ABSTRACT

Community Participation Networking: A Case Study of Gabah Production in Karawang Regency, West Java.

The objectives of the present study are: (1) to identify levels of interest among stakeholders in the gabah (unhulled rice grain) production network in Karawang Regency, West Java, (2) to formulate determining factors in the development of a community participation network in the gabah production, (3) to devise an archetypal network which has the potential to increase farmers' income in the region. Among the important findings of the study were as follows. The relationships amongst stakeholders are affected by several factors, including common needs, trust, sense of communal togetherness, similarities in task and functions among public and private institutions. These relationships act as a structure for a community participation network in the gabah business in Karawang Regency. Using TOWS, the present study examine the external and internal environment of the network to produce 4 strategies to enable the development of a community participation network, as follows: (1) empowerment of Farmers Community Cooperatives, (2) application of post-harvest technology, (3) creation of a central market, (4) improvement of farmers/competencies and empowerment of the Village Unit Cooperative. To determine the development priority, a QSPM (quantitative strategic planning matrix) is utilised to obtain a total of highest AS (attractive scores). The matrix indicates that the Farmers Community Cooperative has the highest score of 6.22 in case of strategy, therefore it should be prioritised. The present study suggests that the community participation network in the gabah business should develop a strategy to empower the Farmers Labour Cooperatives (KKT) by focussing on stakeholders that has very strong relationship in the gabah business to KKT. The Farmers Labour Cooperatives (KKT) could be an instrument for the farmers to provide a value-added gabah business. The Karawang Local Government, through its Agricultural Regional Office, could act as a server for the network, providing technical information on agribusiness for the KKT and the Poktan. The above suggestion underlines the importance of the acquisition of collective means of production, credit facilities for farmers, legitimation of the KKT as corporate bodies, and debt management. Last but not least, it is suggested that a further study be conducted on the feasibility of the development of e-farmers and e-commerce based on the existing community participation network.