

## Assessing Business Empowerment Program Effectiveness: Dolago Padang's Women Farmer Group Study

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### Abstract

*This research evaluates the implementation of an economic empowerment program through the Women Farmer Group (WFG) using sustainable home food yard activities (P2L) supported by the Food Security Agency - Ministry of Agriculture. The program aims to enhance economic empowerment in priority areas, addressing stunting and vulnerable food-insecure regions while promoting food resilience. The study measures the effectiveness of the program implemented through the WFG and evaluates it from the perspective of Islamic economics. Adopting a field research approach with a qualitative descriptive method, primary data is collected through interviews and observations, and secondary data is obtained from the documentation. Program effectiveness is assessed using a simple statistical method, dividing realized program activities by the set targets. Analysis of effectiveness indicators is based on interview findings. The research measures program effectiveness through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion-drawing techniques. The results show that the WFG program in Dolago Padang Village fulfills two effectiveness indicators: target accuracy and program objectives. From the perspective of Islamic economics, the program aligns with principles of justice, responsibility, social security (Takaful), and economic empowerment by the principle of Palawan. However, the program needs to meet the remaining four effectiveness indicators. The study recommends strengthening program awareness and monitoring for future implementation. It emphasizes that achieving program success is a shared responsibility between the government and the community, requiring the fulfillment of effective measurement criteria.*

*Keywords: economic empowerment, Women Farmer Group, effectiveness, Islamic economics.*

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Economic empowerment (Basargekar, 2010; Ghosh, Ray, and Nair, 2023; R. Dewi et al., 2022; Abdu, Marquis, and Colecraft, 2023), derived from the word "daya," meaning power or strength, refers to enabling individuals or communities to realize their potential and improve their economic well-being (Ragasa et al., 2022; Zimmerman, 2000). In society, economic empowerment involves stimulating awareness, motivation, and the development of existing potential (Narmatha, 2019; Fabiyi & Akande, 2015; Sandøy et al., 2016). It aims to enhance community productivity and generate higher value-added income (Nursyamsu, Ningsih, and Nurdin, 2022). This is achieved by improving access to critical resources, technology, markets, and demand (Mulato, 2019; Sasnita, 2020).

Meeting basic needs such as clothing, food, shelter, health, and education is fundamental to sustaining human life (Lachaud et al., 2018; Glass et al., 2020; Ahmed, 2016). Among these needs, access to food is essential and cannot be postponed, making it a daily requirement (Rosmala, Nursyamsu, and Haekal 2019). Agriculture, particularly farming, plays a vital role in meeting this need worldwide, including in Indonesia, where Muslims are encouraged to utilize their land for productive purposes, including cultivation (Suminah et al., 2023).

Dolago Padang Village, specifically Dusun IV in South Parigi Subdistrict, Parigi District, is an area with dormant or unproductive land with the potential for addressing food security challenges. Through the support of the Sustainable Food House Area (P2L) program by the Food Security Agency - Ministry of Agriculture, the government aims to address stunting and food insecurity in priority areas. By utilizing home food yards, dormant land, and unproductive land, households can generate food for consumption, improve nutrition, and increase their income through market-oriented production.

Within the agricultural domain, farmer groups serve as social and entrepreneurial platforms for communities (Ferdiawan, 2020). These groups are formed based on shared interests, environmental conditions, social factors, and cultural aspects (Sandøy et al., 2016; Narmatha, 2019). One such group in Dolago Village is the "Bernilai" Women Farmer Group, consisting of 30 members. The group is expected to utilize government support, specifically the P2L program, to increase food availability, accessibility, and utilization for households according to diverse nutritional needs. Furthermore, the program aims to enhance household income through market-oriented food production. To achieve these goals, the group must effectively implement the program, including activities such as seed gardens, demonstration plots, planting, post-harvest processes, marketing, and awareness campaigns.

