

## An Analysis of Agrarian Political Economy in Forest Access in Perhutani-Managed Areas Through Social Forestry Programs

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Manuscript Chronology: received 14 January 2022, revised 8 February 2022, accepted 11 April 2022

### Abstract

The Social Forestry program in Perhutani-managed forest areas aims to improve the welfare of the community through joint management and promote sustainability. The program uses the Partnership Cooperation (Kulin KK) scheme, which is regulated by the Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation No. P 83 of 2016. However, this program has become a new conflict zone as various actors are competing to dominate forest use. Women, who have allocated more time and energy to the agricultural sector, now have few opportunities to be involved in forest management because of gender biases within the governance and implementation of the Social Forestry program. Women also have to compete with various parties in order to participate in forest management including Perhutani and the Forest Village Community Institution (Lembaga Masyarakat Desa Hutan—LMDH), the party authorised to manage forest utilization programs.

Keywords: forest, Social Forestry, Perhutani, LMDH

### Introduction

Forest area in Java is approximately 2.4 million hectares, but about 85,37% of the area is controlled by a state-owned forest enterprise, Perum Perhutani (Ferdaus et al. 2014). Meanwhile, there are 5.617 villages in the Perhutani-managed area, 60% of which are below the poverty line and need access to forest resources as their economic sources (Apriando 2013).

Inequality in agrarian control in the forestry sector has been going on since the Dutch colonial period that pioneered the institutionalisation of state control over land, forests, and other natural resources with the issuance of the Forestry Ordinance that took effect in Java and Madura in 1865 (Komnas HAM 2016). This Ordinance adapted the approach of state control over land, forests, and resources. The concept is used in Perhutani's working method that it excludes the participation of village communities around the forest.

Perhutani as a state-owned enterprise has management control over forest, especially in Java and Madura that aim to increase state profits through timber business. Meanwhile, villagers around the forest use the forest to fulfil their daily needs. This different objective creates tenurial conflicts because both sides are involved in managing the same resources. On the one hand,

Perhutani has greater power and dominance because its tenure rights are legally guaranteed. In contrast, forest management right of the community is limited by regulations and state authority. This condition creates inequality in forest control and gives birth to prolonged agrarian conflicts.

One of the solutions offered by the government to resolve such conflicts is to involve the community in forest management. In 2002, Perhutani launched Joint Community Forest Management (*Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat, PHBM*) programme through a farmer group called Forest Village Community Organization (LMDH). In addition to resolving conflicts, the programme is also expected to reduce poverty problems in rural areas around the forest. However, the implementation of PHBM programme has not been effective because cases of arrest of forest farmers are still happening. LMDH has failed to serve as a forum that facilitates the interests of the community with various issues, ranging from budget and programme management transparency to discrimination in the election of administrators (Ferdaus et al. 2014).

Along with the change of power, policies in the forestry sector continue to develop, including under Jokowi-JK administration that includes social forestry as one of

the priority programmes through vision and mission of Nawacita.<sup>1</sup> Through this programme, the government targets an allocation of 12.7 million hectares of land to increase community's participation in forest utilisation in state land areas while still promoting sustainability. This programme also applies to Perhutani areas, one of which is in Harumansari Village through Forestry Partnership Recognition and Protection (*Kulin KK*) scheme. This partnership is regulated by Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation No. P 83 of 2016 on Social Forestry.

One of the provisions in the regulation states that community who receives a Decree (*Surat Keputusan, SK*) on forest management has the right to receive fair treatment based on gender. The inclusion of such a provision was a result of strong encouragement from various parties to ensure a more gender sensitive natural resource management in Indonesia. This is considered as an effort of the government to respond to the shortcomings of the agrarian policies in the forestry sector that tend to be masculine. However, the implementation of this provision at the site level requires close monitoring given that forest management has always been dominated by men. In society, women's participation in forest management is very limited compared to men due to power relations (Peluso & Poffenberger 1989). In fact, women are economic subjects and actors who are very dependent on the environment they live in. In some cases, women have a significant role in programme implementation and land management, from land clearing, propagation, planting, maintenance, to harvesting.

## Methodology

Departing from the forest management scheme through *Kulin KK* partnership as mentioned above, this research aims to describe: how are the changes in women's tenure pattern before and after social forestry in the Perhutani-managed area? How is the distribution of land and benefits for women in the social forestry programme and with whom do women compete to gain access to land utilisation in the social forestry programme in the Perhutani-managed area? These are the research questions that will be discussed in this paper.

