



## Regional Government Strategy to Improve Fishermen Welfare in Samatiga During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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### A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this study is to formulate strategies to improve the welfare of fishermen during the Covid-19 pandemic in Samatiga District that can be carried out by the West Aceh regional government and to analyze the opportunities and challenges in implementing government strategies to improve the welfare of fishermen during the Covid-19 pandemic in Samatiga District. West Aceh District. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with data triangulation. The theory used is SWOT analysis and litmus test to measure the strategic issues that are formed. The results of this study are strategies for increasing the welfare of fishermen in Samatiga sub-district, West Aceh Regency, namely increasing the economic empowerment of fishermen to increase the selling value of their catch through fishermen groups.

### INTRODUCTION

The welfare of the people is the ultimate goal of all government programs and policies. Indonesia as a maritime country certainly needs to pay attention to the welfare of fishermen who are a milestone in Indonesian maritime affairs. The Indonesian marine sector has very promising economic potential and is very strategic to be managed and developed as a source of development that can provide benefits to the state and society. This is also supported by Kusumayanti's statement (Kusumayanti et al., 2018) that fisheries become something important and very strategic in national development.

President Joko Widodo is also aware that Indonesia's marine resources, which have great potential, must be supported by innovative policies from the government. The World Maritime Axis is the flagship program of the Joko Widodo government to optimize Indonesia's marine potential and return Indonesia's maritime greatness and strength to the world. Indonesia has the largest fishery potential in the world, both capture fisheries and aquaculture, which is 10.2 million tons/year for capture fisheries and 56.8 million tons/year for aquaculture (Potensi Perikanan Indonesia, 2017). Indonesia's fisheries potential is able to absorb labor consisting of 0.47 million public water fishermen, 2.23 million marine fishermen; and 2.65 million fish farmers (Sufi, 2019).

The great potential of fisheries in Indonesia should be able to provide an increase in the fishermen's economy so that their welfare also increases, but in fact there are still many poor fishermen in Indonesia. This is a separate difficulty faced by fishermen throughout Indonesia when Covid-19 attacks Indonesia.

The World Health Organization (WHO) stated that the corona virus is a global health emergency, because the outbreak continues to spread to 216 countries in the world, including

Indonesia. Based on data from the Covid-19 handling task force as of September 16, 2020, there were 228,993 positive cases of COVID-19 and have spread to 34 provinces and 493 regencies/cities in Indonesia. The COVID-19 pandemic has not only attacked the health system but also has an impact on people's lives.

Lavell in Annisa Meutia Ratri's writing stated that COVID-19 is a disaster that has an impact on human life, both the health system and the community's economy (Ratri, 2020). The spread of the corona virus which has spread to various parts of the world has an impact on the Indonesian economy, both in terms of trade, investment, tourism, agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and other sectors. The COVID-19 pandemic has also caused fishermen to slump, incomes decline, a lot of debt, production stops and changes to professions (Wulandari, 2021)

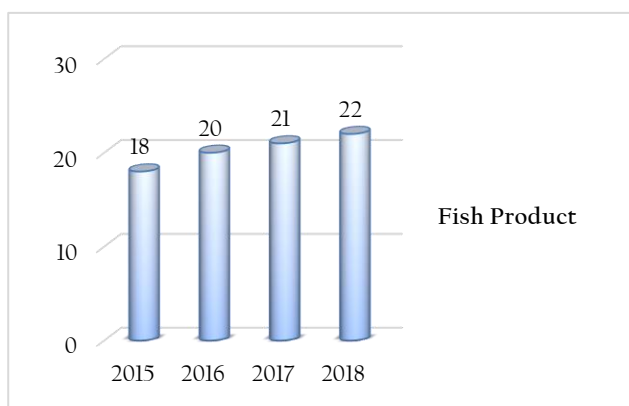
Based on the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) report in the second quarter of August 2020, Indonesia's economic growth was minus 5.32 percent, previously in the first quarter of 2020 it grew by 2.97 percent (BPS, 2020). Economic growth is certainly an important part of human life. The state is required to be able to formulate economic policies and ensure the economy of citizens in order to live prosperously.

The COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia is risky widely and has an impact on socio-economic conditions in various sectors, one of which is the fisheries sector. Not only that, there are 26,675 Fishery Households (RTP) affected by COVID-19, due to the drastic decline in fish prices or export marketing that has been closed (Efrizal, 2020). In addition, the existence of closure policies in several areas also affects the absorption of fishery production by fishermen, so that they find it difficult to sell fish which in turn results in lower fish prices, as happened in West Aceh.

Based on Law No. 45 of 2009 concerning Fisheries, that fishermen are people whose livelihood is fishing. Fishing communities are formed from life in the ocean which is very harsh and full of risks, especially risks that come from natural factors (Suwiyadi, dkk). There are several characteristics of fishermen based on fishing facilities, technology, livelihoods, types of fish, and the size of the boat/boat. During this pandemic, almost all types of fishermen were affected. The Covid-19 outbreak has caused a very significant decrease in the selling price of fish, but like it or not, fishermen must continue to go to sea to meet their daily needs, even though the operational costs they incur are higher than their income.

This is of course a separate problem faced by fishermen during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another impact that will be felt is that exports are hampered and even some countries close access to import fish products from outside, so that production will decrease, the abundance of fish at the local level will result in a decrease in prices, meanwhile people's purchasing power decreases so that the income of fishermen also decreases.

This condition is also felt by fishermen in West Aceh Regency as said by Nanda Ferdiasyah as Secretary General of the Laot Aceh Barat commander in the news written by serambinews.com that West Aceh fishermen are affected by COVID-19 where fish prices have decreased causing a lack of fishermen's income so that the fishermen's economy increasingly worrying (Bahri, 2020). This condition causes fishermen to find it difficult to buy fuel, difficult to pay credit, unable to repair damaged fleets and even unable to buy new boats. Of course, this is inversely proportional to fish production in West Aceh, which increases from year to year as shown in the graph below:



Graph 1. Fish Production in West Aceh Regency 2015 to 2018 (Anwar, 2021)

Kondisi tersebut makin parah ketika dilakukan pembatasan bagi acara besar atau hajatan sehingga konsumsi ikan menurun, penjualan ikan ikut menurun karena pembeli terbatas untuk konsumsi keluarga dan rumah makan.

The research by Ramadhan (2019) found that some assistance from the government was given to fishermen to improve the welfare of fishermen, including insurance premiums for fishermen, fishermen's E-cards, and so on. Even though the implementation is influenced by limited funds, lack of facilities and infrastructure and low fishermen education (Ramadhan, 2019).

Subsequent research by Rosni (2017) which resulted in the welfare level of the fishing community, namely from 63.63% belonging to the underprivileged, 31.82% belonging to the prosperous I, and 4.56% belonging to the prosperous II. All

respondents are declared poor because their income is far below the UMK in Batubara Regency (Rosni, 2017).

Subsequent research by Arnawa et.al (2016) that the impact of providing assistance for capture fisheries facilities can increase the income of fishermen in Gianyar Bali Regency by 2.6287%, and there are factors that affect fishermen's income, namely the number of boat costs incurred by fishermen and the type. While the factors that have no effect are the type of fishing gear, distance traveled, number of fishing gear, age, education and length of fishing (Arnawa et al., 2016).

Subsequent research is from Ni Made Dwi Kusumayanti et al (2018) that when the quality of social capital increases, the income level of fishermen tends to increase and with increasing quality of social capital, the level of welfare also tends to increase (Kusumayanti et al., 2018).

The research from Suwiyadi (2019) which results that the condition of fishermen on the coast of Central Java using the World Bank criteria is declared not yet prosperous, this is caused by uncertain income and low strategic innovation carried out by the community (Suwiyadi et al., 2019).

Then research from Liony Wiyanti (2013) which results that strategies to improve welfare are still dominated by government programs and fishermen's poverty is caused by natural, cultural and structural factors (Wijayanti & Ihsannudin, 2013).

