

STRENGTHENING ECONOMY OF COASTAL COMMUNITY THROUGH BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF MINA RURAL AREA (BDPMRA) IN THE REGENCY OF BANTUL GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Empowering policies related to gender-sensitive programs for the development of marine and fishery sectors are increasingly necessary to reduce poverty and underdevelopment in the coastal areas. The study was aimed to review the access, control, benefits and participation of the fisherwomen in Business Development Program of Mina Rural Areas (BDPMRA) in the regency of Bantul. In addition, it was also used to know the institutional strengthening of the Joint Business Groups of fishermen and fisherwomen in the management of fishery and marine resources.

Descriptive qualitative approach was implemented in the research design with the stand point of gender awareness. The data collection techniques were done through in-depth interviews, literature study, observation and FGD.

The results showed the weakness of gender disaggregated data, monitoring system and lack of data based on the needs assessment, and the absence of government affirmation resulted in the lower access, control and participation of fisherwomen in BDPMRA. Besides, the program still marginalized vulnerable groups in the coastal areas. The strong desire of the fisherwomen to move forward and improve themselves needed the real, affirmative actions of government. Thus, the empowerment program is not only focused on the short-term, practical gender needs but also the investment to increase the capacities of themselves and the institutions managed and run by women.

Keywords: women's empowerment; institutional strengthening, access, control

INTRODUCTION

The main issue of gender per se is not just a question of social justice but it is to make sure that there is a more appropriate, worthy reward in the sustainable human development itself. In fact, It is really hard to realize the management of marine resources into the valuable chain of the fishermen and fisherwomen actively taking part together in the sector even though the fisherwomen play an important role and have a strong influence in the fishery and marine sectors. Of the 86 countries, 5.4 million women work in the marine and fishery sector, even in China and India, the number of fisherwomen reached 24%, and more than 60% of fishery products are marketed by fisherwomen (FAO, 2012).

The condition of poverty and inequality suffered by coastal communities results in some difficulties to achieve the expected equality. In Indonesia, gender in this sector is also hindered by the lack of access to capital, markets and technology, social protection owned by fishermen and patriarchal culture. Empowerment programs launched by the government often ends in failure. The results of coastal community empowerment were not optimal due to these factors: the weakness of supporting system of fishery and marine, lack of government policies related to environment support (policy environment) (Sakaria, 2014; Partosuwirdjo 2010) and the poor resources of coastal communities (Sahudiyono, 2009). The new

institutional construction in the coastal areas were confronted by the social resistance because of the local economic organizations, and the brokers who felt threatened by the presence of "modern institutions" such as KUD Mina (Anggraini, 2008).

PROBLEMS

The phenomenon of poverty and gender inequality also occurred in Bantul district, one of the target of BDPMRA (Business Development Program of Mina Rural Areas) in Indoensia. The aim of BDPMRA was to develop the productive fishery business. Pre survey researchers showed that the Community Direct Assistance Program for Business Development Program of Mina Rural Areas (CDAP-BDPMRA) for Fishing has not been performed optimally in encouraging the economic independence of fishermen and fisherwomen.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- a. How are the access, control, participation and benefits received by fisherwomen and fishermen related to the Community Direct Assistance Program for Business Development Program of Mina Rural Areas (CDAP-BDPMRA) in the government of Bantul Regency to empower the fishermen - gender perspective?
- b. How is institutional strengthening of the Business Group of the fishermen in the management of fishery resources in Bantul Regency- gender perspective?

Empowerment of Fisherwomen

Empowerment is a process in which people become strong enough to participate in, share control over and influence the events and institutions that affect their lives. Empowerment aims to increase the powers of those who are weak or unfortunate (Ife, 1995).

In the perspective of gender, empowerment approach is more reliant on the framework of women competencies to improve the independence (self-reliance) and increase the power in herself (internal strength) (Moser, 1993). The empowerment of women must build the power within in order to increase women's ability to control the resources and make the decisions (Kabeer; 2005: 15-16).

The development approach through various programs to eliminate the poverty has not considered the benefits to women and men fairly. It contributed to the emergence of gender inequality and injustice. Strengthening the position of women is still difficult to achieve since the social structural forts such as a patriarchal culture result in a weak bargaining position of women. Some serious problems of marginalization, discrimination and exploitation are still confronted by women. Even they do not have any voices in the formal decision-making process. All of these make the poverty of women become more severe. The application of a gender perspective in view of poverty is merely to assert that poverty experienced by women is specific so that it is necessary to have a special handling to the matters (Darwin, 2005: 164). Women's empowerment would be meaningful when it included three things: (1) capacity building that improves women's capabilities; (2) cultural change that is in favor of the women; (3) structural adjustment that stands on the side of women (Muttalib, 1993).

