

# Stakeholders Collaboration to Stimulate the Economic Empowerment for Salt Farmers in Pamekasan Regency

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## ABSTRACT

Previous studies about the dynamics of salt farming in Indonesia have shown several problems. One of the main problems is related to the management context of salt farming. An attempt to enhance salt farming management is to increase salt farmers empowerment. One of the policies declared by the government to overcome this problem is People's Salt Business Program/ Program Usaha Garam Rakyat (PUGAR). The purpose of this research is to further examine the role of stakeholders in the process of empowering salt farmers. The research subjects consisted of three groups consisting of salt farmers in Pamekasan Regency, members of the People's Salt Business Group (KUGAR) and assistant staff of the Pamekasan Regency Marine Affairs and Fisheries Service who carried out the PUGAR program. Stakeholder relationships and roles were analyzed with a qualitative approach, namely by collecting data through interviews, observation and documentation. Interviews were conducted by direct observation using Indonesian. This study also seeks to identify problems in the dynamics of salt farming in Pamekasan Regency so that the empowerment of salt farmers is more implemented. This research was conducted with a qualitative approach to capture the condition of salt farmers in Pamekasan Regency. The results showed that the salt price tends to fall during the harvest season, exacerbated by the government's salt import policy. This condition has led to a stagnant state of salt farming in Pamekasan. In addition, these issues stimulate the development of a partnership framework to strengthen cooperation among stakeholders. Empowerment of salt farmers actually has significant impact on production results. In addition, this study emphasizes the impact of stakeholder collaboration in community empowerment. The result of the research is expected could be used as a reference by stakeholders in formulating policies for the increase of farmers welfare.

**Keywords:** *Stakeholder Collaboration, Pamekasan, Empowerment, Salt Farming, PUGAR*

## INTRODUCTION

Previous studies that have discussed the dynamics of salt farming in Indonesia over the past decade have tended to be dominated only in the context of salt production and usage (Baekhaki et al., 2018; Bambang, 2019; Dawa et al., 2020; Parwoto, 2018; Sumarmi et al., 2020). There are at least several reasons why the direction of the dynamics study of smallholder farmers focuses only on the following contexts: first, salt is considered a product to meet the economic needs of salt farmers (Wahyurini & Hamidah, 2020). Second, the need to use salt is not only in the domestic sector but also in the industrial and commercial sectors. These contexts show that the problem of salt outside the characteristics of

the production and use sector is not problematic, especially when it comes to the management of salt dams as the production base of salt farmers, which has apparently been forgotten in the context of the study of salt production in the field of farmers. However, the management context is very important in the process of improving the well-being of salt farmers (Baekhaki et al., 2018). There are several studies that have discussed management aspects in the dynamics of salt farmers, for example efforts to increase the participation of employees, the community and local government can help improve the economy of salt farmers (Miski, 2022).

Although there are already previous studies emphasizing the management aspects of salt farmers, the discussion still revolves around cultural aspects

and does not affect the technical and procedural areas (Farchan & Muhtadi, 2019; Kurniawan & Zulham, 2020; Takekawa et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2015). The government is one of the actors who has an important role in supporting the increase in salt productivity. According to Ihsannudin et al., (2018), the government's role in increasing the productivity of salt farmers, one of which is through the National Land Agency by being able to carry out a land certification program or PRONA, so that problems regarding limited production land can be overcome.

The previous study has shown about the empowerment of salt farmers in East Java, Indonesia. Empowerment is done by analyzing existing internal and external factors. There are internal and external factors. The research suggests the strategy of empowering salt farmers in increasing farmer productivity. The strategy is developed from SWOT analysis to identify what factors must be developed, for example, the Kraksaan area, Probolinggo which optimizes the SO strategy with the WT strategy alternative. Other studies also explain that empowerment needs to be carried out by various aspects, for example, the need for the use of renewable technology, supporting production factors such as available resources, good institutions such as legal mechanisms that apply to the culture involved in the surrounding community (Ihsannudin et al., 2018). The research has a gap, where there are still many salt farmers who have not been able to increase crop productivity due to many internal and external factors that have not been profoundly studied, including the government, private sector and the community in empowering salt farmers.