This paper uses a political economy approach that focuses on the issue of agrarian inequality against women in forest management in Perhutani-managed area before and after the realisation of social forestry programme in Harumansari Village.

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with an ethnographic approach. The data collection

was conducted through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, literature studies, and documentation. The selection of informants was done using a purposive sampling. This research was conducted for 3 months from December 2018 to February 2019 at Perum Perhutani BKPH Leles, Harumansari Village, Kadungora District, Garut Regency, which has been designated as a social forestry programme area through *Kulin KK* scheme, covering an area of 85 hectares.

## Agrarian Political Economy in Forest Management in the Perhutani-managed Area

The agrarian political economy approach is often used as an analytical tool to look at the issue of inequality of land tenure that occurs as a result of the separation of farmers from their land. Marx calls this a process of primitive accumulation, which is the first step towards capital accumulation of the privatization of resources and means of production by capitalists (Mulyanto 2008). State facilitates these two processes as the power holder in formulating policies that are in line with capital interests. In the context of forest management by Perhutani, the state has two roles: as a capitalist that enables a state-owned enterprise (Perhutani) to monopolise timber management in Java and Madura and as an institution that has the power to perpetuate capital accumulation through the power of exclusion. The monopoly of forest management was a product of colonialism during the Dutch colonial period that had a capitalism character which regulated land ownership for the state if ownership rights could not be verified. This policy was known as "*Domein Verklaring*".<sup>2</sup> Moreover, state arbitrarily controlled or divided the land in the form of plantation or forestry concession. This process resulted in a centralised forest management adopted by Perhutani as a state-owned enterprise in the timber sector.

The process of determining state's lands does not prevent land grabbing. In many cases, farmers were the victims. State uses the power of exclusion to separate farmers from their land, which appears as a neutral process through its instrument of power. The power of exclusion in an agrarian study tends to have two characteristics. Empirically, exclusion is seen as a condition that denotes that most people do not have access to land while others have land to be privatised. Another reference to exclusion is seen as a wide-scale process and often involves various acts of violence perpetrated against poor people in order to evict them from their land by powerful actors. Normatively, exclusion is seen as negative and is counterposed to inclusion that

has a positive meaning. These two frameworks refer to the notion that exclusion is something imposed on the weak by the strong, something that must be opposed due to its detrimental nature (Hall et al. 2011).

In the power of exclusion with a gender dimension, women and other marginal groups have to contest with stronger power forces in regard to controlling land and various agrarian resources. Derek Hall, Philip Hirsch, and Tania Murray Li (2011) view exclusion as a process of dismissing the weak by the strong in land tenure through various instruments of power, such as regulation, coercion (violence and a series of intimidations), market, and legitimation.

Four instruments of power that lead to the process of excluding certain individuals, groups, or social institutions in land ownership that occur within a country are carried out through: 1) Regulation, namely policies or rules issued by the state to regulate various elements of society, groups, and institutions related to access to resources; 2) Force, can be in the form of violence, threats, and punishments to intimidate the weak so that regulations can be enforced; 3) Market Power, which takes an important position in the power of exclusion that can be realised through regulation, coercion/ violence, and legitimacy; 4) Legitimation establishes a justification for something or a series of normative foundations that have a major influence in various forms of exclusion instruments, namely regulation, force, and the market. The four instruments of power are interconnected and do not stand alone. The market is also reinforced by the power of regulation, force, and legitimation, as are the other three instruments of exclusion (Hall et al. 2011). Exclusion process aims to generate inequality of control and access to privatised land.

Access in the perspective of Ribot and Peluso (2003) is the ability to benefit from things. The ability to gain access is more akin to a Bundle of Power than a Bundle of Rights (Ribot & Peluso 2003). Often a person does not have a right, but can benefit from something because of their power, and vice versa. Every individual has a different level of power. The stronger the power an individual has, the greater their chances of accessing resources. In the theory of access with a gender dimension, women with a weak bundle of powers will be confronted with a series of powers from various more powerful actors (the state, corporations (Perhutani) and community organisations) that can prevent women from accessing resources. In some cases, while women have the right to resources (The Bundle of Rights), they do not have the ability to benefit from what they have due to inequality

in power relations. This is related to the concept of gender that generally recognises the existence of a social construction that is inherent in men and women which causes gender inequality in society such as economic marginalisation, women's subordination, stereotype, double workload, and violence (Fakih 2016). These five issues cause women's participation to be less than optimal in various development programmes, including forest management.