To assess the success of the program's implementation, it is essential to measure its effectiveness (Sukoco & Prameswari, 2017; Prager & Creaney, 2017; Chiebonam et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2022). Program effectiveness is crucial to evaluating how the program achieves its objectives (Hinson, Lensink, and Mueller, 2019; Hanggana et al., 2022; Rahman & Zailani, 2017). In the case of the Women Farmer Group, effectiveness analysis is employed to assess whether the program targets are met accurately, program objectives are fulfilled, program awareness is created, and program monitoring is conducted.

Considering the significance of maximizing the potential of agricultural resources, both natural and human, it is crucial to explore other ways to develop this sector (Sofyan et al., 2022; Ningsih, 2022; Syamsu et al., 2022; 2023). Agriculture, particularly in providing food and increasing household income through market-oriented production, plays a crucial role (Sushila Kishor, 2022; Hinson, Lensink, and Mueller, 2019; Hanggana et al., 2022; Chiebonam et al., 2023). Therefore, this research aims to examine the effectiveness of the government's support program, P2L, in terms of economic empowerment within the context of the Bernilai Women Farmer Group. The research focuses on the effectiveness indicators proposed by Ni Wayan Budiani, namely target accuracy, program objectives, program awareness, and program monitoring.

Based on the background above, the researcher aims to delve deeper into the effectiveness of the economic empowerment program within the Bernilai Women Farmer Group.

### **Objective**

This research aims to assess the effectiveness of the government's economic empowerment program, P2L, within the Bernilai Women Farmer Group. It focuses explicitly on evaluating program targeting accuracy and alignment with the group's needs, assessing the fulfillment of program objectives in increasing food availability and accessibility, examining program awareness among group members and its impact on participation, and analyzing the effectiveness of program monitoring mechanisms. The research aims to provide evidence-based insights into the program's effectiveness within the Bernilai Women Farmer Group context, contributing to Islamic economics and informing future program strategies for empowering women farmers and enhancing agricultural productivity.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Effectiveness**

According to the Indonesian Dictionary, "efektif" (effective) means producing results, starting to take effect, having an influence, consequence, or (D. K. Dewi et al., 2023; Sandøy et al., 2016; Glass et al., 2020). Effectiveness can also be defined as measuring success in achieving goals (Wayan Budiani, 2007). It is fundamental in achieving predetermined objectives in any organization, activity, or program. Effectiveness is achieved when the intended goals and objectives are met as specified. In short, effectiveness is the measurement of the attainment of pre-established goals (Glass et al., 2020; Hanggana et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Steers explains that effectiveness is the extent to which a program operates as a system with specific resources and means to fulfill its objectives without impairing the way and resources and without exerting undue pressure on its implementation (Rahman & Zailani, 2017; D. K. Dewi et al. 2023; Gloria & Charles, 2022).

On the other hand, effectiveness is the relationship between output and objectives, where the more significant the contribution of output to achieving objectives, the more influential the organization, program, or activity is considered. Based on the above definitions of effectiveness, effectiveness is the critical factor determining the success of a group or organization in implementing a program or activity to achieve predetermined goals and targets. Assessing effectiveness can provide insights into the continuity of the program (M. Goosen et al., 2023; M. F. A. Goosen, Mahmoudi, and Ghaffour, 2014). In light of the above definition, effectiveness encompasses the entire cycle of input, process, and output, referring to the utility of the results of an organization, program, or activity in determining the extent to which goals (in terms of quality, quantity, and timeliness) have been achieved (Harto, 2022; Ghosh, Ray, and Nair 2023). Measuring organizational effectiveness is complex and subjective. It involves comparing predetermined plans

with achieved results. Criteria for measuring effectiveness include target accuracy, program socialization, program objectives, and program monitoring.

Additionally, effectiveness can be assessed through the resource, process, and goals approaches (Basargekar, 2010; Suryadi, Kushardiyanti, and Gusmanti, 2021; Ahmed, 2016; Narmatha, 2019). Other criteria, such as production, efficiency, satisfaction, adaptability, and survival, are also considered. Effectiveness is a standard measure that determines the success of economic empowerment programs (Wayan Budiani, 2007).

