The Role of Muhammadiyah in Sustainable Development Through Community Empowerment Program

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Abstract. Sustainable development is the development goal of every country, including Indonesia. The process of sustainable development has positioned the community as the subject with the main actor of the development is the community itself. Regarding this context, the process is performed through community empowerment approach. Muhammadiyah is the biggest non-governmental organization in Indonesia which engaged in religion, social community, economy, education, environment, and health sectors. This study aimed to discover the role of Muhammadiyah in the sustainable development of Indonesia. The method used in this study was mixed method as the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The results of the research have concluded that Muhammadiyah has positive and significant roles in sustainable development of Indonesia, including from the evaluation results of the restoration program of tropical forest ecosystem in East Borneo Province and social-economic empowerment on vulnerable groups in Yogyakarta Province. The approach of Muhammadiyah through community empowerment program has been successful to improve the knowledge, change of attitude, and skills of the facilitated community. The community empowerment approach was implemented by Muhammadiyah to encourage public participation in sustainable development.

1. Introduction
At present, it has been realized that more issues faced by the world due to the climate change: decrease of biodiversity, poverty, trust crisis and others [1]. Sustainable development is the development which committed to provide contributions for the future [2]. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is the international agenda which becomes a continuation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), this agenda was made to answer the demand from word leadership in overcoming poverty, gap, and climate change in the form of real actions [3]. The sustainable concept itself is at least contains two dimensions, the first is the dimension of time because sustainable means related to the condition which will occur in the future, the second is interaction between economic system and environmental-natural resources system [4]. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide opportunities as well as challenges for developing countries because the implementation cost will be expensive although it could bring long-term benefits [5].

In the implementation effort of sustainable development, the initial phase has to be started through the community empowerment as the determinant of success. Community empowerment is a process in which the efforts or potentials conceived by the community are integrated to the resources owned by the government to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions and integrating the
community in the context of national life as well as empowering the community to be capable of provide full contributions to achieve national-level progress [6]. The orientation of community empowerment has to support the community in order to develop themselves on the basis of the existing innovations that implemented in a participatory manner in which the method of approach has to be oriented to the needs of the facilitated community and practical things in the form of individual or group services [7], [8]. Community empowerment has to be performed through three paths, namely enabling, empowering, and protecting [9].

Indonesia is one of the developing countries which still has a serious poverty issue because until present, the poverty keep approaching the economic condition of Indonesia, therefore, it needs to be relieved or at least-reduced [10]. Poverty is a complex matter, due to that cause, the intervention from the entire parties is required. Numbers of stakeholders which include the ministries/institutions, Statistical Central Bureau, academicians, experts, civil society organizations, philanthropists, and businesses have involved in various preparation processes of SDGs’ implementation. On its implementation, there is an integrative principle as the fundamental idea which contains the meanings that SDGs are implemented in integrative manner and interrelated on all social, economic, and environmental dimensions [11]. Muhammadiyah is one of the biggest organizations in Indonesia which engaged in various sectors of religion, social community, economy, education, environment, or health [12]. The movement of Muhammadiyah is taking part amidst the Indonesian nation by establishing various charity businesses which truly capable of touching the lives of many people. It has been recorded in 2018 that Muhammadiyah owns elementary schools (2,250 units), middle schools (1,111 units), high schools (1,291 units), universities (171 units), hospitals and health services (2,119 units), disabled rehabilitation (82 units), and social homes (318 units) [13].

The movement of Muhammadiyah is orientating towards the benefits of people. In running the sustainable development programs, the assignment is given toward Community Empowerment Assembly (Majelis Pemberdayaan Masyarakat (MPM)) and Living Environment Assembly (Majelis Lingkungan Hidup (MLH)). In describing the procedure of empowerment activity in various communities, MPM is referring to the ecological approach of human and environmental development which mentions that social intervention has to be able to reach the entire relational levels between individual and environment. The fields of work that empowered by MPM are emerging awareness of the community regarding the rights and responsibilities as citizen, the development of basic needs, and the improvement of the income of poor and marginalized community, policy advocacy, development of crisis management center which functioned as the anticipation of psychosocial problems in the community [14].

The programs implemented by Muhammadiyah through the activities of MPM strengthen the three main pillars of sustainable development including social, economy, and environment. The concept of community empowerment conducted by Muhammadiyah becomes the key point to motivate the involvement of the community and significant economic growth. In relation to the community empowerment to reduce poverty, this effort is achieved through the outcome of the increasing rate of community’s income through institutional/organizational enhancement of group economy, and the efforts of conserving the living environment. Due to that matter, this study was aimed to discover into what extent the role of Muhammadiyah in sustainable development through the community empowerment program, particularly regarding the restoration program of tropical forest ecosystem in East Borneo Province and social-economic empowerment on vulnerable groups in Yogyakarta Province.

