

ISSN: 2460-8243, Vol. 1, September 2015

PROCEEDINGS

ISEPA 2015

**INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR
ON ECONOMIC AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Published by:

Pusat Penelitian dan Pengembangan pada Masyarakat IPS

Program Pascasarjana STIA Bina Taruna Gorontalo

E-Mail : pim.pps.stia@binatarunagorontalo.ac.id

Website : <http://binatarunaditipgo.ac.id>



PROCEEDINGS OF
INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON
ECONOMIC & PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
ISEPA 2015

Call for Papers
International Seminar on Economics and Public Administration
Gorontalo, Indonesia
2015

Call for Papers:

International Seminar on Economic and Public Administration – ISEPA

Main Issue: Poverty Alleviation

Gorontalo, September 30th, 2015

ISSN: 2460-8343, Vol. 1, September 2015



First Published 2015

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Program Committee : Dr. Ir. H. Azis Rachman, MM.
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Cover Design : Suleman Mlu
Logo Design : Zulfahmi, S.Si.

Published by:

Pusat Penelitian dan Pengabdian pada Masyarakat (P3M)

Program Pascasarjana STIA Bina Taruna Gorontalo – Indonesia

Address : Jl. Prof. Dr. Aloei Saboe No. 173, Wongkaditi – Gorontalo

Telephone : +62-435-834062, Facsimile: +62-435-831299

E-Mail : p3m.pps.stiabinataruna@gmail.com

Website : <http://binamandiri-glo.ac.id>

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PROGRAM PASCASARJANA STIA DINA TARUNA GORONTALO

Jl. Prof. Dr. Alaei Sahoe No. 173 Wongkadiri, Kota Utara – Gorontalo

Telephone: +62-435-834062, Facsimile +62-435-831299

E-Mail: p3m.pps.stiabinataruna@gmail.com

Website: <http://binamundiri-glo.ac.id>

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**EFFORTS IN IMPROVING THE PRODUCTION OF COCOA
THROUGH THE POLICY OF COCOA GERNAS AND THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY
IN POHUWATO REGENCY OF GORONTALO PROVINCE**

Irawaty Igrisa
Gorontalo State University
igrisa_ung@yahoo.co.id

Abstract

Research on efforts to improve the yields of cocoa through the implementation of Cocoa Gernas production and the implementation of agricultural technology in the regency of Pohuwato of Gorontalo Province aims at 1) identifying and analyzing the yields of cocoa production in the regency of Pohuwato, 2) identifying and finding supporting and challenging factors of cocoa production in the Pohuwato, 3) identifying and analyzing agricultural and farming technology applied by agricultural or farmer groups in Pohuwato. This research uses descriptive qualitative approach and for the data collection observation, intensive interview and documentation are applied. Data acquired is validated through a) Extended observation, b) Specific observation and interview, c) triangulation of data source, d) Focus Group Discussion. The data of research's result are articulated through techniques namely a) Data Reduction, b) Data Tabulation, and c) Conclusion Drawing. Findings of the research are 1). Improving yields of cocoa farming in the regency of Pohuwato is shown by the extension of farm area and the increased number of cacao production every year. The efforts done to extend the cacao production is by improving the agricultural and farming technology used by the farmers, helping the cacao to meet the quality standard of the market, 2) Supporting and challenging factors of cocoa production in the regency of Pohuwato are human resources (farmers), the culture within cocoa farmers, innovation by the farmers (supporting factors), and the lack of quality of cocoa farming facilitators, insufficient knowledge regarding the cacao plantation and minimum support from the government in the form of policy (challenging factor) and 3). The implementation of technology related to cocoa plantation and agriculture in Pohuwato has not been maximized. The human resources in the form of cacao farming facilitators have not met the need of the farmers which caused them to lack of skills of agricultural technology. Many farmers are still using traditional methods in doing the pre and post-harvest which reduced the quality of yields. It is expected that in the future cocoa production from the regency of Pohuwato increases in the matter of quality and quantity.

