PKM) was carried out using a community organizing approach that emphasizes joint action planning between the service team and the assisted community. The subjects of the activity were farmer groups located within the fostered area of the Agricultural Extension Center (BPP) of Dumai Timur District, Dumai City. The selection of the service location was based on the need of farmer groups to strengthen administrative management as a foundation for developing agribusiness partnerships, as well as the importance of synergy between higher education institutions and BPP as centers for guidance and development of agribusiness partnership networks at the district level.

The planning process was conducted in a participatory manner by involving farmer groups and BPP from the initial stage. The service team, together with the assisted subjects, identified problems related to group administrative management, institutional strengthening needs, and potential agribusiness partnerships that could be developed. The results of this identification were used as the basis for determining the focus of activities, preparing materials,

and formulating PKM implementation strategies. Active involvement of farmer groups in the planning process aimed to foster a sense of ownership of the program and encourage active participation during implementation.

The PKM implementation method employed an extension approach combined with practical training in data recording and farmer group administration. Extension activities were conducted to provide an understanding of the importance of administrative management in supporting the development of agribusiness partnerships, while practical sessions focused on training in group data recording, membership administration, simple financial administration, and activity documentation. The PKM activities were carried out at the BPP Dumai Timur Hall through stages of preparation, joint action planning, implementation, and evaluation.

3. RESULTS

The implementation of the Community Service Program (Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat/PKM) at the Agricultural Extension Center (BPP) of Dumai Timur District, Dumai City, demonstrated a participatory assistance process that was responsive to the needs of farmer groups. The activity began with an extension session addressing the importance of administrative management as a fundamental basis for developing agribusiness partnerships. At this initial stage, participants showed high enthusiasm, as reflected in their active engagement in discussions and their willingness to express long-standing challenges related to group data recording and business cooperation.

The results of the extension activities indicated an improvement in participants' understanding of the functions of farmer group administration, particularly as a legal, managerial, and strategic instrument in establishing agribusiness partnerships. Prior to the PKM activities, most farmer groups did not possess systematic and well-documented administrative records. Following the extension sessions, participants began to recognize that administration is not merely a formality, but a critical prerequisite for building trust with business partners.

The data-recording practice stage constituted a crucial component of the assistance process. During this stage, participants were directly involved in completing farmer group administrative records, including membership data, organizational structures, farming business activities, and records of production and harvest outputs. These practical activities enabled participants to translate administrative concepts into concrete actions that were aligned with the conditions and capacities of their respective groups.

Throughout the practical sessions, observable changes in participants' behavior emerged in relation to group data management. Participants demonstrated greater accuracy in recording information and increased awareness of the importance of data precision. This development represents an early indicator of a shift from previously informal working patterns toward more orderly and professional farmer group management.

Another significant outcome of the assistance process was the formation of internal agreements within farmer groups to appoint specific administrators responsible for managing group administration. This decision reflects the emergence of new institutional arrangements within farmer groups, characterized by clearer role distribution in organizational management. Such arrangements are expected to ensure the sustainability of administrative practices beyond the completion of the PKM activities.

In addition, the PKM activities facilitated the emergence of farmer group administrators who exhibited local leadership characteristics. Several participants actively assisted other members in understanding administrative recording and initiated follow-up actions, such as proposing periodic updates of group data. The emergence of these local leaders constitutes important social capital for promoting sustainable change at the community level.

From an institutional perspective, the PKM activities strengthened interactions among farmer groups, agricultural extension officers, and higher education institutions. This collaboration created a more open dialogue space regarding the potential development of agribusiness partnerships with external stakeholders, including both governmental and private institutions. As a result, farmer groups began to develop greater confidence in positioning themselves as administratively prepared business partners.

Overall, the results of the PKM activities indicate the emergence of early social change, manifested in increased awareness, behavioral change, the establishment of more structured administrative systems, and the development of local leadership. These changes provide a critical foundation for the social transformation of farmer groups toward more sustainable agribusiness partnership development.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this PKM activity demonstrate that administrative management plays a strategic role in strengthening farmer group institutions. This result aligns with the view of Shaliza et al. (2023), who argue that farmer groups, as subjects of agricultural development, require well-organized institutional systems to effectively perform their functions as learning platforms, cooperation arenas, and production units.