2. Methodology

This study was designed with mixed method as the combination of qualitative and quantitative forms through descriptive statistic analysis method [15]. The data used were primary data acquired through interview, questionnaire, and observation. The data collection method was sampling through snowball technique. The respondents in this study were 266 heads of the beneficiary family of tropical forest ecosystem restoration program in East Borneo Province and the vulnerable groups, including the disabled people community and waste-pickers in Yogyakarta Special Region.
3. Result and Discussion
In principle, the empowerment activity performed by MPM is conducted to motivate the facilitated members to have knowledge and positive mental. The facilitation activities either in the forms of socialization, training, and others are aimed to improve knowledge of the facilitated members as well as enhancing the attitude and skill, therefore, the members will be motivated to conduct effective and beneficial activities for their daily lives.

The questionnaire in this study used Likert scale to measure the answers of the respondents, there were five choices of answer that can be categorized into 5 continuum scales namely very poor (1), poor (2), fair (3), good (4), and very good (5). The results of validity test have indicated that every items from Q1 to Q15 have r-table values < r-count, thus, all of them were valid. The results of reliability test have indicated that > 0.60 value of Cronbach’s Alpha has been acquired, in that order, the entire question items of the questionnaire were determined as reliable. According to the results of questionnaire filling toward the entire facilitated members of MPM PP Muhammadiyah in 2015-2018 period, there were 266 household heads who analyzed through SPSS in which the obtained results are as follows (See Table 1).

| Variable  | N  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Standard of Deviation |
|-----------|----|---------|---------|------|-----------------------|
| Knowledge | 266| 1       | 5       | 4.1  | 0.492                 |
| Attitude  | 266| 2       | 5       | 3.9  | 0.282                 |
| Skill     | 266| 2       | 5       | 3.7  | 0.340                 |

The statistic processing results have indicated that in mean, the answer of respondents on knowledge aspect is 4.1. The attitude aspect is 3.9 in mean. The skill aspect is 3.7 in mean. On all aspects, the standard of deviation values are lower than mean, thus, it can be concluded that the data were properly distributed (See Table 1). According to the questionnaire results which have been analyzed and supported by the result data of interview toward the head of community group facilitated by MPM, thus, the perceptions regarding the implementation results of Muhammadiyah’s Programs in sustainable development activities for each aspect of knowledge, attitude, and skill are as follows:

**Figure 1. Improvement of Knowledge**

**Figure 2. Change of Attitude**

**Figure 3. Improvement of Skill**
The levels of knowledge, attitude, and skill of the entire members after facilitated by MPM PP Muhammadiyah were categorized as good. This condition was seen from the perception of respondents regarding the results of MPM’s programs in which the majority of respondents (61.8%) have stated that there is an improvement of knowledge (see Figure 1), the majority of respondents (53.9%) have also stated that there is a positive attitude (see Figure 2), and the majority of respondents (56.6%) have mentioned that there is an improvement of skill (see Figure 3). These results have shown that the community empowerment conducted by MPM has improved knowledge, attitude, and skill of the beneficiaries of forest restoration or social-economic programs on vulnerable communities.

The main program associated with sustainable development conducted by MPM was the restoration program of tropical forest ecosystem through the development of non-timber yields to improve the income of the community and the reduction of carbon emission in East Borneo Province which has been ran in 2015-2017. This program was implemented toward the local people who live in Batu Rajang Village, Siduung Indah Village, and Long Keluh Village in Kelay and Senggah Districts that inhabit the area around forests which still in a state of poverty, therefore, poverty eradication effort is required through low-carbon economic growth, thus, 75% of the forest area of Berau Regency can be protected from deforestation, plantation, and mining.

MPM has conducted the collective action along with the community through three main activities, 1) agricultural cultivation by performing training and technical facilitation, strengthening groups as social capital, strengthening the land intensification strategy; 2) the processing of agricultural yields which initiated by the identification of potentials and value of benefits that becomes the gateway of community creative economy, the establishment of joint business group as the producing social capital, and growing the entrepreneurship mentality as the business capital, and 3) marketing process which conducted through four steps, namely assessment and establishment of cooperative as the marketing institution, training to enhance mentality and the capacity of cooperative management, administration of licensing/permit for cooperative, and building partnership with stakeholders.

This program has improved the income of household and low-carbon economic growth through the restoration of topical forest ecosystem and the development of non-timber forest products which proved by 190 households that have practiced a new system in forest management on 171 ha of area and produced non-timber products. The knowledge and skill of community in Sidung Indah, Batu Rajang, and Longkeluh Villages have improved with the evidence in which 190 people are implementing the agricultural cultivation practice around the forest area that organized in 9 farmer groups. One cooperation and 3 industrial business groups for the production forest yields have been established as the strengthening result of economic institution.