According to Budiani, the measures of effectiveness are program targeting accuracy, program socialization, program objectives, and program monitoring. Effectiveness is assessed using standards following the reference of the Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Ensure program targeting accuracy: The effectiveness of a program can be enhanced by ensuring that it reaches the intended beneficiaries accurately. This involves conducting thorough assessments and evaluations to identify the target population and tailor the program accordingly.

Improve program socialization: Effective socialization of the program is crucial to its success. Implement strategies to raise awareness and understanding among the target audience, stakeholders, and the general public. This can include public campaigns, community engagement, and effective communication channels. Set clear program objectives: Well-defined program objectives provide a clear direction for implementation and evaluation. Establish specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals that align with the desired outcomes. Regularly review and update objectives as needed. Strengthen program monitoring: Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track the progress and impact of the program. This involves collecting relevant data, establishing performance indicators, and assessing the program's effectiveness regularly. Use the findings to inform adjustments and improvements in program implementation. Adhere to standards defined by the Ministry of Home Affairs' Research and Development Agency: Follow the prescribed standards and guidelines provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs' Research and Development Agency for assessing program effectiveness. These standards serve as a reference point and ensure consistency in evaluation methodologies.

To improve program effectiveness, consider the following concise suggestions (Wayan Budiani, 2007):

Table. 1 The standard measures of effectiveness according as follows:

<b>Effectiveness Ratio</b>	<b>Achievement Level</b>
Under 40	Very Ineffective
40 – 59,99	Ineffective
60 – 79,99	Effective enough
On 80	Very effective

Source: TheThe Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of Home Affairs

To analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of the Women's Farmers Group Program, a simple statistical method is used, namely (Subagyo, 2011):

$$\text{Program effectiveness} = \frac{T}{R} \times 100 -$$

T = Target R= Realization

### **Previous research**

The literature review for the research titled "Assessing Business Empowerment Program Effectiveness: Dolago Padang's Women Farmer Group Study" focuses on previous studies that support the current research. The review identifies relevant studies in economic empowerment programs and women farmer groups. Several studies have examined the effectiveness of economic empowerment programs in various contexts. (Hanggana et al. 2022) Investigated the characteristics of farmer groups that effectively managed agricultural machinery rental businesses. They found that influential groups had members actively involved in management, loyal customers, and adopted certain business entities. (Porciello et al. 2022) Conducted a global assessment of digital agriculture services and their impacts. They highlighted the importance of considering outcomes related to environmental sustainability and climate resilience when studying digital advisory and extension services for farmers. (Ramadhan, Syah, and Waskitho 2022) Explored farmer groups' effectiveness and institutional condition under the Social Forestry scheme in Indonesia. They found that increased permits only sometimes led to increased farmer trust and understanding of the program, emphasizing the need for monitoring and institutional development. (Lee and Huruta 2022) Investigated the role of financial literacy in the relationship between women's empowerment and green microfinance. Their study revealed that financial literacy partially mediated the relationship between empowerment and microfinance, suggesting the importance of pro-literacy policies and local wisdom-based financial literacy. Other studies focused on specific aspects of empowerment programs. For example, (Khan, Bhat, and Sangmi 2023) examined the impact of microfinance on women's economic, social, political, and psychological empowerment, highlighting positive but moderate impacts. Renato A. Villano et al. (2023) explored the relationship between farmer psychological profiles and farm business performance in South Africa. They found significant differences in farm business performance among different psychological profiles of farmers, providing insights for tailored interventions and training methods. (Suminah et al. 2023) assessed the factors affecting the ability of agricultural business actors in Surakarta, Indonesia. They identified empowerment as a significant factor that positively influenced economic capital and the ability of agricultural business actors. (Soemitra, Kusmilawaty, and Rahma 2022) examined the role of the Micro Waqf Bank in empowering women micro-entrepreneurs. Their study found that the joint responsibility system, financing, and mentoring positively impacted micro-enterprises growth.