Furthermore, there is research from Asep Hamzah (2021) which found that there were several adaptation strategies carried out by fishermen during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely by intensification, mobilization of family members, diversification, utilization of social networks and changes in fishing areas.. (Hamzah & Sutrawan Nurdin, 2021)

The similarities in this study are that they both examine the welfare of fishermen, but what makes the difference is the method and focus of the research. In this study, the focus is more on the formulation of strategies in improving the welfare of fishermen by using the Litmus Test theory and looking at the influencing factors with a qualitative approach.

Improving the welfare of fishermen during this pandemic period is studied by developing a strategy. Welfare is part of a very complex coastal area with various issues and problems that require comprehensive handling with special and integrated strategies (Belda, 2012). Strategy is the art of using organizational skills and resources to achieve goals through effective relationships with the environment under conditions most favorable to the organization. Hatten and Hatten in the book Strategic Decision Making for Public Organizations and Nonprofit Organizations (Salusu, 2006) provides several clues to the success of a strategy, namely: 1) the strategy must be consistent with its environment, 2) Every organization does not only make one strategy and does not conflict with one another, 3) focused, 4) centered on the strengths of the organization, 5) Can be implemented, 6 ) compiled on the basis of success, and 7) support from all organizational leaders.

Strategy can be determined of course by looking at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that exist. So in this case, researchers need to conduct a SWOT analysis, namely a study to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the organization and its environment. Kearns (Salusu, 2006) states that the SWOT analysis is generated with a SWOT matrix that describes the meeting between strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which are divided into 6 boxes as shown below:

<b>FAKTOR</b>	<b>EKSTERNAL</b>	<i>OPPURTUNITIES</i>	<i>THREATS</i>
<b>FAKTOR</b>	<b>INTERNAL</b>		
<i>STRENGTHS</i>		<i>COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE</i>	<i>MOBILIZATION</i>
<i>WEAKNESSES</i>		<i>INVESTMENT</i> <i>DIVESTMENT</i>	<i>DAMAGE</i> <i>CONTROL</i>

Gambar 2. SWOT Analysis Matrix Issue Classification (Salusu, 2006)

After the SWOT analysis is carried out, the strategic issues that are at fault from the SWOT meeting or intersection will be obtained. Strategic issues are the main policy choices that affect the mandate, mission, values of the organization, the level and mix of products and services, clients or users, costs, finance, organization or management (Salusu, 2006). Strategic issues that arise are then measured by using the Litmus Test to filter out strategic issues. Issues that are truly strategic are issues that have a score of 27-33, issues that are considered moderate are issues with a total score of 14-23, while operational issues are issues with low scores in all dimensions, namely 1-13. (Macella, 2012)

The steps for formulating the strategy above are the basis for seeing the next steps that the local government of West Aceh can take in improving the welfare of fishermen. The welfare of fishermen is the responsibility of the government to be considered and fought for. Arthur Dunham (Sumarnonugroho, 1987) provides a definition of social welfare is an organized activity with the aim of improving social well-being through the provision of assistance to meet needs such as social adjustment, health, family and child life, living standards, leisure time, and social relationships. Meanwhile, according to the BKKBN, welfare has three indicators, namely Phase I is a family that can meet basic needs, Phase II is a family that is able to meet basic and psychological needs, then Phase III is a family that is able to meet the needs of developers (Rosni, 2017)

For this reason, the existence of the government is very much needed by the community, especially fishermen who are also affected by COVID-19, so that a special protection package is needed for fishermen to be given appropriately and quickly in the face of this pandemic in the form of appropriate and appropriate strategies and can be implemented by the government, especially by the government. local area in order to improve the welfare of fishermen.

Based on the above, this study aims to formulate a strategy to improve the welfare of fishermen during the COVID-19 pandemic in Samatiga District that can be carried out by the West Aceh regional government and analyze the supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing the local government strategy in improving the welfare of fishermen during the pandemic. covid-19 in Samatiga District, West Aceh Regency.

