

Implementation of Rural Development Policy in Thailand through the One Tambon One Product (OTOP) Movement

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ABSTRACT

The Thai government has a very important role in initiating and implementing the One Tambon One Product (OTOP) program. At the national level, this OTOP policy runs through integration between Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Disadvantaged Regions, Ministry of Industry, and Ministry of Agriculture. All governments encourage integrated marketing and promotion between producers of OTOP commodity producers and OTOP commodity sales markets.

The OTOP program is carried out to realize rural industrialization, as well as to improve community welfare through efforts to increase community income with a variety of productive business activities. OTOP in Thailand is no longer interpreted narrowly as a limited area and certain products, but has led to become a rural industry with products that penetrate abroad.

In order to integrate provincial government OTOP program, district/city government, sub-district (tambon) government, and at village level, they coordinate with each other by paying attention to policies on broader scope.

Keywords: Rural Development Policy, OTOP Program, Rural Industrialization.

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INTRODUCTION

Preliminary

Economic development is a change in the industrial field and trade related to income per capita and national income where the process occurs spontaneously and uninterrupted. Economic development policies are aimed at reducing poverty, increasing livelihoods in rural areas towards sustainable economic development. Practically become a kind of guidance for small farmers in rural areas to be able to meet the household food needs independently or achieve family food security.

In Thailand has been found a reality, that the problem of poverty is concentrated in rural areas with low levels of education where the area is not too broad. This condition occurs, because of the low income level, lack of education and capital accumulation, causing the rural population cannot align themselves with the majority of people living in urban areas.

The Thai government continues to try to understand various problems in village development. Various studies and comparative studies were conducted with various parties, and several ASEAN countries, including Indonesia in order to obtain information about the dynamics and complexity of rural communities, so that the results can be taken into consideration for the development of development policy in rural Thailand.

Rural Development Policy

Rural development policies are directed at improving the welfare and quality of life of rural communities by taking into account gender equality. Therefore, various efforts are needed to empower rural communities in various dimensions of village development. Listening to this, there is a linear line of thought, that building villages means developing regions; and building a region means building a country or nation.

According to Raharjo (2006: 262-263), specifically the village development aims to:

1. Enhancing the capacity of community institutions at the village level in participatory development planning;

2. Increasing the involvement of all elements of society in providing meaning in development planning;
3. Increase transparency and accountability in development; and
4. Generating cohesiveness between sectors / sectors and institutions within the overall development framework.

Village development has an important role in a country's national development program, because the development of this village is very broad in scope because it is the basis of a national development. In other words, village development is intended to improve the quality of life and life of village communities.

Furthermore, to foster participation in development that benefits all parties involved, certain types of facilities need to be considered that are not only able to increase participation itself but are also able to increase community independence (Sukarjo, 2006: 2).

Thus, the village development planning policy is a guideline and provisions adopted or chosen in the planning to implement (manage) development in the village which covers all aspects of life and livelihood of the community so as to achieve prosperity for the community.

OTOP Program in Thailand's National Development Policy

In relation to the development policy developed by Thailand, where the role of rural development is an important and strategic factor as the vanguard of Thailand's national development, the OTOP Program is developing to aim to revive the Thai economy by developing villages through superior products that they have and are empowered high competitiveness.

OTOP program to realize rural industrialization and increase community welfare by increasing community income through productive business activities.

One of the activities is carried out by increasing the value of regional superior products that have market opportunities in the domestic and export markets.

Through the OTOP program, not only will the development of agricultural products continue to grow, but also in line with the birth of a variety of local superior products that are processed in each district (tambon) in Thailand, to then be marketed in strategic locations in Bangkok. The results of these products become goods purchased by tourists, where the role of the government is always trying to be able to facilitate access for people and tourists to get it.

Through various policies, the development of OTOP in Thailand is based on three philosophies: 1) Local wisdom products that are accepted globally; 2) Producing products based on the creativity of the local population; 3) Develop human resources. With this philosophy will encourage the improvement and empowerment of human resources as local residents. The increase in human resources is also accompanied by the ability to produce and creativity of superior commodities that are adapted to local wisdom and have international quality standards.

One thing that cannot be denied, is that the success of the One Tambon One Product (OTOP) program in Thailand is largely determined by the collaboration and synergy between the various sectors in rural development. Strategies and policies in their implementation involve the role of institutions as an important part of achieving the success of One Tambon One Product (OTOP) at the operational level, so that the program can be implemented effectively. The positive impact is an increase in regional / local superior value and the strengthening of the productive economy sector of rural communities in Thailand, resulting in domestic and export market opportunities.

The One Tambon One Product (OTOP) program has helped many Thais in increasing their incomes, opening new job opportunities, motivating citizens to work productively, so as to improve the quality of life of people in rural areas. In this case, rural development policies and programs through a growth center strategy are efforts to improve the welfare of the community. In practice in Thailand through the OTOP movement.

The One Tambon One Product (OTOP) Movement can reduce unemployment, make villages in Thailand resilient in the face of the world economy to remain independent and rely on their capabilities and resources to develop their own regions so they are able to compete with other regions. Therefore, OTOP which is designed by developing villages based on superior village potential, will increase the rate of quality economic growth in the village.

If the program is carried out in groups, it will be more possible for business synergies that complement each other / support and benefit, such as reducing business operating costs and performance efficiency. Although it is possible to diversify products, only business groups with similar products can be developed with this OVOP approach because of the uniformity of the use of raw materials, production processes and market segments.

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