The concept of access is used to map the dynamic process of resources and analyse the actors who utilise the resources and their methods. This essentially relates to the agrarian political economy approach formulated by Henry Bernstein (2015) that can be a reference in mapping actors, economic differentiation, and power relations in the Perhutani-managed area as well as referring to ownership and sexual division of labour: (1) Who owns what; this question focuses on the social relations of different property regimes: how production and reproduction are distributed; (2) Who does what; this question relates to who carries out production and reproduction activities which are composed of social relations in production units, producers, men and women, and class differences in agrarian society; (3) Who gets what; it is about the division of labour and distribution of income; and (4) What do they do with their work. The questions are based on the result of social relations of consumption, reproduction, and accumulation.

This process is closely related to the political and economic interests of various actors. In the context of forest management by Perhutani, the state has two roles; as a capitalist that enables a state-owned enterprise (Perhutani) to monopolise timber management in Java and Madura and as an institution that has the power to perpetuate capital accumulation through the power of exclusion.

In the Social Forestry scheme, the role of the state should not stop at only providing space for women to obtain a land, but also to take part in the implementation and evaluation of each policy up to the implementing organizations. Like the LMDH programme, women have equal participation and space with men in forest management. Women's property right is not a guarantee that women can be involved in managing the land if it is not complemented with a right to control (Agarwal 1994). The right to control according to Bina Agarwal is one of the embodiments of the right to control property ownership. However, it becomes more complete when contrasted with the access theory approach by Ribot and Peluso (2003). According to them, access is the

ability to benefit from things. This concept is a broader development of the understanding that access is only limited to the right to use something.

### **The Exclusion Process of Harumansari Forest Village Community**

During the New Order era, territorialisation transpired in various areas in Indonesia through land privatisation by the private sector that was granted concession permits and by the state-owned enterprises. The community who inhabited these lands had to be forcibly evicted by the state apparatus or using various regulations. This also happened in Harumansari Village. The forest, which had been the source of life for many people, had to be surrendered to Perum Perhutani and was given a protected area status in 1986. The lands acquired by the government, which were located on Mount Haruman with an altitude of 700 meters above sea level covering an area of 85 hectares, were replaced with the Perhutani-managed area in Bandung, which at that time was planned for the construction of Cirata Dam. The dam was projected to be the location of a Hydroelectric Power Plant (*Pembangkit Listrik Tenaga Air, PLTA*). During the New Order era, the power plant was the biggest in ASEAN (Detik Finance 2015). Despite the refusal from the community as a response to the land swap proposal, the government quibbled about needing to carry out reforestation because the forest condition on Mount Haruman was critical.

The land swap that led to the sale of the residents' lands was an example of the power of exclusion that aims to separate the farmers from their land. The exclusion process worked through four instruments of power, namely regulation, force, the market, and legitimation. These four powers are interconnected in the process of dismissing and restricting access by the more powerful against the weak, which in this case was Perhutani that represented the state against the people.

First, the power of regulation played a role in determining the protected forest areas. The essence of the regulation was force, which required the people to leave their area because of the power of the government. Second, the swapped land should have been seen with a holistic lens within the development agenda because this is where the power of the market works. The government swapped the Perhutani protected area from Cirata Dam to provide electricity for public interest, but the development was also an instrument to serve market and industrial interests. Unfortunately, this agenda run at the expense of the community's area on Mount

Haruman that was used as a protected area as a buffer for Perhutani to continue serving the demand for the timber market. This plan was successfully carried out by the government using the legitimation of environmental sustainability jargons to normalise the "removal" process of community's control over the land. Meanwhile, the community who confronted the state did not have the power to resist, resulting in them being evicted from their land.

Neither the government nor Perhutani provided any solutions to the residents living around the forest after the land acquisition. This exclusion process caused adverse social and economic impacts ranging from the difficulty in meeting daily needs, increase in migration rate, land conflict, to the exacerbation of double workload for women. Ironically, the community continued to be victimised by the government and Perhutani given that there was a lack of proper compensation settlement process. There were some impacts of the exclusion process experienced by the community after the land acquisition.

First, the government's intervention in setting low price for the land resulted in the residents being unable to seek a substitute land or a sustainable livelihood strategy. The residents were aware of the potential crisis following the sale of land that has been instrumental in meeting the needs of three generations through the practice of subsistence crops. This condition was illustrated in the story of one female farmer who received a compensation of Rp281.400,00 for her land area of 200 *tumbak*.<sup>3</sup> The money ran out in less than two months. In her land, there was also white teak woods that were planted by the previous generations to be used as materials for the houses of their descendants. The sustainability agenda that was carried out by the farmers through farming could not be realised. The government acquired the land without paying for the plants that grew on it. Some of the residents also did not receive compensation because the transactions were carried out through intermediaries, creating a disorganised process. The magnitude of the power of the government and Perhutani was able to legitimise the "land grabbing" which was packaged through normative procedures that were seen as fair and equal land sale transactions. In fact, the government unilaterally set a low price on these lands, while the people, who lost their lands, were forced to bear multiple burdens for the global interest in order to preserve the environment. The bundle of power was the basis for the government's arbitrariness in making decisions that became the rules for the Harumansari Village community.