Keywords: The increase of production and the application of cacao farming technology

INTRODUCTION

One of government policies addressed toward increasing the income and welfare of society is by launching the National Movement of Cocoa Revitalization – known in Bahasa Indonesia as Gerakan Nasional (Gernas) Kakao and was initiated by The Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia in 2009. In the regency of Pohuwato this cocoa Gernas program has taken place since 2010 and brought changes on the cultivation of agriculture and farming by the farmers. Several activities done in this program are rehabilitation and intensification of cocoa plants supported by funds from central government especially in the form of budget for assistance or facilitation allocated for cocoa farmers.

This Cocoa Gernas policy is basically expected to increase the yields and quality of cocoa in the location where the policy is taking place. Nevertheless, based on a research done before this policy has not been applied the way it had to be. According to the facts found on the field, there are still a great number of farmers in Pohuwato who have not properly understood and had the skills needed to apply proper technology of farming and agriculture, resulted in poor quality and quantity of cocoa production. Besides that there hasn't been any marketing and distribution system that is formally done in Pohuwato. Over the years the raw cocoa from Pohuwato has been distributed through collectors within the area of Central Sulawesi (Cason and Igitisa, 2013).

According to the data in the Farming and Agriculture Office of Gorontalo Province, by the time the Gernas program was launched it was shown that there is 4.680 ha of productive lands in the Province of Gorontalo and 50% or

around 2.469 were located with Pohuwato. This shows that Pohuwato the right place to become the center cocoa cultivation in Gorontalo compared to 5 other sub districts/cities. 2012, the width of farms and production rate of cocoa in Pohuwato increased from 2.469 to 4.896,35 ha with 4.270,65 tons of production (BF 2012).

Theoretically speaking, it can be assumed that the rate of cocoa productivity in Pohuwato has significantly increased. This has helped the increase Standard Rate of The Average Cocoa Production in Pohuwato to become 27 tons per hectare. But compared the National Standard Rate of The Average Cocoa Production, which is 2 tons per hectare, the production rate in Pohuwato is still below the standard.

A number of problems are still related to the application of the program of Cocoa Gernas. This program only focusing on the renewal and rehabilitation of cocoa plants. On the other hand several technical aspects related to the use of agricultural and farm technology such as cultivation, maintenance, pests and diseases, extirpation and post-harvest techniques have been given good care. Although there is facilitation and education program farmer groups within the Gernas program, it is believed that two facilities will not be enough to cover up and responsible for the whole area of Pohuwato sub district. Most of facilitator Pohuwato are specialized in agriculture and not cocoa plantation. This causes inaccurate and minimum transfer knowledge about agricultural and farm technology application among farmers.

It is also found that farmers are lacking of sufficient knowledge techniques in preserving the cocoa

place. Many cocoa plants are grown themselves without intensive efforts of preservation. When pest and diseases come farmers are still unable to face them, causing decrease in cocoa production. The post-harvest techniques are also considered to be inadequate which potentially causes the possibility of not cocoa plants to grow imperfectly. Besides that, the cocoa are sold in raw condition without any process of fermentation which makes the quality of the cocoa to become very poor and the price is less competitive, making less income for the farmers. Therefore it needs intensive study on this issue through a research entitled "the effort to increase the yield and production of cocoa through Genome policy and the implementation of agricultural and farming technology in the regency of Poluwato". The focuses of the research are:

1. Identifying the rate of cocoa production in Poluwato
2. Supporting and challenging factors of cocoa production in Poluwato
3. Agricultural and farming technology applied by cocoa farmers in Poluwato

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

A. The Concept of Production Yield Increase

In agriculture and farming one indicator to decide the success of farmers is by looking at the increase of their yield or production. The same applies to cocoa farmers whose yield and production rate fluctuates every year based on how they apply the agricultural technology and how they preserve the cocoa plantation.

Productive is what is produced, or made by the efforts and ideas, farms, family, forces and others that produce

income for whoever working on them (Kamali and Anandaya, 2013:159). In our ability concentration people often misunderstand the term to increase and increasing. To increase is to bring up or to double the ability, to elevate the power of thinking, efforts, and the ability to absorb and to buy. On the other hand increasing is seen as a method, results or process to increase.

The efforts to increase or to qualitatively or quantitatively extend something can be done through a number of ways. In agriculture it can be done through expanding the production rate by carefully choosing high quality seeds, right methods of fertilization, integrated pest management, good irrigation and cultivation by using tractor.