Overall, these previous studies provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of economic empowerment programs, the role of women farmer groups, financial literacy, psychological factors in empowerment, and the impact of microfinance on various dimensions of empowerment

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

In terms of research methodology, using a qualitative descriptive field research approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of economic empowerment programs within the women farmer group (Bungin, 2007; Creswell & Wekke, 2020). The combination of primary data collection through interviews and observations, along with statistical analysis and effectiveness indicators derived from interviews, contributes to a more nuanced evaluation of program effectiveness (Sugiyono, 2016; Rahardjo, 2010).

### **Data**

The research uses primary data obtained through interviews and observations with participants in the economic empowerment program through KWT Bernilai. These provide in-depth insights into their perceptions, experiences, and assessments of the program. Secondary data, including program reports and policy documents, is also utilized to provide additional context and support for analysis. This combination of primary and secondary data provides a comprehensive understanding of the program's effectiveness (Kualitatif et al., 2013; Bungin, 2007).

### **Data Analysis Method**

The study uses qualitative descriptive field research to measure the effectiveness of the economic empowerment program through KWT Bernilai (Gloria & Charles, 2022). Primary data is collected through interviews and observations, and secondary data is obtained from relevant documentation. The program's effectiveness is evaluated by comparing actual achievements to set targets using a simple statistical method. Effectiveness indicators are derived from interviews, and data reduction, presentation, and conclusions are used to achieve research objectives. Future efforts should focus on improving program socialization and monitoring. Effective program implementation is a joint responsibility of the government and the community. Referencing sources and international references would enhance the validity of the methodology

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Implementation of the Bernilai's Women Farmer Group Program**

Program P2L, supported by the government, aims to address priority areas affected by stunting and vulnerable to food insecurity (Hong et al., 2017; Yu et al., 2023). It utilizes underutilized land for sustainable food production, household nutrition, and income generation (Chang & Berdiev, 2015; Trebilcock & Daniels, 2006). Dolago Padang Village qualifies for P2L assistance due to its prioritized status. The program's effectiveness must be assessed to determine its impact and benefits and to inform its continuation. The implementation of P2L activities requires collaboration between the government and the community. The active role and

participation of the community are crucial for the program's success. The program includes various components, including nursery gardens for seed production, demonstration plots as market-oriented food production sites, cultivation to optimize household land use, post-harvest processing and marketing, and socialization activities for coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and control.

In summary, it is essential to evaluate the effectiveness of the P2L program in Dolago Padang Village. The community's active involvement and successful implementation of program activities are vital considerations. The program's components, such as nursery gardens, demonstration plots, cultivation, post-harvest processing, and marketing, should be carried out effectively to achieve the program's goals. Socialization activities play a vital role in ensuring smooth program implementation.

Table.1 Implementation of the Bernilai Farmer Women's Group Program

Year	Programs	Indicators	Objective	Target	Goal	Results
2019	Kebun bibit	Seed production	1.000-7000 Seed	4x/year	4	100
		Distribution	Distributed to all group members, demonstration plots and marketing			
	Demplot	Commodity	There are various vegetables, fruits or tubers that can meet the consumption needs of members and are market-oriented	12x/year	12	100
		Utilization of demonstration plot results	The results of the demonstration plots were distributed to finance the operation of the demonstration plots and additional group cash.			
	Planting	Plants	< 50 polybags of plants in the yard	4x/year	4	100
		Continuity	3-6 Month			
	Socialization	Coaching, monitoring and evaluation	coordination of operational development, monitoring, evaluation and control of use Streamlining the implementation of P2L activities	6x/year	3	50
	Seed	Seed's Production	1.000-7000	4x/year	4	100