**METHOD**

The research method used is descriptive qualitative method, namely looking at the problems that occur in the community and then conducting a study of these problems. The use of qualitative methods is more suitable to be used in answering the problems of this research, because researchers need to examine deeply the internal and external environmental conditions in order to formulate strategies that can be done to improve the welfare of

fishermen in Samatiga during the covid-19 pandemic. The data in this study used field observations in the Samatiga District, Kuala Bubon Village, Lhok Bubon and Suak Semasih. Then the researchers conducted interviews with several informants consisting of the Head of Capture Fisheries and Head of Small Fisherman Empowerment Division of the Marine and Fisheries Service of West Aceh Regency, Fishermen Assistant, Fishermen of Kuala Bubon Village, Fisherman of Lhok Bubon Village, and Fisherman of Suak Semasih Village. This research is also supported by a literature study by looking for reference sources, both books, reports, scientific journals, and other literature sources related to research problems. The data obtained is then analyzed using SWOT analysis according to the problem, presented and then concluded according to the research focus.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2010 reported that the poverty rate of coastal communities reached 35 million people or 13.33 percent of the total population in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the World Bank reports that poverty in Indonesia is still around 100 million. Based on this data, the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (KKP) emphasized that there are around 7.87 million poor coastal communities and 2.2 million very poor coastal people throughout Indonesia. The poor fishermen are spread across 10,640 fishing villages on the coast (Pohuwato et al., 2019). The condition of poverty in coastal communities coupled with the current Covid-19 pandemic has an impact on the daily income of fishermen. To solve the economic problems of fishing communities during the Covid-19 pandemic in West Aceh Regency, support from the government is currently needed so that economic problems are quickly resolved. This is in line with Sugini's opinion in (Reiza Macella, et al., 2021) who stated that the welfare of the community will increase if it is accompanied by empowerment support from the government to the community.

The implementation of community empowerment in order to improve the community's economy, the West Aceh Regency Government has pursued empowerment programs for coastal communities that can be analyzed in three main indicators, namely people centered, participatory, and sustainable.

*People Centered*

*A. Strategies to Improve Fishermen's Welfare During the Covid-19 Pandemic*

The Strategy to Improve Fishermen Welfare During the Covid-19 Pandemic Period in Samatiga District, West Aceh Regency begins by looking at the field conditions which are a strategic environment both internally and externally which become strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in order to formulate strategies to improve the Welfare of Fishermen during the Covid-19 Pandemic. 19 in Samatiga District, West Aceh Regency. These internal conditions which include strengths and weaknesses as well as external conditions consisting of opportunities and threats are the basis for formulating strategic issues ranging from the S-O Strategy, the S-T Strategy, the W-O Strategy and the W-T below:

1. *Increasing the economic empowerment of fishermen to increase the selling value of their catch through fisherman groups (SO)*

The strategy for empowering fishermen's economy through fishing groups is based on the potential of existing marine products, especially in the Samatiga sub-district. There are 12 fishing business groups that have been formed in

the villages of Kuala Bubon, Lhok Bubon, and Suak Semasih which are further empowered by processing their catches into higher value products. So that fishermen can have additional income from the business of the fishermen group. Of course, this needs to involve various sectors ranging from DKP, fishermen assistants, village governments, universities, and also the private sector which has their respective roles as regulators, implementers, assistants, supervisors, and financiers.

2. *Optimization of fishing cooperatives (SO)*

The Fisherman's Cooperative in Samatiga District is still not running optimally, as is the case with the cooperative in Suak Semasih Village. The cooperative is constrained by limited knowledge related to cooperative management. Therefore, the existing fishing cooperatives in Samatiga need to be re-optimized so that they are able to provide sustainable results that can be felt by all members of the cooperative itself.

3. *Optimization of human resources in improving the welfare of fishermen (SO)*

The Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (DKP) of West Aceh Regency is provided with HR support as a companion to fishermen who are directly responsible to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. This is a strength that DKP has, but it is necessary to optimize human resources such as capacity building, besides that the 12 fishing business groups that have been formed in Samatiga District need to be equipped with knowledge and skills in processing their catch.

4. *Optimizing multi-sectoral cooperation in increasing awareness of wise fishing and optimizing fish processing management. (ST)*

The existing cooperation between the government of Aceh Barat Regency and multi-sectoral private sector, universities and other non-governmental organizations needs to be optimized, especially in terms of fishing and fish management. fish use trawl trawls which are detrimental to the ecosystem in the sea.

