

Evaluation of the Implementation of RSPO Standardisation (Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil) on Oil Palm Smallholders for Sustainability in KUD Teratai Biru and Kud Permai Jaya

Yuli Sari Yeni¹, Budi Santosa²

^{1,2}Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia
yuli122012006052@std.trisakti.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to analyse the implementation of RSPO standardisation on oil palm smallholders as members of cooperatives KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya. To analyse the challenges faced by cooperatives related to the implementation of RSPO standardisation. To analyse the strategies applied by the cooperatives in facing the challenges of effective and efficient implementation of RSPO standardisation so as to increase the productivity and welfare of oil palm smallholders. This study used a qualitative approach to analyse the role of village unit cooperatives in RSPO standardisation to oil palm smallholders as cooperative members as well as the issues and strategies applied with the aim of increasing productivity and improving welfare. The subjects of this study were KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya. The survey respondents were cooperative management and cooperative members, namely farmers. Primary data was obtained from interviews and questionnaires distributed to members and administrators who responded to the survey. Based on the analysis of the impact of the implementation of the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Standardisation on oil palm farmers, the impact of standardisation on cooperative members can improve the management of oil palm plantations and also have an impact on increasing the welfare of oil palm farmers and with the existence of the program can overcome the problems that have been a problem of cooperative members and oil palm farmers. To improve innovation performance, cooperatives must be more proactive in responding to various issues related to changes in the cooperative environment both internally and externally. These changes must be responded wisely through research and development activities so that the co-operative can maintain its existence in the future.

Keywords

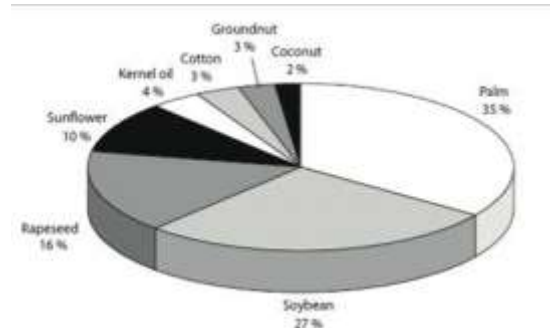
Roundtable for sustainable palm oil; evaluation; cooperatives; palm oil; challenges; strategies; sustainable development goals.



I. Introduction

Indonesia is a CPO exporter with a market share of 56% with production reaching 48.3 million tonnes in 2020. Palm oil has become the world's main vegetable oil and has successfully displaced other vegetable oils since 2007/08, replacing rapeseed and soybean (Oil World cited by Supriyono, 2021). Of the total agricultural land in the world used for various vegetable oil-producing crops, oil palm plantations with a total area of about 20 million hectares account for only 7% of all land, but can produce 39% of the world's total vegetable oil. The proportion of area planted with oil palm is far below that of soybean (61%), rapeseed (18%) and sunflower (14%). palm oil production costs are also the lowest compared to other vegetable oils, at 20% below soybean oil production costs. With all

these production advantages, it is not surprising that palm oil dominates the proportion of vegetable oil produced in the world, shifting the position of soybean and rapeseed oil which were previously the main oil-producing crops in the world (Pramudya et.al, 2015).



Source: FAOSTAT, as cited in Rival & Levang (2020)

Figure 1. Diagram of Vegetable Oil Production in the World

Oil palms are a blessing for developing countries in the tropics (Rival & Levang, 2013). Most oil palms are grown in the humid tropics and are a major source of income for the people of these countries, both as exports and raw materials for local industries (fractionation and refining). Two countries, Indonesia and Malaysia, are the largest producers, accounting for 87% of the world's supply.

Realising this condition, the involvement of independent oil palm growers in the issue of sustainable palm oil is a necessity, but the sustainable palm oil certification scheme developed by the RSPO. The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) seeks to "transform the market to make sustainable palm oil the norm." To fulfil this mission, the RSPO recognises the importance of smallholders and the need for a change from current approaches and practices to increase the involvement of smallholders in the RSPO system.

Today, more and more smallholders have reached a level of self-reliance that allows them to become independent smallholders. However, it is also very important for companies and governments to continue to support the smallholders and build their capacity so that they can obtain RSPO certification. Through RSPO certification, independent smallholders can increase productivity, improve profits, and gain access to international markets while at the same time protecting the environment through the implementation of best agricultural practices.

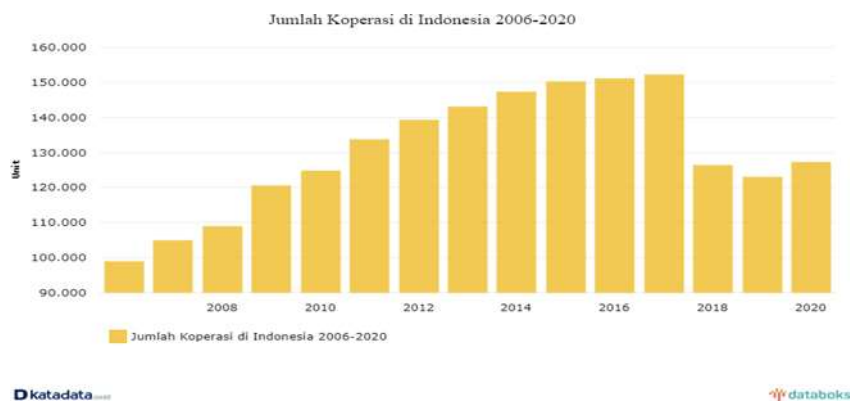
A key factor in creating quality resources to support successful economic development (Cabrera-Suarez, 2011). One of the responsibilities in improving the economy is to form business groups to generate additional income (Morck and Young, 2013). The problem often faced by oil palm farmers is the lack of capital resources and knowledge to run their business procedures so that they can develop their oil palm potential. (Luo and Shen, 2019) stated that for this reason a forum is needed to improve the quality of human resources in oil palm farmers. One of the most effective and efficient forums is the establishment of a cooperative.