Based on the previous study, the relation of government, private sector and the community have the important role to increase and empowering the salt production. To fill this gap, this study takes a case on the empowerment of salt farmers in Pamekasan Regency, Madura Island. As the location of research, Pamekasan Regency has 3 sub-districts that are the center for salt production, they are Pademawu, Klanakan and Galis (Ridanyani & Ma'ruf, 2013). The existence of this salt production center is considered an important thing if an intervention is carried out in the context of management involving many parties. In addition, several main problems were found that could be solved only with the participation of several parties. These problems include the government's salt import policy which is detrimental to salt farmers, the price of salt during the harvest season

drops dramatically and causes controversy among farmer groups, the network of salt farmer groups is very limited (Bambang, 2019; Sumarmi et al., 2020; Wahyurini & Hamidah, 2020). Such issues encourage the local government (local stakeholders) to issue local regulations that refer to the joint and participatory management of salt production among stakeholders.

This change shows a picture of the dynamics of the management of salt articles centers that are insufficient in the Pamekasan Regency. As an analytical guide to examine these dynamics, this study uses the framework for collaborative governance formulated by Ansell and Gash, 2008. In summary, the framework for cooperative governance is a cooperation agreement in which one or more public institutions directly involve nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in collective and formal consensus-based decision-making with the aim of jointly making and implementing public policies (Ansell, 2015).

The framework for collaborative governance has recently been used frequently to understand the process of collaboration between state institutions and nongovernmental organizations, which can be seen from the following research location: collaborative governance in public health policy (Ansell, 2015); changes in water management in the watershed of Colorado (Koebele, 2019); collaborative management of river management in Addis Ababa (Woldesenbet, 2018); joint management of the Science Park in Minas Gerais (Tonelli et al., 2018); managing innovation in solar technology (Prehoda et al., 2019); the sports sector (Frankowski, 2019; Lehtonen & Uusikylä, 2021; Ye et al., 2019). So far, the literature sought has covered many policy sectors. However, no one has used it to specifically read and analyze the topology of salt dam management.

Therefore, this study is about two main questions: 1). What is the role of stakeholders with regard to production management and mining farmers in Pamekasan Regency? and 2). How are empowerment efforts being made to improve the economic level of the salt farming community in the Pamekasan Regency? The purpose of this study is to further investigate the process of the role of stakeholders and to identify the problems in the dynamics of salt farming in the Pamekasan Regency, as well as how the empowerment efforts were carried out by stakeholders in salt farming communities in Pamekasan Regency.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Location and Time of Research

Indonesia has a potential salt area of 37.4 thousand hectares which can be used as a salt production area. One of the potential areas for salt production is Madura Island. This island is one of the largest salt production centers in Indonesia. One of the main salt producers on Madura Island is in Pamekasan Regency. In addition, the People's Salt Business Group (KUGAR), a strategy to empower salt farmers in Madura, has not been optimally implemented the program. Technical training on salt production conducted by KUGAR has not been able to be implemented in Pamekasan Regency, especially in Bunder Village. Therefore, the location of this research was conducted in Pamekasan Regency. The research was carried out for about 7 months, starting from May 2021 to November 2021.

### Types and Methods of Data Collection

The research subjects consisted of three groups consisting of salt farmers in Pamekasan Regency, members of the People's Salt Business Group (KUGAR) and assistant staff of the Pamekasan Regency Marine Affairs and Fisheries Service who carried out the PUGAR program. The output of this study is to determine the relationship between stakeholders with the empowerment of salt production and the existence of a diagram of the relationship between stakeholders. Stakeholder relationships

and roles were analyzed with a qualitative approach, namely by collecting data through interviews, observation and documentation. Interviews were conducted by direct observation using Indonesian. This is with the aim of knowing the condition of the salt commodity supply chain in Pamekasan Regency. Parties to be interviewed: a) Salt Farmers in Pamekasan Regency; b) Member of the People's Salt Business Group (KUGAR); c) Assistant staff from the Marine Affairs and Fisheries Service in Pamekasan Regency implementing the Community Salt Business Empowerment (PUGAR) program. The collected data is processed using Value Chain Analysis to identify the processes of salt distribution.