*Second*, the shift in land ownership which has been a means of sustainable production for farmers had caused economic problems in meeting the daily needs. This condition indicated that the process of exclusion of farmers from their land was running according to its original purpose. This relationship further created dependence between the community as the weak party and Perhutani as the powerful party. Various forms of economic injustice also occurred due to the imbalance of power relations between these parties. Economic injustice arises because of monopolistic practices in the provision of agricultural production facilities, while social inequality occurs between farmers and communities outside farmers (Lagiman 2020). The people as the dependent party had very little bargaining power before Perhutani. One of the forms was labour exploitation of the residents who did not have an alternative production. This condition was apparent after the government won the land acquisition, in which Perhutani immediately took full control. Tree seeds such as *kaliandra*, *africa*, *sengon*, and pine were immediately brought in to replace the previous owner's subsistence plants. The community was employed with a daily wage to plant for 6 months on Perhutani land. This work opportunity was offered with a piece-rate income system per day. The low income was only enough for a day's meal. People were paid Rp50,00 for planting one tree seed.<sup>4</sup> In a day, a person could only plant 100 to 200 trees. This means that the maximum average wage per person ranged from Rp5.000,00 to Rp10.000,00, which was allocated for buying rice, side dishes, and children's pocket money that run out on the same day. The wage standard provided by Perhutani became an absolute provision for forest village communities as casual daily labourers without a negotiation or bargaining process. Low-wage intervention indicated that Perhutani was supported by an exploitative work system. There was no health insurance or work safety protection for farm workers. However, this condition was still accepted by the residents for economic reasons. Perhutani has created dependence as a consequence of the relationship between the power holder and those who are ruled (Martin 1995).

*Third*, land acquisition caused changes in the division of labour between genders. Women bore a double workload to earn a living and perform domestic work. This was because the migration rate of the male population out of the village had increased because Perhutani's land access was completely restricted after six months of planting activities. The limited space for community management to continue had caused many residents, especially men, to migrate to Bandung, Bogor,

Majalengka, and Cirebon to sell *bajigur* and grilled meatballs, while farming activities were done women. Women took advantage of the remaining forest land, rice field, livestock, or peddled with undiminished social reproductive responsibilities. This choice was taken because the rules, which restrict production activities in the forest with a series of penalties and fines, including finding grass for animal feed and firewood to sell and use, came into effect. This period was viewed as the "terror period" because community activities were always under the control of Perhutani through forest police. This condition was referred to as the panopticon system that describes that power works by creating fear for the community to obey the instruments of power created by the government and Perhutani through policies, laws, and regulations (Foucault 1995).

*Fourth*, the tighter control of Perhutani increased the frequency of land conflicts. The power of regulation played a big role in this regard because Perhutani reduced public access to forest resources, causing economic turmoil in the lives of the people living around the forest. The centralised management system of Perum Perhutani that does not pay attention to social aspects made Perhutani unable to properly manage the forest (Yanuardi 2013). This conflict continued and escalated at the beginning of reformation following the downfall of President Soeharto in 1998. People who had been constrained by a tight security system during the New Order eventually pressed to access the forest on Mount Haruman. The pressure was exacerbated by the difficult economic conditions during the collapse of the New Order, contributing to the community's decision to take wood from the forest as an economic source to meet their daily needs. This period was regarded as the collapse of the legitimacy attached to the forest on Mount Haruman. Consequently, almost everyone in the village thought that the forest belonged to Soeharto. During this period, the control of the forest police and *mantir* was weakened, in which people started taking advantage of the situation to openly grow rice and secondary crops. At that time, as a response, Perhutani reminded the residents not to cut down trees. The looting of forest products did not only occur on Mount Haruman, but in almost all forests in Indonesia (Peluso 2011). Forest occupation by communities in various areas urged the government to issue a deliberative policy that allows the community to work in the Perhutani-managed area through the Joint Community Forest Management (*Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat, PHBM*) scheme.<sup>5</sup>

The unequal burden borne by the people demonstrated that there was an inequality of power

between the two parties. This condition continued when the people no longer had access to benefit from the resources that have been privatised by Perhutani as the power holder.