RESEARCH METHODS

This is a type of a descriptive-qualitative, gender-oriented research. The selection of the research site in Bantul was done purposively. The data collection techniques included indepth interview, observation, focus group discussions, and technical documentation. The key informants were purposively selected. Informants consisted of fishermen, fisherwomen and managers of local coastal institutions, officials of relevant agencies, Department of Fishery

and Marine, Department of Tourism, Cooperation and Business Groups of fisherman/fisherwomen in Bantul District. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was first performed by eight (8) representatives from the recipients of BDPMRA, the second one was done with seven (7) guiding instructors, the third was carried out by inviting 10 (ten) stakeholders namely: the members of the working group, the section chief of Directorate of Marine and Fishery (DMF) and members of Related Working Units. Interactive analysis techniques used included: data reduction; data presentation and drawing conclusions or verification (Miles and Huberman, 1992). Triangulation technique was implemented to ensure and develop the validity of the data in this qualitative research.

Description of Research Area

Bantul Regency is administratively divided into 17 districts, 75 villages/urban villages, 933 hamlets and 5818 the Neighborhood Associations (RT). Bantul land area is 50 685 hectares or 506.85 km², and the sea area is ± 125.936 km². People who rely their livelihood on the sectors of agriculture are 41.17% , stock husbandry 14.73% and fisheries 3.24%, while 40.86% are in industry, trade, services and others. The increasing number of fishermen turning to be the *vannamei* shrimp farmers has given a significant impact on the decreasing interest of fishing. It also shifts the work patterns of fisherwomen, considering that not all activities of shrimp farms involve women. (Performance Report of Department of Marine and Fishery, Bantul 2015).

Informant Profile

In 2012 there were 20 BDPMRA recipients consisting of some groups of processors and marketers; in 2013 there were 5 groups, and in 2014 there were as many as 9 groups, and the members of the groups were generally fisherwomen. In 2012 BDPMRA recipients were all catfish-cultivating fishermen with the total number of 20 groups, and in 2013 there were 9 groups receiving the aid consisting of 8 groups of carp cultivation and a group of catfish cultivation. On average, the members of each group were about 8-10 people.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gender Role

The role of women in fishery sector is undoubtedly recognized since they provide their significant contributions in it. Although they have their important, strategic role, their position is still marginalized, especially, in the access and control of the resources and benefits such as: credit, technology, information and educational opportunities. The problem is exacerbated by the government policies in various agricultural activities that do not take the women in the consideration.

In the study site, the activities of seeding, nursery and caring were dominated by the fishermen. Although the majority of women were also actively involved in those processes, the fisherwomen were more dominant in the decision making of the fishery product marketing and processing than the fishermen. Product processing is generally done at home so that it is more comfortable, practical and efficient because it can be done at any time. Fishermen can also help these activities after they finish their work in the fields. Marketing activities are culturally dominated by the fisherwomen. It is a kind of customs or tradition in the region that marketing is the duty and authority of women.

Both fishermen and fisherwomen have to face some changes resulted from by the social shift of their roles. In 2010, some new tourist destination was developed, for example, greatly influence the life of coastal communities. Beaches became an impressive magnet for them to diversify their businesses by opening restaurants or shops. The regulating concept of the new

arrangement of beaches or coastal areas is able to synergize some existing potentials such as hybrid power plants as an educational tour, biogas, culinary and, of course, beaches. The business diversification was, automatically, considered more promising and made the fishermen in Bantul to spend more time on Saturdays and Sundays to accompany their wives in running their restaurants or shops. It was a truly rational, logical and appropriate choice considering the high operational cost of fishing at sea and the bad climates. They relied on the supply of fish for their restaurants from the brokers of Pacitan, Cilacap and Semarang although the price was more expensive.

Access and Control of Fisherwomen on BDPMRA

CDAP-BDPMRA policy was launched for coastal communities as a stimulant to grow the productive assets for an incentive in the development of coastal economic activities. It provided an access in the form of funding for the purchase of equipment, building some facilities and institutional strengthening economic efforts. The empirical data indicated that the access and control of the fisherwomen to the fishery resources were still low. Not all the planners and policy makers paid their special attention to the gender issue as a priority. It was reflected in the lack of identification of the needs of the women in coastal areas due to the limited understanding and mentoring in coaching and guiding the fishermen and fisherwomen in the activities of catching and processing fish.