### Analysis Method

A descriptive qualitative method was used to analyse the data According to Sugiyono (2017), research with a qualitative approach is a research method which is used to investigate the state of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument. Therefore, this study uses an ontological approach, in which we investigate the actual situation. The data analysis technique in this study is based on the steps according to Strauss and Corbin (Sugiyono, 2017), including open coding, axial coding, selective coding and value chain analysis. Open coding is about naming and categorizing a phenomenon accurately and thoroughly. After the data is broken down to find categories, the data is aggregated in another way, namely looking for the relationship between a category and its subcategories or is known as the

**Table 1. The research's data and variables.**

Variables	Description and unit of measurement	Expected sign
Expend	Fisher's household monthly expenditure, in Rupiah.	
Accident	Ownership of occupational accident insurance, 1 if fishers have insurance and 0 if fishers do not.	+
Health	Ownership of health insurance, 1 if fishers have insurance and 0 if fishers do not.	+
Age	Fisher's age, in years.	+/-
Gender	Gender of the fisher, 1 if male and 0 if female.	-
Education	The last level of education completed by fishers, 1 if education is above senior high school and 0 if education is at most senior high school.	+
Hours	The average working hours per week, in hours.	+
Married	Fisher's marital status, 1 if the fisherman has ever been married and 0 if the fisherman has never been married.	-
Size	Number of fishers household members	-

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics of Indonesia

axial coding stage. Furthermore, selective coding is performed, namely the integration process to create a theory. The last phase is value chain analysis. Value chain analysis is a process in an enterprise to identify the most important and ancillary activities that add value to the product and then analyze to reduce costs and increase differentiation. The validity test in this study used four types of triangulation, namely source triangulation, method triangulation, theoretical triangulation and researcher triangulation. After analysis, the results of this study are expected to be able to answer research questions: what are the problems in the dynamics of salt farming in Pamekasan Regency, and how are the empowerment efforts carried out by stakeholders in salt farming communities in Pamekasan.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Collaborative management: supply chain of salt products in Pamekasan Regency

Starting conditions, the inability of salt farmers to capitalize and distribute their products is a major problem and is being exploited by various parties. These parties are the owners of capital who then give loans to farmers. Farmers therefore have to sell their salt products to this party. In addition, parties with large capital form business entities such as Sole Proprietorship (UD), Commanditaire Vennootschap (CV), and Limited Liability Company (PT) as a condition for depositing salt at factories. Therefore, there is a relationship between salt farmers, KUGAR, collectors or intermediaries who have business entities, factories, agents and retailers. This ratio forms a salt distribution chain network that is divided into several models.

Among the various stakeholders involved in the supply chain for the distribution of salt products, there are parties that mostly dominate the salt market, namely collectors and factories. Collectors have great power in terms of capital and form relationships with farmers with a bound system. In addition, these intermediaries or intermediaries with large capital form business entities such as UD, CV and PT. On the other hand, factories control the

feed system by salt processing with the addition of iodine composition. In addition, salt processed in the factory has a higher level of neatness and quality, which increases the sales value in the market.

Facilitative leadership, in an effort to improve the welfare of salt farmers and improve the quality of salt production, the government is the most dominant party in providing assistance to salt farmers. Through the PNPM-Mandiri program, the government has created a Salt Business Empowerment (PUGAR) program. The PUGAR program has been implemented since 2011; this program was started in 3 sub-districts, namely Pademawu sub-district, Tlanakan sub-district and Galis sub-district. At the beginning of its establishment in 2011, Pamekasan Regency had 123 groups, and in 2012 it increased to 155 groups. PUGAR consists of between 7-10 people per group. Furthermore, through the PUGAR program, a salt farming group called the People's Salt Farmers Group (KUGAR) was established. With the community empowerment program, it is easier for the government to run assistance and training programs. Training programs such as the use of geomembrane technology and land integration for ionization and packaging processes.

Initially, PUGAR was established to distribute the Community Direct Assistance Program (BLM), but over time, this program has evolved into an active institution that houses farming groups to help produce and distribute salt. The aid that salt farmers received in the Pamekasan Regency, for example, was in the form of capital ranging from 50 to 75 million per group. In addition, assistance and training on the use of geomembrane technology was received in 2015 with an amount of 2,400 roles.