Besides that there is also an intensification method, which is an effort to grow production by fitting or changing production elements, either the production factors or the methods.

The concept of growing yield or production in this research is intended as an effort done by the cocoa farmers to control their production, by using correct method of agricultural and farming technology such as the application of cultivation techniques, preservation, pests and diseases examination and proper post-harvest techniques. It is expected that by using the right agricultural and farming techniques the yield and production will grow and the income of cocoa farmers will increase as well.

B. The Concept of Applying Farming/Agricultural Technology

Farming and agriculture technology is the technical skills based on science or agricultural and farming engineering (Kamali and Anandaya, 2013:187). The progress and development in any field of life can never be achieved without technology, if the right technol-

logy is not applied in agriculture and farming the yields will not grow. The same also applies on cocoa which is one branch of agriculture that is constantly encouraged by the government to sustain national economy.

Technology is often interpreted as a branch of science that relates to skills in industry and agriculture technology is often seen as methods of working on agricultural fields. In this are methods such as how to spread the seeds and preserving and harvesting the plants. What we need to know is the impact of a technology on the productivity of agriculture. Low productivity of consumption plants is often caused by the difficulty of farmers in adopting new technology. The lack of understanding and knowledge on technology is mostly caused by low capital and the lack of agricultural skills.

Several agricultural technology that can be used to grow the yields of production are the cultivation techniques, handling the pests and diseases, post-harvest techniques, yield quality increase method, preservation, cultivation, safety and products marketing method. Therefore the scope of agriculture technology includes a number of formal applied sciences from the cultivation to marketing aspects. (<http://pas.komnus.com/id/berita/Kondisi-Pertanian-Indonesia.php>).

RESEARCH METHOD

The research was done in the sub district of Pohuwato, Gorontalo Province with 5 (five) designated sub regencies as the main targets of the research. The subjects of the research include farmer groups in five sub regencies; Taluditi, Rancangan, West Popayato, East Popayato, and Patilanggi. Method used in this research was descriptive qualitative method with study case approach, whe-

re the researcher used the phenomenon that was happening to the cocoa farmers in Pohuwato and the researcher is the main instrument of the research data collection. The researcher was trying to identify the phenomenon that was happening in increasing the yields of cocoa production through the application of agriculture and farming technology in the Pohuwato regency.

Data sources come from: 1) Primer data source, which is data acquired from research informants, in this case the executors of the policy and subjects of policy namely the cocoa farmers, 2) Secondary data sources, which are data from documentation/publications and reports about research results from locations that are relevant with the research focus. As for data acquiring the data collection techniques used are 1) Interviews, 2) Observations, 3) Documentations.

Techniques of data validation are done through: 1) Extended observation, 2) Continuous focus, 3) Focus Group Discussion. Data analysis of Miles and Hibermas (1994) offers data analysis techniques through: 1) Data reduction 2) Data tabulation, and 3) Conclusion Drawing

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Policy of Cocoa Farm Potentials in Pohuwatu Regency

The effort to develop the potentials of cocoa farm resources has been done since 1990's when Pohuwato was still part of Gorontalo regency. This is proven by the cocoa farm developed by the Agriculture and Farming Department of Gorontalo Regency at the time. In 2003, along with the change of Pohuwato as independent regency the cultivation of cocoa was continued by the Department of Agriculture and Fa-

ming of Pohuwato. The potential development of cocoa farming goes along with a National Policy known as the National Movement of Growing the Cocoa Production and Quality (Gerakan Nasional Peningkatan Produksi dan Mutu Kakao (Gernas Kakao) that has been initiated by the Agriculture Ministry of Indonesia since 2009. In 2010 the Gernas Kakao has been started in Pohuwato regency and has brought significant changes on the farming pattern done by the farmers. Some of the activities done through the Gernas Kakao are Kakao renewal program, rehabilitation and intensification of cacao plants supported by funds from the central government especially in the form of budget for facilitation and education for the farmers. In this case there are two agriculture and farming facilitators hired and are assigned to provide assistance for the farmers in the center area of cocoa cultivation in Pohuwato regency.