2020		Distribution	group members, demonstration plots and marketing			
	Demplot	Commodity	There are various vegetables, fruits and tubers that can meet the consumption needs of members and are market-oriented	12x/year	12	100
			Utilization of demonstration plot results			
	Planting	Plant	< 50 polybags of plants In the yard	4x/year	4	100
		Continuity	3-6 Months			
	Socialization	Coaching, monitoring and evaluation	coordination of operational development, monitoring, evaluation and control of use Streamlining the implementation of P2L activities	6x/year	2	33,3
		Seed's Production	1.000-7000 Seed			
2021	Seed	Distribution	The results of the demonstration plots were distributed to finance the operation of the demonstration plots and additional group cash	4x/year	4	100
		Commodity	Various vegetables, fruits and tubers can meet the members' consumption needs and are oriented. Market			
	Demplot	Commodity	There are various vegetables, fruits and/or tubers that can meet the consumption needs of members and are oriented Market	12x/year	12	100
		Utilization of demonstration plot results	The results of the demonstration plots were distributed to finance the operation of the demonstration			



			plots and additional group cash.			
	Planting	Amount of Plants	< 50 polybags of plants in the yard	4x/year	4	100
		Continuity of existence Plants in the yard	Plants are in the yard for 3-6 months			
	Socialization	Coaching, monitoring and evaluation	Coordinate operational development, monitoring, evaluation and control to expedite implementation P2L activities	6x/year	3	50

Source Processed from the documentation of the KWT Bernilai 2019-2021

The implementation of the P2L program has gone well during the 2019-2021 period. On average, the programs implemented achieved an outstanding level of effectiveness, with an effectiveness ratio above 80. Members of the Women Farmers Group of Value have used their home gardens well through activities such as nursery management, demonstration plots, planting and post-harvest and marketing. Production result. However, the role of the Food Security Service and the Ministry of Agriculture in program socialization, monitoring, and evaluation of Valued Women Farmers Groups has yet to be adequately implemented. This should be a shared responsibility between the government and society. As a result, the program effectiveness ratio only reached a less effective achievement level, namely between 40 and 59.99.

One of the obstacles to implementing the program is the existence of social restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, the Worthy Women Farmers Group members are still trying to achieve the main objectives of the P2L program. This can be seen from marketing demonstration plots and planting results, which are still running.

To increase the effectiveness of the P2L program, it is recommended to improve coordination between the government and the community in terms of program socialization, monitoring and evaluation. It is also necessary to find solutions to overcome the obstacles arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this did not prevent the members of the Worthy Women Farmers Group from carrying out the main objectives of the P2L program. This is evidenced by the results of the marketing of demonstration plots and plantings as follows:

**Table. 2** Marketing Results KWT's Bernilai

Year	Sales' Total	
2019	Rp	17.634.000
2020	Rp	32.421.000
2021	Rp	33.201.000

Source: Processed from the documentation of the KWT Bernilai 2019-2021

From the table above, the members of the Valued Farmers Group have been able to process the demonstration plot quite well. The marketing results are the result of total sales per year. Members of the Women Farmers Group are valued for having carried out the marketing, and the marketing results are to finance the operation of the demonstration plot and increase the group's cash. This will later impact increasing the welfare of the Valued Women Farmers Group itself because the increase in yields will reduce household consumption costs and increase the group's income through marketing activities. To increase production yields from P2L activities, support is also needed from the Food Security Service and the Ministry of Agriculture. In addition to marketing results, the need for diverse, nutritionally balanced, and safe food is enough to fulfill household food for members of the Women's Farmers Group of Value.

### **The Effectiveness of Economic Empowerment Program Implementation through the "Value" Women Farmer Group**

In the analysis of the Kelompok Wanita Tani Bernilai program in Dolago Padang Village, an evaluation of its effectiveness was conducted, focusing on four dimensions: target accuracy, program socialization, program objectives, and program monitoring. Several findings were identified, and based on these findings, steps can be taken to enhance the program's effectiveness. The first dimension evaluated was target accuracy. It was found that the program has been successful in achieving target accuracy. The women farmer groups have legitimate institutional and organizational structures and are registered in the agricultural extension management information system (simluhtan) application. They also meet the criteria for receiving P2L assistance. To maintain target accuracy, it is crucial to regularly verify the qualifications and membership of the groups.