The beneficiaries in three villages of activity location own varied experience and knowledge in performing agricultural cultivation. Besides planting paddy, there is part of the community that already planted the other plantation crops, namely cocoa, rubber, pepper, agarwood, vegetables, and others.

Besides the forest restoration, the sustainable development program conducted by Muhammadiyah is community empowerment toward vulnerable groups, particularly for disabled people, waste-pickers, and street vendors in Yogyakarta Province. This form of social, economic, and environmental empowerment activities is focused on the effort of providing skill knowledge as well as personal motivation/willpower. The performed activities include training, facilitation, socialization, education, and raising involvement in organization to grow life motivation and livelihood. According to interview and observation results, it seems that there are diversity of empowerment activities conducted by Muhammadiyah on vulnerable groups.

The community empowerment through religious activities is implemented in the form of routine recitation on each group and cross-group inspirational recitation combined with mutual learning, mutual motivation, and exchange of experience as well as inspiring each other. Health facilitation, MPM uses preventive approach through socialization regarding health and curative through free medication in cooperation with PKU Muhammadiyah hospital.

The community empowerment in the sector of social economy is for the community of pedicab driver. The form of empowerment is conducted through the strengthening of pedicab driver organization through the Pedicab Driver Union of Ahmad Dahlan. In addition, the socialization regarding the...
regional and traffic regulations are also provided for the members to know the rights and responsibilities in traffic. Another activity that implemented is English language training, therefore, the members can understand the basic conversation to greet and offer the service and price toward the foreign tourists. MPM also provides some pedicabs to the facilitated members. This provision of pedicabs is conducted by MPM in collaboration with Lazismu.

The community empowerment on street vendor group is directed toward healthy and halal foods. The first facilitation conducted is the improvement of organizational capacity by establishing a group named as Asongan Surya Mandiri. MPM uses quality checking of food products sold by street vendors to discover whether the foods produced by them contain dangerous materials such as borax, preservative, and others. This checking/examination performed by MPM in cooperation with the laboratory of university. The facilitations implemented after the examination are in the forms of training and socialization about healthy, hygiene, and halal foods. This training activity is conducted by MPM by cooperating with Health Agency to provide facility toward the facilitated members through the provision good and healthy certification toward the foods of the members, therefore, the foods can be accepted by the schools. Another form of facilitation that conducted is the provision of merchant carts to facilitate the members in selling at schools.

The social-economic empowerment on micro business group is also implemented through the activity of organizational capacity improvement by establishing organization group. This group consists of housewives, therefore, the members organize social gathering (arisan) as the media to unite them in the group. The performed facilitation is the capacity improvement of low-cost production. This effort is implemented through socialization about the procedure to make proper product as well as through training regarding packaging and marketing of the product. In this training activity, MPM is cooperating with Department of Industry, Trade, and Cooperative (Disperindagkop). MPM has also provided the instruments that can be used by the facilitated members to perform rapid production.

Community empowerment on waste-picker community. The first facilitation that conducted is through group enhancement by establishing an organization named as Guyub Makmur. The conducted activity leads to hygienic street vendors (angkringan sehat), such as food-making training which has been done, including the making of sweet potato-based donut (donat telo), the provision of merchant carts to the group, socialization activity about the household financial management and gymnastics to establish the solidarity of members in the group.

The community empowerment has also conducted by MPM toward disabled people. The empowerment in the group of this disabled people was started through cooperative training in aimed to improve the comprehension of disabled group regarding the management of cooperative. Then, a saving and loan cooperative is established that will be ran by the members of disabled group. The facilitation activities continue to run in order to control the implementation of the cooperative. Besides establishing the saving and loan cooperative, MPM also conducts various activities to improve the welfare of disabled people, starting from the entrepreneurship training to health examination performed through cooperation with local health department.

4. Conclusion

According to the research, thus, it can be concluded that Muhammadiyah through Community Empowerment Assembly (MPM) has crucial role in community development by running tropical forest restoration program and community empowerment toward the vulnerable group such as disabled people, micro economic enterprise, street vendors, and waste-pickers as the inseparable part of sustainable development. The role of Muhammadiyah is as the facilitator, inspirer, and mediator in community empowerment program in order to improve the welfare of the local community in accordance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition, the results of empowerment toward poor community by Muhammadiyah is the improvement of community welfare which seen from three aspects, namely knowledge, attitude, and skill that are improving after participating in community empowerment program held by Muhammadiyah. The recommendation of the author is that the facilitated members as the implementer of empowerment program have yet to own sufficient power and independency to conduct activities in their community. Due to that matter, the role and the
presence of facilitators have to be maintained until the members are fully accustomed to the empowerment process that being implemented.

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