5. *Efficiency and evaluation of the use of the budget every year. (WO)*

The limited budget that DKP has every year also limits operations, the quantity of programs and assistance provided

to fishermen so that efficiency and evaluation of budget use need to be optimized to support the improvement of fishermen's welfare.

6. *Increased supervision and evaluation of fishing groups and cooperatives by optimizing human resources and stakeholder collaboration and community support (WO)*

The productivity of existing fishing business groups and fishing cooperatives has not run optimally, in addition to that the limited number of cooperatives needs to be increased through regular and continuous monitoring and evaluation and the establishment of cooperation between cooperatives and stakeholders in order to help increase the productivity of cooperatives and fishing business groups in the area. Samatiga District.

7. *Optimization of supporting facilities and infrastructure (WO)*

The existing port in West Aceh is not adequate to bring in investors from outside as entrepreneurs to buy fishermen's catch, besides that there is no fish auction place that can provide fish prices at competitive prices. This is necessary so as to increase the income of fishermen. Therefore, the Government needs to optimize supporting facilities and infrastructure to improve the welfare of fishermen.

8. *Increased involvement of fishermen groups and Panglima Laot to wisely catch fish (WT)*

In the coastal area of Samatiga District there is still a threat in the form of catching fish using equipment that has been prohibited by the government, namely trawl. Even though this trawler is a modified trawl this is detrimental to fishermen in other adjoining village areas. Therefore, the community needs to be involved both from Panglima Laot, fishermen and other communities in protecting the sea and its contents.

After identifying the strategic issues above, then these issues are tested using the Litmus Test. The test is carried out by answering several questions with a weight of 1 to 3 on each of the 13 questions, then each is added up and the highest score is the most strategic issue, then Moderate and operational which are the most strategic issues that can be carried out by the relevant Office.

Tabel 1. Litmus Test Result

No.	Strategy Issue	Litmus Test Questions Scoor													Scoor Totals	
		1	2	3	4					5	6	7	8	9		
					A	b	c	d	e							
1.	Increasing the economic empowerment of fishermen to increase the selling value of their catch through fisherman groups	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	34
2.	Optimization of fishing cooperatives	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	2	2	29
3.	Optimization of human resources in improving the welfare of fishermen	1	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	22
4.	Optimizing multi-sectoral cooperation in increasing awareness of wise fishing and optimizing fish processing management	1	3	1	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	26
5.	Efficiency and evaluation of the use of the budget every year.	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	22

6.	Optimization of supporting facilities and infrastructure	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	3	2	2	23
7.	Increased supervision and evaluation of fishing groups and cooperatives by optimizing human resources and stakeholder collaboration and community support	1	3	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	3	2	3	3	26
8.	Increased involvement of fishermen groups and Panglima Laot to wisely catch fish	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	20

Source: Primary Data 2021

Based on table 1, the results show that the strategic issue that has the highest value is Increasing the economic empowerment of fishermen to increase the selling value of their catch through fisherman groups, with a score of 33. This issue is an issue that is considered very strategic in order to improve the welfare of Samatiga fishermen, West Aceh Regency.

**B. Support and Resistor Factors in Improving Fishermen Welfare During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Samatiga District, West Aceh Regency.**

**1. Support Factors**

*a. Conformity of the vision and mission with conditions in the field*

The Vision and Mission of the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries has become one with the vision and mission of the regional government of West Aceh Regency, namely the realization of an Islamic West Aceh, Infrastructure Development and a People's Economy that is Transparent, Credible, Accountable and Integrity. While the mission of the West Aceh district government has 8 (eight) points, one of the missions that have been in accordance with field conditions is the third mission, which is to build a people's economy that relies on the natural resources sector with integrated management based on spatial planning and disaster maps. An appropriate vision and mission that describes the real conditions in the field indicates that in the process of formulating the vision and mission it is based on the problems that exist in the community.