Institutional design, the salt distribution process from upstream to downstream involves several parties in the marketing channel for salt. A marketing channel is an organization or institution involved in the distribution process of the supply chain of products and services. There are different designs for the distribution of salt products in the Pamekasan Regency, these designs are influenced by the relationships built between salt farmers,

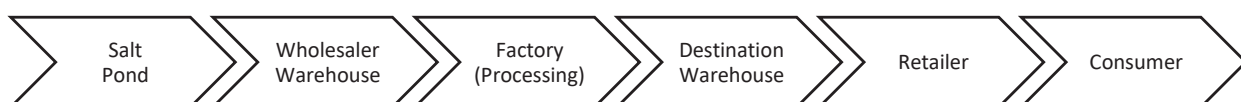


Figure 1. Supply Chain Flow for Distribution Salt

Source: Data Processing by Author



intermediaries, factories, agents and retailers. The following is the supply chain flow for the distribution of salt products in general in Pamekasan Regency.

From the Figure above, salt farmers who have just harvested sell it directly to brokers, or sell it directly along the road. Fresh harvested salt is in the form of salt crystals. To obtain higher quality salt, recrystallization is carried out which is processed by the factory. The factory finely processes the salt and increases the iodine content. Salt deposited by mediators is still raw material with blue bags weighing 50 kgs/bag. For the farmers who have warehouses, the salt is stored in their warehouses as stock and protection so that the quality of salt does not change. For intermediaries who already have capital and are in the form of a business entity, they also have a warehouse as storage space before being laid down at the factory. After being processed by the factory, the salt is packed in bags with a more attractive and hygienic packaging. Factories that have processed salt ready for distribution in the community will be assisted by agents who distribute it to retailers, markets and stalls. This distribution chain runs more or less after the harvest season in May-October.

In addition to the distribution design above, there are several salt distribution channels in the Pamekasan Regency. This distribution channel is divided into 2, namely direct distribution channels and indirect distribution channels. The direct distribution channel is the distribution of salt from farmers directly to consumers, while in the indirect distribution channel there are several parties who are the distributors. The following is a description of direct distribution and indirect distribution.

Based on the Figure above, the salt products can be distributed through 2 (two) channels, namely

direct and indirect distribution. Direct distribution is a direct path without going through a mediator. Performing direct distribution to consumers requires additional costs, such as transportation. The intended consumers in this distribution are cattle breeders. Salt that produced by farmers is used as a mixture of drinks for cows and livestock. Salt sold directly to consumers costs between IDR1250 - to IDR1500/ kgs.

In addition, there are also indirect distribution channels through mediators. This indirect distribution consists of 4 different paths, including:

1. Farmers → Wholesaler → Factory → Distributor → Small Merchant → Consumer

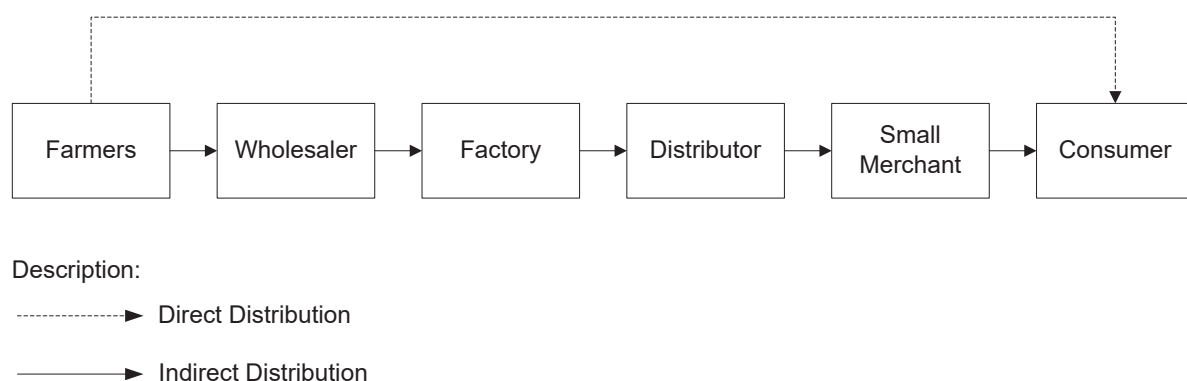
Salt farmers sell their salt products through brokers since they have to distribute salt in the form of salt processing factories, in the form of UD, CV, and PT. The relationship between farmers and intermediaries has a fairly close relationship. Although there is no organization among market participants at the farm level, each party feels that they are in a network where each party must always recognize and take this into account.

2. Farmers → Factory → Distributor → Small Merchant → Consumer

This scheme is fairly the same as the first scheme. The difference lies only in the position of farmers selling their salt directly to the factory. Not all farmers are able to sell directly to factories due to the amount of stock that needs to be distributed and farmers need to have a business entity.

