



## **Policy Communication in Developing Frankincense Commodity in Humbang Hasudutan Regency**

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### **Abstract**

Frankincense commodities play an important role in agricultural commodity production in Humbang Hasudutan. Traditional processing has become a local wisdom that has been practiced for years. However, the threat of eroding customary forests and the lack of marketing are obstacles faced by farmers. The purpose of this research is to find out the communication of government policies in developing frankincense commodities. The method used in this research is descriptive with a qualitative approach. The results show that policy communication is able to encourage the effectiveness of frankincense agricultural development in Humbang Hasundutan. Policies regarding socialization to farmers to understand how the food estate program takes place, encourage community involvement in supporting the development plan. Efforts to create farmer welfare, encourage the strengthening of farmer organizations to be an important need in supporting the development of frankincense commodities. Strengthening the organization is considered capable of overcoming the problem of marketing difficulties of frankincense production from farmers.

**Keywords:** Policy Communication, Frankincense, Farmers

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Government policy in encouraging the development of prime agricultural commodities to fulfill food security puts the Food Estate program in Humbang Hasundutan into strategic policy. The involvement of community participation in management encourages efforts to build appropriate policy communication in encouraging collective awareness. The carrying capacity of land and community is the main driver of Food Estate development. Efforts to encourage superior commodities, encourage frankincense farming to become one of the development sectors. The agricultural sector is the main livelihood of the community, with 1,200 farmer groups ([humbanghasundutankab.bps.go.id](http://humbanghasundutankab.bps.go.id), 2018).

Humbang Hasundutan Regency is one of the development target areas agricultural areas in Indonesia, due to the population of Humbang Hasundutan Regency In 2015 (BPS Publication Year 2016) of 182,991 people, 85% of them are living from the agricultural sector. In terms of economic growth Humbang Hasundutan for 3 (three) Inrecent years, the agricultural sector has contributed to economic growth the biggest successively was in 2013 amounting to 47.78%, in 2014 amounting to 46.58% and in 2015it was 45.78%. Furthermore, in 2015 the District's economy Humbang Hasundutan grewby 5.24% of the amount of economic growth that the economic growth of the agriculturalsector was 3.97% ([Humbanghasundutankab.go.id](http://Humbanghasundutankab.go.id), 2021).

The people of Humbang Hasudutan have a local commodity Frankincense, which has the quality of a superior product. Farmers who have been developing frankincense products in customary forests for decades are faced with the problem of land conversion for national strategic programs. Traditional frankincense production relies heavily on environmental conditions. However, the food estate program in Humbang Hasundutan has encroached on the customary land of frankincense forests (Tempo.co, 2021;Pulitzercenter.org, 2021). This means that the implementation of the food estate program has impacted the frankincense forest, which is very meaningful to the local community. Concerns about the land allocation for the food estate program in Humbang Hasundutan raise concerns about the impact on frankincense forests. The 2051 hectares of land required will be eroded by the Frankincense Forest. These conditions indicate a conflict between the food estate program and frankincense forest preservation. Communities with a traditional system of collecting frankincense resin from its source by frankincense farmers in Humbang Hasundutan will continue to switch skills to become farmers for market commodities.

Frankincense is one of the commodities that has economic value and is important to the local community. However, the protection of frankincense trees and the sustainability of production (Edisimedan.com, 2018). The frankincense commodity is not only a product of agricultural production, but frankincense farmers maintain local wisdom. Frankincense is a source of life, caring for the cultural values contained in the management of frankincense as a cultural heritage that has been managed for hundreds of years, and endemic plants that cannot grow in all places. This makes frankincense farmers who still maintain local wisdom (Simamora, 2022;Ambarita, 2015).

