

Performance Analysis and Performance Improvement Strategy Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to analyze performance analysis and performance improvement strategy Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency. Sampling is carried out by means of a census of all Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency as many as 111 respondents. The analytical method used is descriptive work performance value and analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The results show that performance of Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency is in the "enough" category with an average work performance score of 71.88. The strategy for improving the performance of Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency is by implementing a strengths threats strategy, namely: 1) increasing extension facilities and infrastructure; 2) providing rewards and punishments for extension workers; 3) increasing the intensity of counseling through demonstration plots; and 4) improvement of information technology, especially online-based.

Keywords: Performance, Improvement, Strategy

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 35 of 2022 that to increase agricultural production and productivity it is necessary to strengthen agricultural human resources and apply appropriate, effective and efficient agricultural technological innovations which are carried out through

agricultural counseling. Agricultural Extension has not fully provided strong support in achieving national food security, so it is necessary to strengthen the function of Agricultural Extension.

Agricultural Extension is a learning process for key actors and business actors so that they are willing and able to help and organize themselves in accessing market information, technology, capital and other resources as an effort to increase productivity, business efficiency, income and welfare as well as increase awareness in preserving the function environment (Kementerian Pertanian, 2013).

Agricultural Extension activities are carried out by Agricultural Extension so that the role of extension agents is very important in agricultural development. According to Purwatiningsih et al. (2018), Extension workers are expected to be at the forefront of successful agricultural development through direct interaction with farmers, and figures who have a role in developing farming businesses and increasing agricultural yields (Hariani et al., 2019). Agricultural Extension agents as the spearhead of agricultural development means that Agricultural Extension are the frontline in agricultural development where the performance of extension agents must be sharp and hard to be felt by farmers. Agricultural Extension are directed to carry out mentoring and consulting tasks for the main actors and business actors in

developing their agribusiness businesses, so that the adoption of appropriate technology can run well and in turn increase the empowerment of the main actors, production, productivity, income and welfare of farmers and their families (Kementerian Pertanian, 2013).

The food crisis that hit the world has encouraged Indonesia to ensure that it continues to maintain and improve national food security. Various efforts have been made starting from the supply side related to increasing production, efforts to diversify food, improve food distribution efficiency, use technology to increase food production and quality to strengthen national food stocks. The performance of Agricultural Extension is expected to have an impact on the performance of farmers to increase agricultural production. This is in line with the research of Isdianto et al. (2021) that there is a significant influence between the performance of extension workers and food security. In order for extension activities to run well, it is necessary to have extension workers who have good skills and competence in the field of agriculture. Fields, facilities, infrastructure and funding are needed so that the performance of extension workers can be effective and efficient.

North Padang Lawas Regency has 12 sub-districts with a total of 386 villages and 2 sub-districts. Meanwhile, the number of Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency was 111 people consisting of 49 extension officers with the status of State Civil Apparatus and 62 extension workers with the status of Daily Freelance Assistant Agricultural Extension. Extension workers with the status of State Civil Apparatus include extension coordinators and supervisors.

The limited number of extension agents makes farmers unable to optimally utilize the existence of extension agents. The limited number of Agricultural Extension workers must be balanced with the performance of Agricultural Extension workers. The performance of Agricultural

Extension must be a top priority so that cooperation between agricultural stakeholders is needed to make it happen.

One illustration that shows the performance of Agricultural Extension is the quality and quantity of farmer groups. The growth and development of farmer groups is directed at efforts to increase the ability of farmer groups by approaching management aspects and leadership aspects of the function of farmer groups as learning classes, vehicles for cooperation and production units (Kementerian Pertanian, 2016).

The strategy to improve the quality and quantity of farmer groups has not been carried out optimally because farmer group development is usually only carried out routinely if there is a program that will involve farmer groups such as assistance with seeds, fertilizers, production inputs and others. After the program was completed there were no further follow-ups so that the development of farmer groups was not sustainable.