### **Gender Inequality in the Joint Community Forest Management Programme**

Around the year of 2002, Perhutani brought in student researchers to do a brief assessment using the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) approach. The result of this assessment then became the basis for a policy to establish Joint Community Forest Management (PHBM) in 2004 around Mount Haruman area. The community prepared all for the institutional prerequisites for the implementation of PHBM as established by KKP Garut. These prerequisites included the rules for establishing Forest Village Community Organisation (*Lembaga Masyarakat Desa Hutan, LMDH*) and Forest Farmers Group (*Kelompok Tani Hutan, KTH*). As a result, Buana Mukti LMDH was formed with 70 members, most of whom were men. The opportunity for women to obtain forest management rights in Perhutani-managed areas through PHBM scheme was very limited (Cifor 2007). According to (Agarwal 2001), this was due to inequalities at the household, community, and state levels, thereby limiting women's participation in forest management. This condition was caused by gender inequality through various forms, ranging from marginalisation, subordination, stereotype, double workload to violence which prevent women from being involved in production activities (Fakih 2016).

Manifestation of gender inequality could be seen in the PHBM system run by LMDH. The group members were only filled by the closest individuals who have kinship relations with LMDH core management consisting of village officials, bureaucrats, and teachers. This indicated the existence of social and economic violence that limited women's access and participation to take strategic roles in the group, resulting in the impoverishment of women (Yayasan Pulih 2021). Social violence arises due to unequal power relations in community groups. Moreover, women have little room to obtain the right to forest management by joining LMDH. Women are labelled as additional breadwinners and having "weak" energy. This labelling

contrasts with the image of forest identified with a masculine male workspace. This condition is a result of social construction that has so far despised the position of women as subordinates in society in order to establish a patriarchal system (Fakih 2016).

Women are dealing with an ecological crisis. Drought damages the agricultural system; the provision of clean water needs declined due to the drying up of residents' wells after Perhutani's occupation. Women who carry the domestic workload had to spend money to buy water, drill wells, or even fetch water from neighbouring wells using pipes or manually transported.

The patriarchal system that is rooted in various institutions and community groups increasingly prevents women from utilising the resources around their environment. Therefore, some women chose to find work as labourers in textile factories in industrial cities in West Java. Many also became women migrant workers (*Tenaga Kerja Wanita, TKW*) due to the narrowing of land and the lack of opportunity for women to be involved in various programmes (Peluso & Purwanto 2018). The decision to work abroad was made in an effort to ensure household survival in response to poverty conditions (IOM 2009). The phenomenon of TKW was an indicator of the layered adverse impacts experienced by women since the occupation by Perhutani from separating women from their sources of livelihood to the lack of access provided by LMDH in the PHBM programme. It was the most challenging period for women living around Mount Haruman due to their production and reproduction responsibilities.

For elderly female farmers with limited abilities and skills, they relied solely on their strength, such as working as farm labourers with a wage difference of Rp10.000,00 lower than the daily wage of men. This difference in wage was motivated by the assumption that farming activities require greater physical strength which is associated with the type of work of men than women (Kemenpppa 2016). Whereas in practice, women are more involved in almost all agricultural processes, both in the fields and farms, while men only do some types of work. The following table 1 illustrates the division of roles between men and women in the agricultural sector, both in fields and farms in Harumansari Village.

**Table 1. Division of Role based on Gender**

Type of Work	Role
Land clearing	Men and women
Sowing	Men and women
Planting	Women
Harvesting	Women
Plowing (using a tractor)	Men
Maintenance	Women

Source: processed by the author from interviews with farmers in Harumansari Village (2019)

LMDH works more to serve the needs of its core management who have interests with various external parties, one of which is the company. In the implementation of its programme activities, LMDH usually cooperated without paying attention to details related to the group members and disregarding the benefits of cooperation for the organization. In distributing the seeds, LMDH failed to identify the types of seeds needed by the residents and the right time for planting. In 2017, the core management instructed its members to plant citronella seeds distributed by LMDH. The seeds were obtained from a company that was in need of citronella to be processed into eucalyptus oil. The community was gathered to discuss the agenda for planting citronella. Although some residents suggested delaying the distribution of seeds due to the dry season, one of the core management members insisted on implementing the programme on the grounds that it was an experiment and had already been accepted by LMDH. As a result, after several months of planting, the programme failed because many citronella plants died due to drought.