*b. Implementation of the mission to achieve the vision*

The West Aceh District Government's mission was then revealed to be a strategic plan by each West Aceh district agency, which was then compiled into a short and medium-term plan, as prepared by the West Aceh District Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Service (DKP). Of course, in achieving the vision, many programs and activities are carried out to achieve the above vision. One thing that has been done by the West Aceh district government in improving the welfare of fishermen is by providing assistance with boats and fishing gear to several groups of fishermen.

*c. There is a direction for improving the welfare of fishermen*

The Department of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DKP) of West Aceh Regency prior to the COVID-19 pandemic routinely made visits to groups of fishermen, one of which was Samatiga sub-district. Then at least once a year DKP holds a discussion by inviting the panglima laot and representatives of the fishermen's groups to discuss some of the problems they face and then provide a joint solution. Every year, each sector proposes a program plan along with the budget needed to improve the welfare of fishermen, one of which is the program of ship assistance, fishing gear, and other facilities that support fishermen's activities. DKP always tries to increase the quota of recipients of assistance from either the regional or central

government, so that the aid is evenly distributed to all groups of fishermen in Samatiga District and other sub-districts in West Aceh.

*d. Human resources assistance from the ministry of marine and fisheries as a companion for fishermen*

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (KKP) places 6 human resources for assisting fishing groups in the West Aceh DKP who are tasked with conducting routine assistance and regular visits every month. These fisherman assistants have their respective areas of duty in the field of catching, cultivation and also business groups in their respective assigned areas. They also help fishermen groups to prepare all administrative requirements to obtain assistance. They also disseminate information on new policies and programs implemented by the KKP to fishermen. The presence of these assistants is very helpful for DKP Aceh Barat and further strengthens DKP resources in providing assistance, counseling, socialization as a form of providing public services to fishermen and other coastal communities in West Aceh.

*e. The potential of abundant marine products along the coastline and sea of West Aceh*

The Samatiga area has catches in the form of medium fish, small fish, and shrimp. Suak Semasih village which only catches shrimp in certain seasons gets quite abundant catches. However, this potential is not accompanied by good shrimp marketing. They actually find it difficult to market the shrimp at the right selling price. So far, they sell to agents at low prices, while the agents are able to resell them to shrimp entrepreneurs, who then process and export the shrimp at a high enough price.

*f. There is economic potential from fish processing business in the Samatiga region, West Aceh.*

The Samatiga region has 2 cooperatives that have been formed and 12 fish processing business groups whose headquarters are in the village of Kuala Bubon. Two of these 12 groups have received freezer assistance from the ministry to store fish raw materials. The processing results are still in the form of dried salted fish and small shrimp. The results are also marketed not only in the West Aceh region but outside areas such as Medan.

*g. There are fishing groups that continue to form from year to year in the Samatiga region, West Aceh*

Samatiga already has more than 10 fishing groups and 2 cooperatives that have been formed. However, this group still lacks activities, namely fishing only. Currently, the government continues to encourage individual fishermen to join fishing groups in order to improve their welfare.

*h. There is a panglima laot*

Panglima laot as Aceh's local wisdom, they have legal force regulated by Qanun No. 10 of 2008. In Samatiga District itself, every village has a Laot commander who is called the Lhok Sea commander and some of them also work as fishermen. Its existence can help DKP as the mouthpiece of the government in the midst of the community in providing information about government programs and policies, as well as inviting fishermen and the community to catch fish wisely.

*i. There is assistance from the central government given to fishermen*

Various assistances have been provided by the KKP for fishermen in the Aceh Barat region. The assistance provided is in the form of boats and fishing equipment for fishermen. The assistance is given to groups of fishermen who have passed the administration and have been surveyed by the ministry and declared eligible to receive the assistance. The existence of assistance from the central government is certainly very helpful, considering the limited assistance provided by the West Aceh district government itself to fishermen.

*j. There are various programs from the central government in improving the welfare of fishermen.*

Various programs made by the central government such as KUSUKA membership, the provision of jasindo insurance for fishermen, applications for selling catches online from the ministry and other assistance programs are very helpful in improving the welfare of fishermen.