The problems faced by frankincense farmers are not only about the threat of food estate, but also the development and marketing of frankincense. Lack of information about frankincense prices, its traditional marketing system, marketing costs, marketing margins, and marketing efficiency (Manullang, 2019). The progress of the food estate program in Humbang Hasundutan Regency is considered to have progress in the government's view by placing a guarantee on the sale of production results in the community switching to commodity development (Pardede et al., 2022). Therefore, it is important to see how policy communication in developing the Frankincense Commodity in Humbang Hasudutan Regency?.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses descriptive with a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2016) Descriptive research is a research method used to describe problems that occur in the present or are ongoing, aiming to describe what happened as it should be at the time the research was conducted. This research focuses on the agricultural sector in Humbang Hasudutan which is believed to be a source of food availability for Indonesia in the future. Data collection techniques through several journals and articles that have been available in fact and recorded. Data analysis techniques are carried out by observation in several journals, theses and articles. The research was conducted by observing from several people then the data was combined in an organized manner according to the date and time stages, then making conclusions from the data that had been determined.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Strategic Communication to Develop Frankincense Production Potential**

Strategic communication is important in developing agricultural potential. The efforts include; First, empowerment of farmers' institutions and organizations one of the strategies that can be

applied is the empowerment of farmers' institutions and organizations. This is the communication process of providing training and education to farmers on how to manage their organizations effectively. In developing the frankincense commodity, which is an expensive item that is sold at a higher price than gold, requires an organization that is able to provide institutions to develop production. Frankincense as an auxiliary material in ritual activities (Ambarita, 2015).

Second, revitalize the farming system by improving the technology system and providing broad marketing access. Frankincense from the Humbang Hasundutan Regency contains a lot of cinnamic acid. Cinnamic acid gives frankincense a specific odor, so it is often used as raw material for the perfume, cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries. Third, strengthening coordination and communication. Communication is an important aspect in agricultural development. This condition includes efforts to build effective communication and maintain competitiveness and increase the growth of frankincense commodities. This means that communication can implement strategies that focus on increasing productivity and efficiency.

Based on data from the Humbang Hasundutan Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), in a year the frankincense income of the Humbang Hasundutan community reaches Rp. 200 billion. This figure is very fantastic and must continue to be increased in the future. There are at least two countries that are regular customers of the best frankincense sap business from Humbang Hasundutan, namely Singapore and France. People who make a living from farming frankincense, need efforts to build coordination through the communication process so that the frankincense yield is high enough.

### **Policy Communication in Protecting the Potential of Frankincense Commodity**

Local governments have an important role to play in encouraging and protecting indigenous peoples and frankincense forests. Through local regulations, recognition, and protection of the rights of indigenous peoples. The recognition of frankincense as a Humbahas commodity is important so that frankincense becomes a regional potential that can be the basis for improving the community's economy. In order to improve the development of frankincense commodities, the government needs to pay attention to good and effective communication policies. Involving the public in the policy-making process, building public trust, using mass media, optimizing the role of commands, applying fast and effective principles. The communication policy can encourage the role of the community, protect the community and encourage the community in developing frankincense farming. Communication policy places frankincense farming communities involved in the policy-making process. The process of community/public involvement since the beginning of the policy is part of communicating the policy.

Economically, the frankincense sap business of the Pandumaan-Sipituhuta indigenous community is very promising. The government's step in the plan to form a regional company specifically to manage frankincense sap and commodities is one of the communication policies in handling the frankincense sap business. So far, frankincense farmers have only been pegged to agents and middlemen. With a special regional company for frankincense, sales, economic improvement of farmers, and how to produce high-quality sap will be monitored. Constant policy communication can have an impact on maintaining reputation and increasing public trust, so that in encouraging market needs, frankincense farmers are able to meet their needs and the community is empowered from sales. By developing fast and effective principles, the community will be encouraged to develop frankincense commodities.

Environmental benefits, utilization of the main results of Frankincense cultivation trees include; First, the production of frankincense sap is useful for maintaining religious traditions that still often use frankincense sap. Second, the sap content can be used for medicines. Third, the wood produced by Frankincense can be used as a basic material for buildings. Fourth, utilization for other purposes ranging from stress relief, natural home cleaners and anti-aging oils. With these potential economic and environmental benefits, an appropriate communication policy is needed to make frankincense a commodity market (Manullang, 2019).