Recently, it was discovered that the distribution of seeds was carried out by one of the administrators because they were suspected of benefiting from the labour wages that did not reach the farmers. According to the farmers, the company had prepared a budget for the payment of their wages which were entrusted to LMDH for distribution. However, as a "thank you fee" for the planting activity, the residents were only given cigarettes and coffee, which were intended for men. Whereas, female farmers did not receive similar rewards because they did not consume both. They also did not receive any compensation in lieu of wages. From the profits of citronella cultivation that were obtained by the core management of LMDH, there was unpaid sweat of farmers, notably women who provided free labour for the core management.

The above story illustrates that LMDH, which aims to accommodate communities in joint forest management, acted like a labour provider for the external parties and Perhutani. Occasionally, LMDH also operated like a profit-oriented business organization for some people. This happened because the power held by the management of the organization was greater than that of the members, allowing them to control the direction of the management of the organization. To distinguish the existence of class differentiation, it is important to look at how the relations of production and consumption as well as the division of labour are carried out by the people in the organization through four key questions in the political economy approach (Bernstein 2015).

First, "who owns what?" This question does not only refer to the subject of ownership of resources, but also to power. LMDH management has the power to determine the programme to be implemented with a lack of transparency. Meanwhile, those who are members do not have equal power to intervene or influence every decision related to the organization. This can be seen when several core management members become patrons of the decision making that will be followed by the group members. Second, "who does what?" This question is to map out who devotes more time and energy to work than others. From the case above, there were two major groups, namely the core management who coordinated and conveyed information to the group members to carry out the planting process. Farmer members used more of their time and energy to execute the work ordered by the core management. The type of work, time spent, and energy of the two groups were different. One group only communicated and coordinated information and became an intermediary between the external parties and the farmers, while the farmers did the core work that demanded more physical strengths and energy. Third, "who gets what?" explains the consequences or results received from the work. The core management members were suspected of

benefiting from the wages of the farmers' work, while the farmers were exploited to support the income of the core management. The farmers were divided into two groups determined by gender. Men only received wages in the form of food and drink, while women got nothing. Fifth, "what do they do with the results?" The male farmers worked and got paid to make a living that only lasted a few hours to support their work. Meanwhile, women were "exploited" without any wages. On the other hand, the core management gained profits from the work of the farmers, which were then used for various purposes or even for personal advantage.

### **Inequality of Women's Participation in Social Forestry Programme**

In 2016, Jokowi officially realised the promise of his vision and mission in Nawacita by implementing the Social Forestry programme covering an area of 12.7 hectares on state land, including Perhutani land. This programme was known by the management of LMDH Buana Mukti. They immediately applied for a social forestry programme assisted by the Indonesian Green Union (*Serikat Hijau Indonesia, SHI*) and the West Java PPS Pokja. This programme consists of two schemes, namely the Social Forestry Forest Utilisation License (*Izin Pemanfaatan Hutan Perhutanan Sosial, IPHPS*) and Forestry Partnership Recognition and Protection (Kulin KK). Perhutani encouraged farmers groups to apply for a Kulin KK decree instead of IPHPS, while farmer groups opted otherwise. This difference was due to the division of authority and rights in the IPHPS scheme. People felt more benefited from the distribution of 70% for farmers and 30% for Perhutani. Whereas, the Kulin KK scheme applies a partnership that places farmers and Perhutani on an equal footing.

Some parties considered that the resolution of Kulin KK Scheme is feared not being able to place the two parties in an equal position. This is due to the power dominance and the strong state legitimacy that has been attached to Perhutani for a long period of time also affects the relationship. Aligning the superiors and inferiors in a scheme that lacks monitoring, is likely to end up unequal.

The farmers in Harumansari Village initially proposed the IPHPS scheme, but from the result of the forest location survey, it appears that the land cover is above 10%, hence LMDH Buana Mukti could only propose the Kulin KK scheme with an area of 85 hectares. The total number of farmers was 115 people consisting of previous LMDH members plus 45 new members. The core management of LMDH gathered the farmers by

registering ID cards and family cards (KK) who wanted to join in managing lands. One KK was allowed to manage a maximum of 2 hectares of land.