*k. There is assistance from universities to provide assistance and increase the production and income of fishermen and fishermen's woman*

Universities in implementing the Tri Dharma of Higher Education are by conducting training to fishermen, providing equipment that helps fishermen in their activities and so on. As is often done by lecturers at Teuku Umar University to carry out community service in Kuala Bubon, Samatiga sub-district, both for fishing groups and fish processing business groups. This activity is very helpful for local governments, to provide training, counseling, assistance and provision of equipment with renewable technology that makes it easier for fishermen to carry out their activities, as well as improve the competence and quality of processing businesses and cooperatives that have been formed.

## **2. Resistor Factors**

*a. Limited budget managed by the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (DKP) of West Aceh*

West Aceh DKP which annually formulates a program of activities per sector, which is then discussed and submitted as a service plan to the West Aceh district government for later discussion by BAPPEDA. However, in reality it is often the case that the program and the proposed budget are not in accordance with that given by the local government of Aceh Barat Regency to DKP. This happens because of the dynamics that occur in the budget discussion process, both because of political interests and the limited budget of the West Aceh Regency government which must also be divided into several other sectors. For this reason, DKP is only able to receive the funds provided and manage it as well as possible.

*b. Limited quantity of fisherman companion*

Since 2015, DKP has been assisted by assistant fishermen from the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, which now number 6

assistants. However, this amount has not been able to meet the needs of fishermen in West Aceh. These 6 facilitators each have 2 to 3 sub-districts each person to be assisted in various activities, both catching, cultivating and fishing business groups. The large number of groups and sectors that must be accompanied makes it difficult for them to arrange a visit schedule so that it hampers the process of providing information and other mentoring activities, due to the limited human resources of the Facilitators.

*c. Limited capacity of human resources*

The DKP admits that they have limited human resources in terms of quantity and capability, especially in terms of providing training in post-catch fishing business processing, such as fish processing business, which can later be developed into a sustainable business. So far, DKP has only relied on training provided by the Medan training center which does not necessarily make training programs for the West Aceh region every year, the last training was held in 2019 before COVID-19. Meanwhile, DKP itself has never held its own fish processing training program, due to the limited capacity of its human resources.

*l. Inadequate facilities and infrastructure*

Currently, Aceh Barat only has 1 cold storage for fish storage at PPI Meulaboh. Then the existing port in West Aceh is not adequate to bring in investors from outside as entrepreneurs to buy fisherman's catch. In addition, there is no fish auction place in West Aceh that can be used as a means for fishermen to sell their fish at competitive prices without dependence on benches, as well as the absence of ports such as Belawan Port in Medan for the West and South Aceh regions.

*m. Supervision that is not optimal*

The existence of limited human resources and the large number of issues that must be completed make supervision not optimal according to their expectations. In fact, every year supervision is always carried out, as well as periodic visits by fishermen's companions and sometimes service leaders also go to the field to just do observations and surveys when assistance will be provided. The mindset of fishermen themselves who are still backward also contributes to this weak supervision, where there is a case when fishermen receive assistance in the form of boats from the provincial government for 250 million, the boat has been sold by the head of the fishing group who received the assistance. This illustrates the weak supervision carried out by DKP, even though when the assistance was given the DKP had notified them to be able to use the assistance properly in order to increase fishermen's income.

*n. There is fishing using Trawl*

Fishing using trawl trawls has been banned, but apparently it is still being done by some fishermen in West Aceh, especially in Kuala Bubon village, Samatiga sub-district, who still use trawl traps. DKP has advised not to use the trawl, because it will have an impact on the number of fish in the sea which continues to decrease from time to time and will eventually run out. The use of fishing gear has not been resolved to its roots because the fishing gear used by fishermen is actually modified into semi trawl (Marefanda, 2019).

*o. There are unscrupulous agents.*

The existence of agents in the fish sales cycle in the West Aceh region has existed for a long time. The existence of this

agent is often known as "toke bench". Toke bench as an agent to buy fish at a certain benchmark price, some also provide capital loans to fishermen for operational costs. Then the fishermen will replace it with their catch. But unfortunately, the existence of this bench sometimes also harms fishermen because some people buy fisherman's catch at a very cheap price, then sell it again to other parties, either factories, companies or even bigger agents at a much higher price. The DKP is aware of this problem, but there is not much that can be done other than encouraging fishermen to join groups of fishermen who then form cooperatives. The cooperative will later manage the cycle of selling the caught fish for cooperative members.