A series of program stages including socialization, planning, and recruitment was tainted by political interests of Working Group (WG). WG was the executive or the managing Teams of PUMP-PB at the central office established by the Director General of Fishery Cultivation to coordinate the implementation of the BDPMRA-PB at the level of the Directorate-General. The candidates of BDPMRA recipients were determined more by the WG consisting of party officials in cooperation with the steering committee - the Executive Team of BDPMRA-PB- at the provincial level. Then the remainders were given to the candidates proposed by the local coaching agents. The impact of this kind of recruitment really ruined the trust of the groups of traders and fish farmers/breeders to the coaching agents. Their recommendations were not fully considered by the WG team. Even BDPMRA revolving was known as "aspiration fund".

The process of BDPMRA socialization was not fully opened. The researchers confirmed it to the competent technical selecting team who had the right. They admitted that there was a lack of socialization. The first BDPMRA was implemented in 2013 and was not openly carried out because it would complicate the task of the selecting team if it was informed to all WG in coastal areas of Bantul (*interview with extension N, July 2015*).

In terms of access to funding, during the first year of its implementation in the coastal villages of Bantul regency, the results showed that the majority of CDA-BDPMRA recipients were elite groups in the coastal regions. Ironically, the majority of the coastal groups with limited capital and assets, low incomes, small fisherman and fish merchants was not touched by this program. They were ignored and excluded from it. BDPMRA access to loans allocated to fishermen was much higher than that to fisherwomen. More fishermen were invited on the various activities of counseling. It totally differed from the fisherwomen who spent more time more by working in the domestic sector and away from the information access.

The differences in access and control over the resources of fishery business between the fishermen and the fisherwomen were inseparable from the cultural influences and stereotypical factors in which the division of labor or work / tasks / responsibilities between men and women prevailing in coastal communities. From the cultural standpoint, the husband

as the head of household has the power and is the determinant in deciding all policies in family life. In contrast to the position of the wife, she must have their docile nature, and she is devoted to her husband.

The fisherwomen had almost no control over the ships, and boats, except pools or land for fisheries. There was also no access to the cultivation equipment for the fisherwomen. The fisherwomen's access to pest and disease control of fish was totally banned or eliminated because they were considered to have less understanding on it, and just fishermen really understood it due to the frequency of their counseling attendance. It resulted in no access for the fisherwomen to understand the pest and disease control of fish.

Participation of Coastal Communities in BDPMRA

The lower level of access and control of fisherwomen to BDPMRA gave an impact on the program itself. The representatives of fisherwomen in the socialization meeting were only to fulfill the quota requiring the representation of women in a meeting forum. In terms of participation quality, the fisherwomen's voices were rarely considered as an input to the interests of women when the program was implemented. Furthermore, there was no inclusion of women in the socialization and consultation of the program. Similar to previous studies (Sahudiyono,2009; Anggraini 2008), it also indicated that participation of women in various activities organized by BDPMRA Bantul was quite good. They were active enough. It could be seen from the level of attendance and the output of the training. Unlike the groups of fish cultivation and traders, their attendance and output in the training were not optimal. It was due to the various activities of the fishermen.

Benefits of BDPMRA

BDPMRA funding came from the state budget of MMF. Funding of Rp 65,000,000, - was given to some groups of fish cultivation and traders. The fund was allocated to support the trainings of entrepreneurship and catfish and carp breeding by using the tarpaulins. They found that the training was very useful. They learned the simple, technical stages related to: container preparation, eggs hatching, larvae caring/treatment, seed sorting, feeding, environmental sanitation, water management, and harvesting.

At the beginning of the training the members of the group were interested in fish farming. Then, due to lack of monitoring, they were less motivated. Their business lost, even most of the tarpaulins and catfish breeding were sold. It was quite understandable because this group was formed by certain elites who merely wanted to get some funds of BDPMRA. They had low motivation. On the contrary, the groups, selected by the coaching trainers, developed well and even their income increased significantly. Initially, before they got the assistance, their earning was about 500-750 thousand rupiahs per month and after that it increased up to 600 thousand to 1 million rupiahs.