When the research was conducted, the farmers had only received the Kulin KK decree for about 3 months, which was previously given to LMDH Buana Mukti by the Minister of Environment and Forestry on 27 July 2018. The majority of the decree recipients (73%) were men because the membership approval system was based on the name of the head of the family with some exceptions.<sup>6</sup> At least, there were 24 names of women from the total farmers, 7 of whom were widows/divorcees, while the other 17 were women land managers whose husbands were not farmers.<sup>7</sup> The determination of the decree holders could not be separated from the patriarchal construction in which the decision-making axis even programme targets were always established by the head of the family, most of whom were men. Women became the second choice when the husband or head of the family had other preferences regarding their production activities. As a result, the process of determining the recipients of the SK Kulin decree in Harumansari Village was still far from the spirit of justice. Furthermore, there was a bias in the selection of members, which was based on the close relationship between the core management without taking into account the aspects of gender and needs. Various individual and group interests also existed within the organization, which were connected with various external parties. They used LMDH as a source of income, for example, the paragliding tourism management plan which, although it was made in the name of LMDH Buana Mukti, the formulation and distribution of benefits allegedly only involved the core management of LMDH. This was reinforced by the lack of information about paragliding management from ordinary citizens.

Instead of being a forum that represented the interests of the community, Perhutani's land became an arena for political battles between ordinary citizens and the core management of LMDH, who exploited the momentum of agricultural assistance through social forestry programme. With various objectives that had been planned by LMDH, strategic locations in the Mount Haruman area were mostly controlled by the core management of LMDH. The locations included areas that were intended to establish paragliding spots and agroforestry plantations<sup>8</sup> for tourism, which would be managed by the land management circle. Meanwhile, locations that had difficult terrains and were located at a fairly distant altitude or were deemed less strategic were left to the farmers who wanted to manage without taking



into account their age vulnerability, gender, and ability. Many conflicts of interest had made the organization, which should have been a bridge to improve the community's welfare as the objective of social forestry, a new part of an arbitrary power system.

Gender inequality as part of patriarchy has continued since the land acquisition to date at LMDH by involving old players and a system that has not changed much. Of all the major schemes designed by LMDH Buana Mukti since its formation in 2004, women had always been the subjects with the least space to occupy strategic positions and take important roles in the organization. The LMDH management members, who are dominated by old players, view women's roles as not very important, especially in decision making, distribution of access, and benefits due to inequality in power relations and gender construction.

The dissemination of information and decision making related to social forestry only circulates among certain circles of people, which are dominated by men. This was recorded in the experience of one female farmer who was unaware that her name was added to the list of recipients of the Kulin KK decree because there was no notification whatsoever from the LMDH. The farmer admitted that she was only ever asked to give an ID card by one of the LMDH management members in 2017 without further explanation. She never participated in any social forestry socialisation activities that were held in the village. This unawareness continued by the fact that since the Kulin KK decree was issued in July 2018, the decree has not been given to her and is still held by the head of her KTH.<sup>9</sup> As a resident who has worked on Perhutani land since 2012 and is registered as one of the recipients of the decree, information about social forestry should have been known.

Some women, who deserved the SK Kulin decree, were not considered as beneficiaries. This was because the bundle of power held by women is very small when compared to the bundle of power held by men, LMDH, Perhutani, and even the state in accessing the benefits of forest resources (Ribot & Peluso 2003). Ribot and Peluso (2003) explain that the theory of access focuses on looking at the broader social relations that allow a person to benefit from natural resource management, rather than focusing on property rights. One example is what was experienced by a 50-year-old Mrs. Sinta, a female farmer with the status of a widow whose participation rights in the Social Forestry Programme have been guaranteed by the state. She was part of the

poor and vulnerable group according to the expected programme targets. Yet, having a right alone was not enough. Even with such a vulnerable status, she did not have access to receive benefits from forest management through the Social Forestry programme. Instead, she questioned her non-participation in the process of submitting the SK Kulin decree, hence her name was not registered as a recipient of the decree nor joined LMDH. This happened because information about the social forestry programme was also unknown, although she herself was working on land in the Perhutani area that had been planted with corn. Mrs. Sinta, who did not have strong legitimacy to manage Perhutani's land, had a very big risk of being evicted from the land she cultivated by other farmers who have a decree. While she was already at a vulnerable level, as a widow and a poor woman, this position was not taken as an important consideration for LMDH in the distributing the land in the Social Forestry programme. According to Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation P.83/2016, Social Forestry is intended to reduce poverty, unemployment, and inequality in the management/utilisation of forest areas.

On the other hand, although structurally women are at the lowest level in society, there is also class differentiation within their groups, which is determined by their social status. This condition could be observed when among the female farmers there was a name of the wife of one of the village officials. LMDH entered her name into the list of SK Kulin decree holders not being based on the principle of need, but rather on a stimulus programme as a "quota" for the village, even though she herself actually had a private farm. Several months after receiving the decree, she has yet to manage the land in the Perhutani area due to limited workforce.