3. Farmers → Wholesaler → Factory → Small Merchant → Consumer

In this scheme, farmers sell their salt products to brokers. Most farmers who sell salt to intermediaries



**Figure 2. Product Distribution Channel**

Source: Data Processing by Author

have kinship, whether in capital or in kinship. The distinguishing point in this scheme is the distribution of factory-processed salt which is sent directly to retailers in markets or shops.

4. Farmers → Factory → Small Merchant → Consumer

In this scheme, farmers sell salt directly to factories, while factories sell their processed products directly to small traders. This scheme is the shortest scheme and offers benefits to farmers and factories as salt processors and producers.

### Relations between actors over the distribution of salt products in Pamekasan Regency

The process of salt from production to distribution cannot be separated from the role of several stakeholders. These stakeholders have their respective roles which greatly affect the outcome of the process. The distribution of salt products in Pamekasan Regency involves various actors, ranging from salt farmers, the private sector and the government. The relationship of stakeholders is presented in Figure 7 below.

Salt farmers have an institution called the People's Salt Farmers Group (KUGAR). KUGAR was formed through the PNPM-Mandiri program of the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries to empower the community. The private sector is involved as a recipient of salt from farmers, such as PT. Budiono, PT. Garam, and several other factories. In addition, factories that receive salt from these farmers only receive salt through business entities in the form of UD, CV and PT. This condition is used by several parties who have large capital to establish

a business that supplies salt to factories. These parties are commonly referred to as intermediaries or salt collectors who buy salt directly from farmers. Mediators can influence the price of salt bought by farmers, because there is a direct link between farmers and intermediaries from the beginning of production to the harvesting or sale of salt. The middlemen with large capital offer loans to farmers as capital for salt production. Farmers therefore have to sell their salt agricultural products to the middlemen. This transaction is extremely detrimental to salt farmers, because salt from farmers is often priced below the market price.

The PUGAR program in Pamekasan Regency, which has been operated since 2011, however requires government protection and assistance, especially with regard to the standardization of salt prices. In addition, the institutional strengthening of KUGAR is also needed to expand marketing networks and salt distribution directly from farmers to factories. It is necessary to cut the supply chain and improve the welfare of salt farmers. So far, there has been no determination of the salt price from the Ministry of Commerce, so the dynamics of the price game are still taking place. In addition to protecting salt farmers or KUGAR, the government must also provide protection to UD, CV and PT that deposit salt to factories. It is possible that factories also play prices by buying salt from collectors, far below the normal price. This condition similarly happen if factories buy salt directly from farmers.

On the other hand, after the salt is processed by the factory and added with iodine, it is marketed to the public through agents and retailers. In this