The growth of cocoa farm potentials can be seen from the size of the area and the rate of cocoa production in Pohuwato. The data taken from the Farming and Livestock Department of Gorontalo Province in 2014 show that the size of cocoa farming area in Pohuwato was 5.171 hectares with production rate of 2.960 tons. This growth was the impact of Cocoa Gernas done in 2010 to 2011, where the size of area before that was only 4.341 hectare and production rate was 2.566 tons in 2011. The cocoa production has shown significant result after the Gernas. If the potentials of areas can be optimized through the application of agriculture and farming technology there is a big expectation for cocoa production to increase. Therefore it is really important to grow the cocoa production through applying the right agriculture technology in the whole far-

ming area planted by cocoa in Pohuwato.

From the description we can strongly assume that the effort to grow the cocoa production can be done by the farmers through the application of the right agriculture and farming technology in order to improve the quality and the quantity of farmers' cocoa production. In this case farmer groups are expected to become useful media for the farmers to understand and to apply the right agriculture and farming technology especially in cultivation techniques, preservation, harvesting, post-harvesting, fermentation, drying and marketing of the cocoa. The role of farmer groups can be optimized through the assistance of cocoa farming facilitators and other farmers who are skilled and experienced enough with the technology. The final impact of the activity is that it is expected to help better production and growth of cocoa farmers' income and people of Pohuwato in general.

B. The Growth of Cocoa Production in Pohuwato Regency

The Growth of Cocoa production in Pohuwato Regency can be seen through the extended size of area and increase in cocoa production every year. This growth is strongly related to the geographical location of sub regency and of the cocoa cultivation farm. From the research it is found that there are 13 (thirteen) sub regencies in Pohuwato but not all of them meet the conditions to become cocoa farm. The areas within the sub regencies that are suitable to become the cocoa plantation sites are generally located at the higher grounds while others are used to cultivate oil palms, coffee beans, nutmegs, cloves, corns, chili and other commodities. Therefore, in this research the team only determined five

sub regencies to become the research locations namely Taluditi, Randangan, West Popayato, East Popayato, and Pattilanggio.

According to the Local Medium-Ranged Development Plan (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Daerah) of Pohuwato for 2010–2015, the sub regency of Taluditi with seven villages and with the size of 159.97 Km square, along with other sub regencies, become the main suppliers of cocoa production in Pohuwato and made as locus in this research.

Based on the result of the previous research the effort of cocoa cultivation has helped the raise of income of farmers in Pohuwato even though in a not too significant rate (Canon and Igrisa, 2014). Nevertheless, several other policies are still necessary to improve the quality and the quantity of cocoa yields in Pohuwato which is the follow up program of the 2010 cocoa gemas.

Among the five sub regencies, there is an extended size of area followed by the increase of cocoa yields that happens only in the sub regency of Taluditi. This sub regency turns out to be the right place to become the center of cocoa cultivation center in the regency of Pohuwato. The increase of production in Taluditi is followed by the extension of cocoa's plantation area. In the year of 2012 there had been extension of lands as much as 459 hectares from 3.271 hectares to becoming 3.730 hectares in 2013. This is followed by the growth of cocoa production for as much as 742 tons; from 4.906.50 tons in 2012 to 5.649 in 2013.

C. Efforts to increase production of cocoa in Pohuwato regency

The local government of Pohuwato has worked to increase cocoa production

through a number of policies that are the continuation of the Gemas Cocoa Movement done in 2010–2011. One of the forms of efforts to increase the production of cocoa is by designating the Taluditi sub regency as the center of cocoa cultivation area as well as some other places within the regency of Pohuwato where cocoa can fit in to grow.

Some results of research indicated that the increase of cocoa production involved a number of parties such as the Agriculture, Fishery, and Farming Department, the Facilitator Institution at the regency and sub regency areas and all stakeholders related to the cocoa cultivation effort. The effort of increasing cocoa production has been done by the government through a number of programs and funding assistance to the farmers. There is reality found by the researcher indicating that some of the farmers were still lacking of proper knowledge of agriculture and farming understanding of cocoa. There are also several other programs launched to increase the cocoa production such as the Farmer Group Empowerment Program through strengthening the group and giving information related to cocoa farming technology.