The process of popularising social forestry programme from the policy makers to programme implementers did not seem to have been successful because some farmers have not or did not even know that the programme had entered the village. Most of them were women. This unawareness stemmed from the lack of involvement of the farming community as a whole with various programme implementers from the government, NGOs, and LMDH management. As a result, the Social Forestry programme has become a "double-edged knife" for farmers who have not received a social forestry management decree because they are in danger of being evicted from Perhutani-managed land since they do not have the legality of the decree.

## Conclusion

The problem of community poverty and challenges faced by women in forest management in the Perhutani area are explained through economic and political approaches. This problem involves the state as the main institution in the exclusion process as well as in regulating limited access to the community as the root cause of poverty. Another actor is Perhutani, which is actually part of the state institution as an engine for the accumulation of state wealth through a monopoly on forest management that implements the principle of centralised management. This has made people whose access to forest is limited unable to receive benefits from forest resources. In society, women are the ones who experience multiple losses due to gender construction which is the root of the patriarchal system. This construction reduces women's opportunities to access forest resources, which have been characterised as masculine production spaces dominated by men, especially in the Social Forestry programme.

The Social Forestry Programme, which is projected to be a solution to the gap in land tenure for communities around the forest, has in fact not been able to become an answer to the problem of women's poverty in the Perhutani area in Harumansari Village. Various forms of discrimination against women within LMDH as implementers and beneficiaries in the Social Forestry programme are caused by several factors. *First*, LMDH is a forum dominated by village elites as old players since the PHBM period, hence the system and management methods are still centred on the decisions and interests of certain people. *Second*, the lack of women's participation in the farmer group's agenda has distanced them from the centre of information dissemination. Women do not have space and strategic positions in LMDH to convey their aspirations, decisions, and needs. *Third*, gender construction that considers women as additional breadwinners has influenced the attitude of programme implementers and LMDH management in placing women as actors who have a very large work allocation in the agricultural sector. This affects the distribution of land received by women, both based on the designation of the location and the area of land, which is still unequal. The lack of transparency in LMDH's programme management on matters related to assistance and group business empowerment plans has resulted in an unequal distribution of benefits to women. *Fourth*, the assessment process carried out by the LMDH management on the farmers was not carried out prudently so that the recruitment of LMDH members had not yet targeted

vulnerable and poor women who needed land more. Therefore, in practice, the implementation of the Social Forestry programme has not been able to achieve gender justice as referred to in the Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation No. P 83 of 2016 on Social Forestry.

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## End Notes

- 1 *Nawacita* is the term used by Jokowi and Jusuf Kalla in referring to their vision and mission during the 2014 election, which contains nine priority programmes in the government.
- 2 *Domein Verklaring* is the principle in the *Agrarische Belsuit* regulation, which was derived from the *Agrarische Wet Act 1870* that reads "any land which other parties cannot prove as their *eigendom* right (property right) become the property of the State".

3 *Tumbak* is a unit of land area used by residents in Harumansari Village. One *tumbak* equals to 14 square meters.

4 Rupiah currency at the end of the 1980s, even though the nominal was small, had a high value compared to 2022. When compared to the price of rice at that time that ranged from Rp1.000,00 to Rp1.500,00, while the current price of rice is around Rp9.000,00 to Rp13.000,00. The price of rice became a reference so that it was easy to compare the value of goods in the 1980s.

5 PHBM stands for Joint Community Forest Management. PHBM programme, launched in 2001, aims to provide access to communities to cultivate lands through a partnership scheme with concession owners by way of intercropping. PHBM emerged during the reformation period as an effort to improve governance in the forestry sector that ignored the lives of forest village communities.

6 This exception refers to the type of work performed by husband and wife in one family. The name of the head of the family (husband) is included in the recipient of the Kulin KK decree if both are farmers. Under certain conditions, the name of the woman (wife) could be added to the list of recipients if the wife is a farmer and her husband is not a farmer or is constrained by chronic illness so that he could not carry out production activities.

7 Women who obtained Kulin KK decrees included widows or farmers whose husbands were not farmers. Usually, the husbands of these female farmers migrated to urban areas such as Jabodetabek, Bandung, and other big cities to sell *bajigur* or grilled meatballs. In some cases, there were also women whose husbands have been sick for a long time so that they could not work to manage agricultural land.

8 LMDH Buana Mukti has 4 (four) Social Forestry Business Groups (KUPS), which are divided into paragliding tourism, agroforestry, coffee, and honey bee sectors.

9 When the interviews were conducted with the resource persons on 29 January 2019, the Kulin KK decree had not been given by the head of the Forest Farmers Group (KTH) who was a member of LMDH. The resource person also did not know that her name was included as one of the recipients of the Kulin KK decree.