The increased participant understanding of administrative functions reinforces Marliani's (2018) assertion that administration constitutes a fundamental necessity in modern societies experiencing shifts in life patterns. In the context of farmer groups, administration serves as a tool for coordination, documentation, and legitimization in building cooperation with external stakeholders.

From an agribusiness system perspective, the administrative readiness of farmer groups is a crucial prerequisite for establishing partnerships across upstream and downstream sectors. This finding supports Murdiyanto & Kundarto (2012), who emphasize that agricultural development must be integrated within an agribusiness system encompassing production, processing, marketing, and supporting institutions. The observed behavioral changes in systematic data recording reflect a process of social learning. This process corresponds with Freire's (1970) participatory adult education approach, which emphasizes that critical awareness emerges through direct experience and reflection on social practices.

The emergence of new institutional arrangements, particularly the appointment of dedicated administrative officers, indicates a transformation of social structures at the community level. This transformation supports Coleman's (1988) social capital theory, which highlights that role differentiation, norms, and trust within groups can enhance collective capacity in achieving shared objectives. The emergence of local leaders during the PKM process further indicates the effectiveness of participatory assistance approaches. These local leaders function as change agents who bridge newly acquired knowledge with the daily practices of farmer groups. This phenomenon is consistent with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) human development ecology theory, which posits that individual behavioral change is influenced by interactions within immediate social systems.

In terms of agribusiness partnerships, improved administrative readiness strengthens farmers' bargaining positions in cooperative arrangements. This finding supports Falah et al. (2018), who argue that effective partnerships require both written and unwritten agreements supported by clear and transparent administrative systems. Furthermore, enhanced administrative preparedness has the potential to increase farmers' income and profits through more structured agribusiness partnerships. This conclusion aligns with the findings of Pintakami & Asdasiwi (2020) as well as Azmie et al. (2019), who assert that agribusiness partnerships can generate economic benefits when supported by strong institutional frameworks.

The interaction among higher education institutions, BPP, and farmer groups within this PKM activity reflects a triple helix collaboration model involving academia, government, and society. This collaboration strengthens the transfer of knowledge and technology tailored to local needs. From a community organizing perspective, the joint action planning stages applied in this PKM activity fostered a sense of ownership among farmer groups toward the program outcomes, which is essential for ensuring sustainability after the completion of the PKM activities.

The findings also indicate that practice-based approaches (learning by doing) are more effective than lecture-based methods alone in enhancing farmer group administrative skills. Sardin (2018) emphasizes that practical methods significantly improve knowledge and skills by directly engaging participants' experiences. Theoretically, this PKM process illustrates that administrative strengthening is not merely a technical matter, but also a social process that drives transformations in awareness, structures, and social relations within farmer groups. Accordingly, this PKM activity contributes to the development of community service theories grounded in community organizing and local institutional strengthening.

5. CONCLUSION

The Community Service Program (PKM) conducted at the Agricultural Extension Center (BPP) of Dumai Timur District, Dumai City, demonstrates that the application of administrative management is a strategic factor in strengthening farmer group institutions and a critical prerequisite for the development of agribusiness partnerships. Through extension activities and practical administrative recording, farmer groups experienced increased understanding of the importance of group data, administrative completeness, and institutional governance as a foundation for engaging in agribusiness cooperation. These findings reinforce the theoretical perspective that administration is not merely a technical activity, but a social instrument that enables coordination, trust-building, and partnership sustainability.

Reflectively, the PKM outcomes reveal institutional behavioral changes, particularly in data recording discipline, administrative orderliness, and heightened collective awareness among farmer group members regarding the importance of organizational governance. The emergence of more active and initiative-taking group administrators indicates the formation of local leadership that functions as agents of change. This transformation aligns with social capital and community empowerment theories, which emphasize that institutional capacity strengthening can enhance farmer group autonomy and bargaining power within the agribusiness system.

Based on these results, it is recommended that administrative management assistance for farmer groups be conducted on a continuous basis and integrated with agribusiness extension programs at the BPP level. Policy support and synergy among higher education institutions, agricultural extension services, and other stakeholders are also required to ensure that farmer groups develop standardized and adaptive administrative systems aligned with agribusiness partnership needs. In the future, strengthening administrative management is expected not only to enhance farmer group readiness for partnerships, but also to promote the development of an inclusive, sustainable agribusiness system oriented toward improving farmers' welfare.

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