Apart from the class of farmer groups, the performance of Agricultural Extension can also be seen from the level of production and productivity. In accordance with the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 35 of 2022 that to increase agricultural production and productivity it is necessary to strengthen agricultural human resources and apply appropriate, effective and efficient agricultural technological innovations which are carried out through agricultural counseling. The level of production and productivity of rice which is the main commodity of food crop agriculture in North Padang Lawas Regency.

The purpose of this research is to analyze performance analysis and performance improvement strategy Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency.

RESEARCH METHODS

The sample is a representative or part of the population that has the same traits and characteristics that describe and can represent the entire population studied. The

census sample is a sampling method when all members of the population are used as samples (Sugiyono, 2017). Sampling is carried out by means of a census of all Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency as many as 111 respondents.

Data collection was carried out using primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are sources of data obtained directly from the field called primary data. Secondary sources are data obtained from other relevant sources, for example government agencies, called secondary data. The interviews were conducted referring to a list of questionnaires that had been prepared.

The analytical method used is descriptive work performance value and analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). SWOT analysis includes (Rangkuti, 2008):

1. Identify the various significant forces that can drive the achievement of goals.
2. Identify significant weaknesses that could hinder the achievement of objectives.
3. Identify significant opportunities that can drive the achievement of objectives.
4. Identification of various significant threats that can hinder the achievement of objectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

General Description

The North Padang Lawas Regency Agriculture Service is formed based on Regional Regulation Number 8 of 2016 concerning the Establishment of North Padang Lawas Regency Regional Apparatuses. The North Padang Lawas Regency Agriculture Office is a type A Office, administering government affairs in the field of food availability and is a regional technical institution as a supporting element that is more technical in nature.

The organizational structure of the North Padang Lawas Regency Agriculture Office is as follows:

1. The North Padang Lawas Regency Agriculture Service is headed by a service head who is an echelon II level official. The head of the service is the person who is fully responsible for this organization.
2. Secretaries and functional group positions are people who are in charge of assisting the duties of the head of service. The secretary oversees two sub-sections, namely the general and staffing sub-section and the program and finance sub-coordinator. Functional group positions are people who assist the head of the service in the field of engineering, especially those related to agricultural engineering and extension techniques.
3. The Head of Service is also assisted by four fields, namely the field of crops and horticulture, the field of facilities and infrastructure, the field of plantations and the field of counseling. Each field oversees several sub coordinators. Each field head is directly responsible to the service head regarding all the main tasks and functions of the field he leads.
4. In the sub-district, the Head of Service is assisted by the Coordinator of the Agricultural Extension Center (BPP). There are 12 BPP coordinators spread across 12 districts. BPP is a place for extension workers. The BPP coordinator directly coordinates extension workers in the field.

Performance of Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency

In accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Agriculture Number 91 of 2013, performance measurement indicators are carried out in three main activities, namely:

1. Preparation of Agricultural Extension, which includes:
 - a. Make data on potential areas and agro-ecosystems.
 - b. Guiding (escorting and assisting) the preparation of the Group Needs Definitive Plan (RDKK).
 - c. Arrange village and sub-district Agricultural Extension programs.

- d. Make an Annual Agricultural Extension Work Plan (RKTPP).
2. Implementation of Agricultural Extension, which includes:
 - a. Carry out the dissemination/dissemination of extension materials in accordance with the needs of farmers.
 - b. Carry out the application of Agricultural Extension methods in the target area.
 - c. Increase the capacity of farmers to access market information, technology, infrastructure, and financing.
 - d. Growing and developing farmer institutions from the aspect of quantity and quality.
 - e. Growing and developing farmers' economic institutions from the aspect of quantity and quality.
 - f. Increasing productivity (compared to previous productivity for all sub-sectors).
3. Evaluation and reporting of Agricultural Extension:
 - a. Evaluate the implementation of Agricultural Extension.
 - b. Make a report on the implementation of Agricultural Extension.