Over the years the Department of Agriculture and Farming of Pohuwato has done correctional and empowerment efforts to the farmers group through integrated facilitation / education program to all farmer groups within the area of Pohuwato. This is an integrated program with the one from the Department of Farming and Livestock of Gorontalo Province and it is expected that these groups and institution will strengthen each other in order to collectively increase the production of cocoa. Technical assistance is also

given related to the application of farming technology such as cultivation techniques, preservation, pest extermination, harvest and post-harvest. Some other materials that are also expected to improve the quality of cocoa are fermentation techniques, drying and processing of the cocoa to become a productive commodity that will contribute to the raise of people's income.

Some of the programs found by the research team and have been done by the Agriculture and Farming Department of Pohuwato along with related departments as a result to improve the quality of cocoa production in Pohuwato, namely:

1. The distribution of pesticides to prevent the pests and diseases against the cocoa plants.
2. The distribution of cocoa processing equipment to accelerate the process of raw cocoa into packaged products.
3. Funding assistance to purchase original and fermented cocoa to the results processing unit or farmer groups, so that it is expected that the cocoa can be purchased, stored and sold without going through the collectors.
4. The empowerment of cocoa farmer groups, and it is expected that they can apply the technology of cocoa plantation and increase the production especially in the center area of cocoa farms in Pohuwato.
5. Improving the capacity of farmers through technical assistance that is related to cultivation techniques, harvesting, post harvesting, and fermentation and drying of the cocoa which are expected to improve the quality and quantity of the cocoa of the farmers.

According to the research team some of the programs done by the Department of Agriculture and Farming of Pohuwato have not really been running effectively and efficiently. Therefore it is really necessary to run an evaluation on the program that has been done by the assigned departments in order to improve cocoa production. There are certain programs that directly gave so much benefit to the farmers but on the other hand there are also certain programs from which the farmers have not benefited from, especially in processing their raw cocoa.

One program that needs evaluation, according to the research team, is the one providing equipment to process the raw cocoa into ready products. The equipment have been handed over to the farmers since 2012 and yet have not been used. The tool has very large capacity but the farmers, unfortunately, have not had the skills to operate it properly, especially in processing the raw cocoa into ready products for the market. Besides that the operational cost of the machine is very expensive and is unequal with the production. Therefore the farmer groups are not interested in using the equipment and leave it unused in the storage place.

Another reality found on the field was that establishing the Crops Processing Unit of (Unit Pengolah Hasil/UPH) by allocating Rp. 90.000.000 to the farmer group as the one in charge turned out to be ineffective. The farmer group which is in charge of the unit in reality is unable to use the budget given by the government. The use and allocation of the budget were left for the head of the farmer group to decide; for example in making the decision to purchase the cocoa, the use of the budget and others. The domination of the chief of the farmer group indicates the inaccuracy

Efforts in Improving The Production of Cocoa Through The Policy of Cocoa Certas and
The Implementation of Agricultural Technology in Pohuwato Regency of Gorontalo
Province

applied through education by the agriculture department and other related stakeholders. The education and facilitation need to be done in a more effective way to allow the farmers to absorb the materials. Besides that the quality of competencies of the facilitators need to be overcome. They need to be the ones who understand and master the technology as expected by the cocoa farmer groups.

Therefore we can conclude that sufficient well skilled facilitators in facilitating the application of agriculture technology to reach the farmer groups are really necessary. Common commitment between the facilitators and farmer groups is the key to increasing the yields of cocoa production in Pohuwato regency. With the increase it is expected that people's income will raise as well meaning that proper technology can bring significant changes on the life of people in Pohuwato as well as people in Gorontalo in general.

CLOSING

From the description, it can be concluded that:

1. The cocoa production in the regency of Pohuwato increases every year. The effort done for this is by applying the agriculture and plantation technology of the cocoa by the farmers helping the quality and the quantity of the production to meet the standard of the market
2. Supporting and challenging factors of the cocoa production in Pohuwato regency are the human resources quality, innovation by the farmers (supporting factors) the lack of facilitators of cocoa plantation, insufficient understanding of the

farming technology and less support from the government (challenging factors).

3. The application of agriculture and farming technology of the cocoa plantation in Pohuwato is caused by the facilitators who have not met the needs of the farmers causing them to lack the skill to use the technology and turn back to traditional methods of preservation, harvest and post-harvest techniques. This resulted in the poor quality of the cocoa production which of course needs to be improved.

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