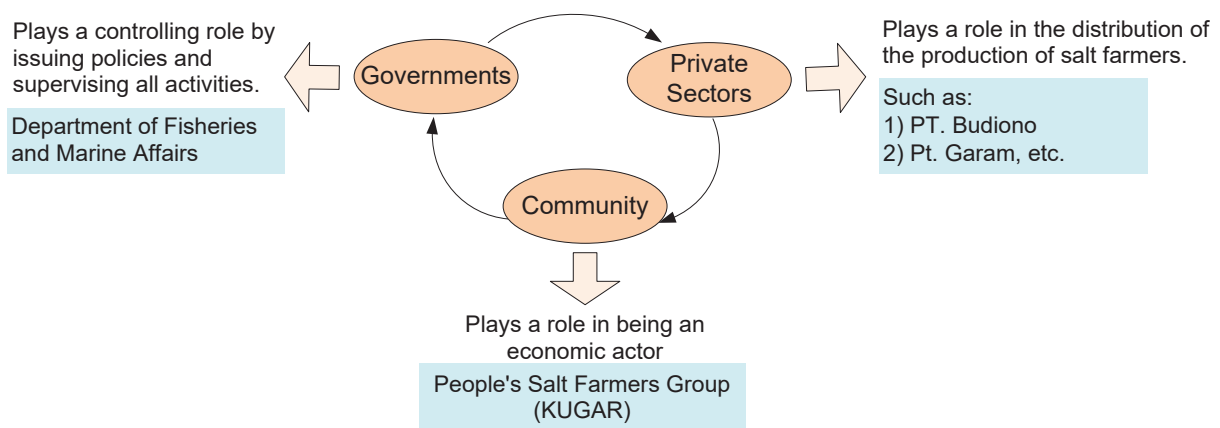


Figure 3. The Relation between Stakeholders

Source: Data Processing by Author

supply chain, it is also possible to play prices, both for agents and retailers. Price protection for factories after the production of salt or finished salt sold in the community is also necessary, considering that currently imported salt is flooding in Indonesian market. The presence of illegal imports actually clouded the price of domestic salt and affected the welfare of salt farmers. The presence of the government to standardize prices from salt farmers, collectors to the level of agents and retailers is very necessary for the welfare of the salt farmers. In addition, it is also necessary to control the salt import policy so that it does not affect domestic salt prices.

### **Analysis of Stakeholders Collaboration in Empowering Salt Farmers**

Collaboration between stakeholders is an important solution in community empowerment. Several parties that must be involved in building this system include the government, the private sector, and the community. Each of these parties has a role and interest that is different from the others. The government has a controlling role by issuing policies and supervising all aspects of activities. The community has a role in being an economic actor and the private sector has a role, among others, as an investor and in the distribution of production results. Analysis of Stakeholders Collaboration in community empowerment through the PUGAR program by looking at three aspects including the role of stakeholders, stakeholder needs and empowerment efforts.

#### **The Role of Stakeholders**

The main key to successful empowerment is the active role of stakeholders, because these stakeholders can influence and be influenced in community development in an area. Fairuza (2017) defines that stakeholders are all parties who are related to certain problems and can influence each other. Meanwhile, stakeholders can be grouped into several types, among others. Parties who have power, parties who have legitimacy and parties who have an interest in the problem area.

Stakeholders Collaboration will be carried out well if it is supported by at least three main stakeholder groups, namely the government, the private sector, and the community. In empowering salt farmers in Pamekasan Regency, stakeholders who have an interest are the Pamekasan Regency Marine Affairs and Fisheries Service from the Government, middlemen from the private sector and salt farmers

who are involved in KUGAR from the community aspect.

The Department of Fisheries and Marine Affairs is the leading sector of empowerment through the assistance of the PUGAR program in Pamekasan Regency. The PUGAR program was established in 2011 with an emphasis on Direct Community Assistance (BLM) to break the chain of middlemen. The PUGAR program began with the formation of the People's Salt Business Group (KUGAR) which was aimed at organizing salt production activities, as well as to reduce the weaknesses found in salt farmers, both individually and in groups. In addition, collaboration is also established in the empowerment process by holding training with Banyuwangi Regency in the process of salt ionization and online packaging which was attended by 50 salt farmers for 2 days at the Marine and Fisheries Service.

The private sector plays a role in the distribution of the production of salt farmers. Marketing and sales are the main activities that are important in business processes. With the PUGAR program, salt farmers are given direction and advice in making transactions to middlemen such as the price of each middleman with the difference in prices offered to salt farmers so that in marketing salt farmers can choose middlemen who provide higher prices compared to other middlemen. KUGAR as part of a society that is empowered through the use of technology has an important role in the current era in various fields. Likewise, to increase the productivity and quality of salt in Pamekasan Regency. The technology that has been carried out is Geomembrane technology and Thread Filter Technology (TUF). Geomembrane technology was first applied in Galis Village, while Thread Filter Technology (TUF) was first applied in Majungan Village. Over the time, the training and application of the technology showed that Geomembrane technology was more suitable to be applied in Pamekasan Regency, and the government has continued to develop the technology with new trainings such as ionization, recrystallization. Therefore, it is aimed to improve the quality of the salt and can be accepted at the factory at a high price.

#### **Stakeholder Needs**

The needs of stakeholders in the empowerment process include the development of a corporate system to improve the quality and quantity of salt production. This development can be seen from the fulfillment of adequate infrastructure in Pamekasan Regency in the process of distributing salt in

terms of transportation, road availability and other infrastructure. The government also continues to provide infrastructure assistance to salt farmers to increase salt productivity and quality. In 2015, the government distributed assistance in the amount of 2,400 rolls of Geomembrane and in 2016-2017 the community had begun to be willing to buy the tool themselves to be applied independently. In addition, the empowerment to be able to create a corporate model and also the use of technology in the production process. Even though the collaboration has occurred, the collaboration of stakeholders has not run optimally. There is no coherent cooperation, especially with the private sector, because there is no real collaboration regarding medium or large scale companies that are partnered with to be able to market the salt farmers products.