However, the second dimension, program socialization, needed to be improved. The findings indicate that program socialization needs to be carried out more effectively. The primary constraint is the COVID-19 pandemic situation, which hinders the implementation of regular and scheduled socialization activities by relevant agencies or institutions. To address this, it is recommended that the relevant agencies increase the intensity and schedule of program socialization. They should also consider the existing constraints, particularly those related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Adequate socialization will help program participants better understand the program's objectives and benefits.

The relevant agencies can adopt a more flexible approach in conducting socialization activities to strengthen program socialization. Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, technology and digital platforms can be explored to hold meetings, pieces training, or information dissemination sessions with group members. Utilizing social media, chat groups, or webinars, messages related to the program's objectives and benefits can be regularly and interactively conveyed to participants. Additionally, online question-and-answer sessions can be organized to facilitate discussions and provide a deeper understanding.

In addition to digital methods, traditional means of communication can also be utilized. Printed materials such as leaflets, brochures, or posters can be distributed in the village as information sources about the program. It is essential to present information in a simple and easily understandable language, emphasizing the tangible benefits that program participants can gain. The success stories of women

farmer groups that have achieved positive outcomes through the program can be highlighted as inspirational examples to motivate other members.

Moving on to the third dimension, program objectives, the findings reveal that the program has successfully improved food availability, accessibility, and utilization for households. Using backyard, fallow, and unproductive land has increased household incomes. To maintain these achievements, it is crucial to continuously monitor and measure indicators such as food availability, accessibility, utilization, and household income regularly. This will identify whether the program objectives have been successfully achieved or if adjustments are needed.

To ensure the continued improvement of food availability, accessibility, and utilization, regular monitoring of these indicators is essential. The diversity-promoting team should conduct visits and monitoring activities as scheduled. Data and information related to program implementation, challenges faced, and achieved impacts should be collected during these visits. This will provide a deeper understanding of the program's progress and enable informed decision-making.

To further enhance program monitoring, the utilization of technology can be explored. For instance, women farmer groups can report their activities and progress through a mobile-based application provided by the relevant agencies. This system would facilitate faster and more accurate information retrieval regarding program development and objective achievements. By harnessing technology, program monitoring can be conducted efficiently without being limited by distance or time constraints.

In addition to regular monitoring, periodic evaluations should be conducted to assess the program's overall effectiveness. These evaluations can involve the participation of external experts, institutions, or organizations to ensure an unbiased assessment. The findings and recommendations from these evaluations can guide program improvements and modifications.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The research findings indicate that Bernilai's Women Farmer Group program in Dolago Padang Village has achieved its target and set goals. It has improved the availability, accessibility, and utilization of food for households and increased household income through available land. However, there are challenges in program dissemination and monitoring that could have been more optimal. To enhance the program's effectiveness, adopting a more flexible approach to program dissemination is recommended by leveraging technology and digital platforms, such as social media, group chats, or webinars. Print media such as flyers, brochures, or posters should also be considered to disseminate program information to the village community. Program monitoring can be improved through regular visits by the diversity of the food supervisory team and the use of technology, such as mobile-based applications, to report activities and monitor program progress efficiently.

Furthermore, collaboration with relevant stakeholders, such as educational institutions, research institutions, and community organizations, can provide technical support, expertise, and resources needed to enhance the program's

effectiveness. Involving experts and practitioners in agriculture and economic development can also contribute positively.

In conclusion, by adopting the suggested measures, Bernilai's Women Farmer Group program in Dolago Padang Village can become more effective in achieving its goals and empowering program participants to improve their well-being.

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