*p. The mindset of the fishing community is still rigid and backward*

The mindset of fishermen in the West Aceh region is still mostly rigid and backward, it is difficult for them to get out of the bench, most of the fishermen don't want to bother looking for fish buyers at the right price, just want to accept the results, and they don't have any more money, so they want to or not. They will borrow capital from Toke Bench as their subscription agent. This habit has been going on for a very long time and has been passed down from generation to generation, so that it becomes a difficult mindset to change to be more advanced and not depend on the bench toke.

*q. Limited ability and knowledge of fishermen*

The limited education they have makes fishermen in Samatiga District also have limited abilities and knowledge. Cooperatives that are already running, such as those in Suak Semasih, are threatened with traffic jams because they find it difficult to manage cooperatives, especially when financial reports must use an application which are difficult for them to understand. According to Efan from the Marine and Fisheries Service of West Aceh Regency, of the 21 fishing groups in West Aceh, only 1 group in Ujong Drien is advanced and can meet the needs of its members and their families and can add to their own fleet of ships with the catch they process and market.

*r. Competition in obtaining assistance from the central government*

The central government provides assistance to fishermen throughout Indonesia with uniform terms and conditions. Such detailed requirements using the application make it difficult for fishing groups in West Aceh, especially in Samatiga. Every year more and more fishing groups are formed and the selection made by the central government is getting tighter. The survey was carried out by the ministry directly, the DKP only assisted. That's why there are still many fishing groups in Samatiga who have never received assistance from the central government, especially during this pandemic. Finally, in 2019, the Kuala Bubon fishing group received 9 units of boats and aid for fishing gear in 2018 in the villages of Lhok Bubon and Suak Semasih. During the pandemic, fishermen in Samatiga only received BLT assistance from the Ministry of Social Affairs through their respective village heads.

*s. There is an element of interest from certain parties in providing assistance to fishermen*

The provision of assistance has not been able to evenly distribute all groups of fishermen, but DKP is still trying to increase the quota of recipients of aid, both boats and fishing gear. This has been planned every year through the Office Work Plan and Budget, however, the final decision remains with the local

government, this is where the interests and politics of interest cannot be interfered with by DKP itself. So often what has been proposed by DKP is different from what has been approved by the regional government of Aceh Barat district.

## CONCLUSION

The Regional Government's strategy to improve the welfare of fishermen during the COVID-19 pandemic in Samatiga, West Aceh Regency can be carried out by increasing the economic empowerment of fishermen to increase the selling value of their catch through fishing groups. This strategy is the most strategic issue that can then be carried out by the Regional Government not only during a pandemic but can be sustainable. The driving factors in carrying out this strategy are the alignment of the vision and mission, the achievement of the mission in order to achieve the vision, there is a direction for improving the welfare of fishermen, assistance for fishermen from the KKP, the potential for abundant marine products, the existence of fishing groups that continue to be formed in Samatiga, the existence of panglima laot, the existence of various assistance and programs for fishermen from the central government, and assistance from universities in terms of mentoring and increasing the production of fishing business groups. The inhibiting factors consist of limited budget, limited quantity and capacity of human resources, inadequate infrastructure, supervision not optimal, fishing with trawl trawls, the presence of unscrupulous agents, limited ability and knowledge of fishermen, rigid fisherman mindset, competition for assistance, and elements of interest in providing assistance.

DKP needs to build cooperation with academics in terms of improving the welfare of fishermen through mentoring, training and socialization; Building cooperation with practitioners in terms of maintaining facilities and infrastructure as well as renewable technology for assisting the activities of fishing groups; and Build cooperation with the Government Other districts with similar conditions to Aceh Barat are subject to comparative studies. the economic potential of the fish processing business,

The limitations of this research are only in the formulation of strategies for future planning, further research can be carried out regarding the implementation of the strategies that have been formulated so that they can be re-evaluated.

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