Table 1. Percentage of Agricultural Extension Performance Measurement

No.	Work Performance Value	Criteria	Number (People)	Percentage (%)
1.	≥ 91	Very Good	1	0.90
2.	76 – 90	Good	41	36.94
3.	61 – 75	Enough	55	49.55
4.	51 – 60	Not Enough	14	12.61
5.	≤ 50	Bad	-	
	Amount		111	100

Source: Data Processing (2022)

The results show that performance of Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency is in the "enough " category with an average work performance score of 71.88. Through the interviews conducted, the causes of the extension worker's performance in the sufficient category are due to a lack of funding including operational costs, a lack of extension facilities and infrastructure and the inadequate quality of extension resources. This condition really needs to be considered in the future because the performance of Agricultural Extension workers should be in the very good category.

To overcome the performance of extension workers who are still in the sufficient category, it is necessary to increase the budget for extension activities such as increasing the operational costs of extension workers. Provision of extension facilities and infrastructure such as operational vehicles that facilitate the mobility of extension workers, especially in areas that are difficult to reach. Procurement of extension media such as books, tabloids,

and internet networks as materials for seeking information. Procurement of equipment as auxiliary materials such as diaries, leaf color charts, and pH meters as well as test fields that can be used as a means of conducting experiments. Procurement of socialization and training activities, each of which is carried out at least three times a year to improve the quality of Agricultural Extension resources in North Padang Lawas Regency.

Extension officers have the task of changing old mindsets and lifestyles with new ones in line with the development of agricultural technology so that it becomes advanced. In addition, extension agents need adequate facilities and infrastructure to be able to carry out their activities optimally, so that the lack of facilities and infrastructure will affect the performance of agricultural extension workers. This is in accordance with Mutmakinah's research (2019) which obtained results that infrastructure, training and job satisfaction had a significant effect on the performance of agricultural extension workers directly.

Performance Improvement Strategy Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency

The strategy for improving the performance of Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency is by implementing a strengths threats strategy, namely: 1)increasing extension facilities and infrastructure; 2)providing rewards and punishments for extension workers; 3)increasing the intensity of counseling through demonstration plots; and 4)improvement of information technology, especially online-based.

The details of the strategy for improving the performance of agricultural extension workers are as follows from the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis:

1. Strengths, Opportunities (SO) Strategy

This strategy is made to create a strategy that uses strength to take advantage of opportunities. Strategies that can be done are as follows:

- a. Providing information, technology and the latest innovations through field schools (by taking advantage of the high education level of extension workers, productive age, work experience and high farmer participation rates).
- b. Increasing the career path and welfare of extension workers (by taking advantage of a fairly high level of education, productive age, years of service, relationships within the organization and coaching and supervision support).
- c. Increasing the role of agricultural extension organizations (by utilizing education, years of service, high levels of active participation of farmers, relationships within the organization and support for guidance and supervision).
- d. Involve farmers in the preparation of extension work plans (by taking advantage of farmers' education, years of service and high levels of active participation).

2. Weaknesses, Opportunities (WO) Strategy

This strategy is made to create a strategy that minimizes weaknesses to take advantage of opportunities. Strategies that can be done are as follows:

- a. Increasing the functional competence of extension workers (taking into account the low level of training received by extension workers and the existence of coaching and supervision support).
- b. Support for the provision and utilization of extension media facilities (taking into account the low utilization of extension media by extension workers due to the lack of extension media facilities and good organizational relations, coaching and supervision support and a fairly high level of active farmer participation).
- c. Improvement of training for extension officers through district-level extension alerts (taking into account the low motivation of extension workers so it is necessary to share information and activities supported by good organizational relationships as well as coaching and supervision support).
- d. Revitalization of training systems and visits and supervision (LAKU SUSI). This system is an approach that combines training for extension workers which is followed up with visits in the form of scheduled assistance to farmers/poktan and is supported by technical supervision from senior extension workers and the availability of information technology as visiting material. This system is carried out by considering the low level of training, the low utilization of extension media, the high level of active farmer participation, good organizational relationships and the existence of coaching and supervision support).
- e. Improving the welfare of extension workers (taking into account the low motivation of extension workers where most of the extension workers are extension workers with THL-TBPP status, so that the average motivation of extension workers is to become civil servants so it is necessary to increase the

welfare of extension workers by looking at good organizational relationships and the existence of support coaching and supervision from superiors).