In contrast to the group of fish processors and marketers, the source BDPMRA fund was taken from the Directorate of Business and Investment, Directorate General P2HP, MMAF worth Rp.69.900.000,- which was for the purchase of tools and each group got a unit consisting of a-two-furnace high pressure stove, a-three-kg gas cylinder, a hose and a regulator. FGD data indicated that some of BDPMRA fund was used to buy the equipment and some was for working capital. It was because, in fact, the fisherwomen's group were in need of funds for their business development. Although they did not receive as much as it was expected, BDPMRA fund was quite beneficial to the fish processors and marketers. Besides, the recipients were required to attend the trainings of entrepreneurship, simple financial management and post-harvest processing.

Networking ability of the two major groups of fish processors and marketers significantly increased to advanced category. Surprisingly most of their members were fisherwomen. Outgoing attitude, easy socialization and the need to improve the economy of families encouraged them to expand their business networks. The condition was totally different from that of the fish farming group which were dominated by fishermen as the members of the groups. They could not develop the business very well because they consider it as a kind of side job.

It was also revealed that distribution of BDPMRA fund was out of target which could be seen through the duplication of names having family connections with the previous recipients. The condition resulted in some protests and making the coastal communities inconvenient. Groups of fish merchants, farmers, processors and marketers were reluctant to attend some meetings, workshops conducted by MMF, Bantul with their various reasons such as a busy fishing, a family matter, an incorrect time and others. They were protesting silently because they did not receive the funding. This restlessness also influenced a number of public figures or local leaders who were excluded and not involved in any consultations or discussions related to the problem but they had to intervene to calm things down.

The condition was captured by the chairman of the chief of the instructors and the related agency. Therefore, before the election of 2014, all kinds of revolving funds was halted so as to prevent any further frictions. The researchers confirmed it to some recipients proposed by the local legislative members. They informed that they were required to deposit 15% of the BDPMRA funds received to the proposing party.

Institutional Strengthening of Groups of Fisherwomen and Fishermen

The BDPMRA's fund was quite helpful for the groups of fish processors and marketers. The supporting equipment given by BDPMRA really improved their business because the skills taught in the training were easily applied and practiced. They got accustomed to talking together about their interests and needs in group, drawing up the common rules, understanding the mechanisms of collective decision-making based on the interests and needs. A partnership among the groups of fish processors, marketers and cultivation had been initiated after the networking formation was established. Thus, the presence of BDPMRA could be as a bridge for the two groups. It confirmed the opinions of Larson and Smajgl (2006) that institutions could foster the economic growth throughout the expansion of the existing businesses and the freedom of economic opportunity.

Some difficulties to find the raw materials faced by the group of fish processors could partially be overcome by the groups of fish traders and cultivation. Nee (2005) asserted how the interactions of institutions with the social norms could drive the economic interests of the individuals or groups. Learning from the previously existing harmony and the common interest in improving the welfare of members, each group was trying hard to show the best performance. As the concept of social exchange of Blau, social exchange in fisherman communities was based on the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Taking into considerations that behavior was based on a system of individual values and the value of the social environment, which, if favorable, would be repeated (Blau 1964, Ritzer: 1995).

On the other hand, the Annual Report of MMF Bantul 2012 and 2013 revealed that the implementation of BDPMRA left a series of problems:

- a. The lower of skills of fisherwomen, the absence of an established networking makes it difficult to produce a qualified fish products.
- b. BDPMRA's training was still a continuation of a domestic role, not to develop the potential of women as individuals in order to be independent and be able to

make their own decisions so that it could alter the unequal power relations to reciprocal one in the domestic sphere and in the surrounding communities.

Empowerment through BDPMRA program had to be imbued with the spirit of gender on implementation of gender bias. It should be a process to change the existing power relations where women had the control over resources (Kabeer, 2005, 2004; Mosser, 1993). The power distribution was done by changing the social structures because the empowerment aimed to increase the power of the weak, including women (Ife, 2008: 316).

CONCLUSION

The weaknesses of gender disaggregated data, monitoring system, achievement indicators, and no government affirmation lead to the lower level of women participation in access and control over BDPMRA program. It's still marginalizes vulnerable groups of the coastal communities. Nevertheless, the participation of the groups is just symbolic at the beginning, and now it develops into advanced category under the assistance of the instructors or trainers, and finally it can be categorized into self-help groups.

Optimizing program measured only by administrative values will result in no change in the position and status of fisherwomen. They are still vulnerable to be subordinated and marginalized community groups. The strong desire of fisherwomen to move forward needs the affirmative action of the State and the authorities to facilitate the access to and control over the resources. Thus, the empowerment program is not a short-term program, only focused on the practical gender needs, but it is a kind of investment to improve the capacity of the institutions themselves run by women.

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