### Efforts to Improve Governance.

From the production process to the distribution of salt in Pamekasan Regency, the collaboration process involves salt farmers, the private sector and the government. Salt farmers who are able to produce good quality salt require training and capital assistance from the government. Start training on the use of geomembrane technology and capital assistance to KUGAR. The empowerment carried out by the Pamekasan Regency government is through KUGAR, which is aimed at organizing salt production actors, so as to reduce weaknesses in salt farmers both individually and in groups. In addition, KUGAR was also formed to facilitate the government in overcoming limited access, lack of capital, skills and knowledge of the workforce. This program has the aim of maximizing the potential of the people's salt business which aims to improve the welfare of salt farmers. Based on the regulation of the Director General of Marine Management Number 1 of 2020 this program focuses on:

#### 1) Productivity

Productivity in this context is the output or result that can be produced by salt farmers. The more productive the salt farmers, the better the salt production that will be produced by these farmers.

#### 2) Effectiveness

The effectiveness in this context is something that can be done simultaneously by salt farmers. A job that can be done effectively is when a routine is carried out continuously, there will be an effective way to do it.

#### 3) Continuity

Sustainability of the work of salt farmers has a strong correlation with salt farmers because this work is closely related to weather conditions and natural factors. Several matters related to climatological conditions are important factors that have an impact on the working system of salt farmers.

#### 4) Corporatization

Corporatization is a process, method, act that makes a corporate management pattern as a control or reference, process, method, act of making something a corporation. This empowerment certainly has a relationship with the value of an empowered object.

In addition, another important process is product distribution, to sell salt to factories. This process requires a good quality level of salt and in large quantities. Although in this dynamic middleman games often occur, there is a high level of trust and kinship between farmers and middlemen. The government needs to be more present in terms of overseeing the production and distribution of salt, considering that salt is a leading sector in Pamekasan Regency. In addition, the government also needs to be present in the supervision and development of infrastructure such as storage warehouses.

## CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATION

### Conclusions

The results of the research through value chain analysis show a diagram model of community empowerment of salt farmers in Pamekasan Regency, namely through the PUGAR program it has been running well in increasing the production and quality of salt commodities in Pamekasan Regency. Production activities up to salt distribution cannot be separated from the role of 3 stakeholders, including: government, private sector, and community. In inbound logistics activities, the PUGAR program for salt farmers is introduced and uses the concept of corporate and land integration. The operation incorporates the traditional technologies and systems used in the salt production process. In outbound logistics activities there are 2 types of distribution commonly used, namely direct distribution where farmers directly sell salt products to consumers, and there is also indirect distribution where there is a mediator before the salt is received by consumers. In indirect distribution there is a warehouse that has been standardized as a place for storing salt so that the quality of the salt remains good, does not shrink, is scattered or mixed with the soil. In service activities,



KUGAR is able to help organize and accommodate the aspirations of salt production activities in the region. In marketing and sales activities, the aim is to break the chain of middlemen and provide advice and direction in selecting good middlemen.

### Policy Recommendation

The Pamekasan Regency Government through the PUGAR program can continue to provide support and assistance to salt farmers. The program can support activities to improve the quality and productivity of salt. The Pamekasan Regency Government also needs to socialize and expand its empowerment area so that pond farmers get maximum benefits. Therefore, the products in this case can be produced in higher quality and become superior commodities in Pamekasan Regency. In addition, to maximize this superior product, salt cannot be separated from the role of 3 stakeholders (governments, private sectors, and community). However, in its implementation, the role of one of the stakeholders is still lacking, namely the involvement of medium and large-scale private companies to be able to communicate in the marketing of salt products. A solution that can be applied is by further socializing related to the advantages and benefits that will be obtained if they are willing to cooperate more in marketing salt products in Pamekasan. Therefore, it is expected that there will be synergies between parties to build a value chain ecosystem in the PUGAR program starting from the input process to marketing and sales to improve quality and productivity.

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### AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

We hereby declare that the contributions of each author to the writing of this paper are: Rendra Eko Wismanu as main contributor. Yudha Prakasa, Lestari Eko Wahyudi and Durratun Nashihah as member. The authors declare that the Author Contribution Letter has been attached.

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