### **Barriers to the Development of Frankincense Commodities**

With communication policies in improving the agricultural sector and ensuring sustainable development in Humbang Hasundutan frankincense farmers experience obstacles. Frankincense farmers in Humbang Hasundutan are spread across 6 sub-districts of Tarabintang, Onan ganjang, Pakkat, Parlilitan, Doloksanggul, and Pollung. The six sub-districts have a fairly high production. In the process of selling frankincense, several patterns of sales strategies are used. First, farmers who sell to village collectors will conduct transactions directly in the forest so that the funds spent by farmers will be less than bringing frankincense to sub-district collectors or to district collectors. Furthermore, district collectors are inter-city marketing, but there are also district collectors who market to exporters. Second, frankincense sap marketing is carried out directly in the market where farmers directly sell frankincense products to sub-district collectors without intermediary village collectors. The community has a tendency to sell directly to collectors with prices determined by collectors.

Another factor that causes farmers to sell more to village collectors is that the frankincense produced by farmers is not always much so that farmers are better off using the market pattern. The shortcomings of both patterns make market information and frankincense prices very limited. The market demand for frankincense prices is determined by consumers based on the color and size of the sap granules. so that farmers are only as price recipients and cannot determine prices in the market, so farmers have limitations in determining prices. These conditions have a negative impact on the welfare of frankincense farmers.

The lack of market information received by frankincense farmers, the unstable price of frankincense sap at the farm level, the management of tree cultivation, the time to produce (harvest) from frankincense plants takes a relatively long time compared to other commodities and the limited adoption of agricultural technology by farmers, is a problem that must be addressed immediately. Policy communication in overcoming these problems is important to take strategic steps by developing partnerships as an effort that can help improve the quality and quantity of frankincense agricultural production. Encourage connectivity Integration of production areas that can help increase business scale and production efficiency. Development of farmer groups as this effort can help in improving the welfare of farmers, so as to improve the quality of agricultural production and increase the marketing of frankincense farmers.

### **Local Government Policy on Frankincense Commodity Development**

Food estate development in North Sumatra has reached realization, where the assignment related to food estate was given to the regent of Humbahas as the person in charge and in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture. Community conditions that have limitations in the strategic plan for food estate development encourage the role of local government. Through policies regarding socialization every farmer understands how the food estate program takes place. Government policy in providing capital for farmers is an effort to overcome the problem of capital constraints. The program is considered to be a step to increase effectiveness and become prosperous. agricultural effectiveness is able to encourage increased production which encourages market needs to increase. The government's efforts in encouraging food estate projects are a priority program of the central and regional governments. Humbahas has great potential, especially since the government's plan to make it a pilot for horticulture-based food estate development encourages the optimization of the value of agricultural commodities.

Frankincense farmers in Humbahas have an important role in producing frankincense, which is the basic ingredient for perfume and other products. However, frankincense farmers expect protection as an effort to maintain the sustainability of frankincense production. This is inseparable from their customary forests, which are claimed as state property. Customary forests are an important part of the lives of farmers in the area as a source of frankincense trees. Challenges related to customary forest protection and product marketing encourage the role of government and local communities in improving marketing and farmers' welfare.

## CONCLUSION

Policy communication can encourage the effectiveness of frankincense agricultural development in Humbang Hasundutan. The potential results of frankincense development can encourage agricultural potential that improves health. The government's steps in determining strategic communication by looking at economic and environmental benefits are faced with the problem of managing frankincense commodity products and minimal community empowerment. Problems such as limited marketing processes and minimal tree culture are important policy priorities. In creating the welfare of farmers, strengthening farmer organizations is an important need in supporting the development of frankincense commodities. Frankincense has many useful values but is not valued at a fair price due to the minimal empowerment process. The role of the local government is important to accommodate production, planting, and sales so that the implementation of the food estate program reaches its goals. Food estate in Humbang Hasundutan is a good and useful sector with frankincense products having high commodity value.

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