3. Strengths, Threats (ST) Strategy

This strategy is made to create a strategy that uses strength to overcome existing threats. Strategies that can be done are as follows:

- a. Improving extension facilities and infrastructure both at the BPP and the extension workers themselves in the form of office equipment, motorcycles, field extension equipment and others (considering the instructor's relatively high education, productive age and working period of extension workers with inadequate availability of facilities and infrastructure adequate).
- b. Providing rewards and punishments for BPP and extension officers. Rewards can be in the form of exemplary BPP or outstanding instructors and punishment can be in the form of delaying the payment of extension operational costs (taking into account the instructor's relatively high education, age and years of service with the current reward system which is still lacking).
- c. Increasing the intensity of extension activities through demonstration plots (by utilizing the instructor's formal education and high tenure/work experience of the extension worker in fostering farmers with a large number of assisted villages and assisted farmer groups and a considerable distance from the working area).
- d. Improving information technology, especially online-based (with a high enough education level of extension workers to be able to accept more advanced information technology).

4. Weaknesses, Threats (WT) Strategy

This strategy is made to create a strategy that minimizes weaknesses and avoids threats. Strategies that can be done are as follows:

- a. The extension worker resides in the WKPP by providing housing facilities (by looking at the low motivation of the extension worker due to the low salary and the distance to the working area which is quite far, the large number of assisted villages and the large number of assisted farmer groups).
- b. Give awards to extension workers who excel (by looking at the low motivation of extension workers and an inadequate reward system).
- c. Involve farmers in the use of extension media that are traditional, easy and inexpensive so that farmers understand more about the material delivered by extension workers (seeing the use of extension media which is still lacking due to inadequate availability of facilities and infrastructure).
- d. Additional operational costs for extension agents (with low motivation of extension agents associated with low salaries and distance to working areas, the large number of assisted villages and the large number of assisted farmer groups).
- e. Substitution of leadership for at least 5 years and mastering agricultural techniques (associated with policies made by leaders sometimes not realized (still in process) have been replaced so that new leaders will make new policies that can affect the motivation of extension workers to work thereby affecting their performance).

Based on the position matrix in the SWOT, the strategy points for improving the performance of agricultural extension workers in North Padang Lawas Regency are located in quadrant 2, strengths threats strategy. This strengths threats strategy creates a strategy that uses strength to overcome threats. This position describes the condition of agricultural extension workers who face various threats, but still have internal strength.

The strengths threats strategy aims to reduce the impact of existing threats using existing strengths. This strategy also shows the

performance of extension workers who have various work threats, but their strengths can still be used to minimize these threats (Arbi and Sriati, 2017).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The results show that performance of Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency is in the "enough" category with an average work performance score of 71.88. The strategy for improving the performance of Agricultural Extension in North Padang Lawas Regency is by implementing a strengths threats strategy, namely: 1) increasing extension facilities and infrastructure; 2) providing rewards and punishments for extension workers; 3) increasing the intensity of counseling through demonstration plots; and 4) improvement of information technology, especially online-based.

Based on the above conclusions, the suggestions for this research are:

1. There needs to be budgetary support from the government, especially Regional Government of North Padang Lawas Regency through additional operational costs for Agricultural Extension workers.
2. Need to procure extension facilities and infrastructure such as Agricultural Extension operational vehicles, equipment (diaries, leaf color charts, and soil pH meter) and information media (books, tabloids, leaflets or brochures, and internet networks).
3. The need for training for Agricultural Extension workers at least three times a year, namely training related to agricultural techniques and management.
4. The need for socialization regarding credit numbers for Agricultural Extension workers at least once a year related to matters of promotion and career paths for extension workers.

Declaration by Authors

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