A co-operative is a place where public funds (members) can be collected and distributed, and these funds can help small businesses start a business or expand their business (Birchall and Ketilson, 2019). One of the benefits of a co-operative is the welfare of its members. In other words, as the co-operative grows, so do the profits of the co-operative that are shared with its members (Thomas, 2014). (Mojo, Fischer and Degefa, 2017) Rural communities should be encouraged to establish co-operatives and participate

in co-operative membership. Because if handled correctly, this will have a positive impact on all members.

According to (Battilana, 2018) the existence of cooperatives at the forefront of the business landscape is a phenomenon in itself, where there is no single legal entity or other similar entity that can match it. Therefore, its presence is expected to balance the other pillars of the economy (BUMN and private). Cooperatives are very much in accordance with the culture and lifestyle of the Indonesian people because they contain the principles of mutual cooperation, mutual cooperation for the common good (Gotong Royong) and several other moral essences (Suryanti, Wahjoedi, Utomo, and Haryono, 2021). According to (Wahyuningtyas, Disastra and Rismayani, 2022) that there are cooperatives in Indonesia which have the largest number in the world, namely 127,124 units, the contribution of cooperatives can reach 68% of gross domestic product (GDP) if managed properly, as in Denmark. However, many cooperatives in Indonesia are not active because they are not well managed and rely on funds from the government (Hamada, 2010). According to (Bretos, Errasti, and Marcuello, 2020) this phenomenon explains that the increase in the volume of cooperatives is not accompanied by quality growth, and many cooperatives are passive. One of the obstacles is that members do not participate in the life of the co-operative.

Member participation is crucial to the progress and development of cooperatives (Özgül, Koçar and Eryaşar, 2020). Dewi Tenty Septi Artiany, Notary of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), announced that according to 2016 data, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of cooperatives is still around 4.4%. "Indonesia has the largest number of cooperatives in the world, but the number is not proportional to the amount of income and the largest contribution of income from cooperatives," said (Lisa, 2016). According to the ministry, the following data on cooperatives in Indonesia are:



Source: Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs RI
Figure 2. Data on Cooperatives in Indonesia

Based on the number of cooperatives in Indonesia, it reached 127,124 units in 2020. This figure increased by 3.31% compared to the previous year. East Java has the highest number of cooperatives, reaching 22,464 units or about 17.6% of all cooperatives. There are also 14,706 units in West Java and 12,190 units in Central Java. The number of cooperatives in Indonesia reached its highest number in the last 15 years. The number reached 152,174 in 2017. However, in 2018 the figure dropped significantly to 126,343 units. In the following year it fell to 123,048 units. The Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (KemenkopUKM) has set a target for the cooperative

sector to contribute 5.5% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2024. Currently, cooperatives only contribute 5% to its GDP.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is felt by all lines of the economy, including Village Unit Cooperatives (KUD). As many as 60 per cent of KUDs have collapsed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. President Director of Induk KUD Portasius Nggedi said that there are currently 9,436 village unit cooperatives in Indonesia. Of that number, only 40 per cent can survive the COVID- 19 pandemic.

To revive KUDs, restructuring is needed by standardising KUDs. With standardisation, cooperatives will be able to help optimise palm oil productivity. Indonesia's palm oil industry has recorded relatively rapid growth. Indonesia's oil palm plantation area reached more than 16.38 million hectares in 2020 (Ditjenbun, 2021). The industry has also been a source of inclusive economic growth, directly creating 5.3 million jobs and providing livelihoods for 21.2 million farmers and their families, contributing an average of 13.96% of non-oil and gas exports and USD 8 billion in foreign exchange savings from reduced diesel imports. This plantation production is carried out by 54.94% large private plantations, 40.79 smallholder plantations and 4.27% large state plantations (Ministry of Trade-BPDPKS, processed by Yusuf, 2021).

This research is a modified research from a study entitled "Sustainable Palm Oil Certification Scheme Frameworks and Impacts: A Systematic Literature Review" conducted by (Norhana Abdul Majid, Zaimah Ramli, Sarmila Md Sum, Abd Hair Awang, 2021) which shows that it is necessary to understand the dynamics of sustainability certification implementation. This research also provides an overview of how sustainability certification in the palm oil industry, especially the RSPO, can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Likewise, the research entitled "Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) in Smallholder Farmers of Thailand" conducted by (Ubolrat Wangrakdiskul et al, 2021) states that this research can be used to promote RSPO standards with the remaining oil palm farmers, and dealing with palm oil trade barriers can be minimised. With these various things, this research is expected to contribute to the sustainability and productivity of oil palm farmers.

Based on the background that has been described, the researcher is interested in conducting research on "EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION OF RSPO STANDARDS (Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil) TO SUSTAINABLE FARMERS IN KUD TERATAI BIRU AND KUD PERMAI JAYA".

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an agenda for achieving global sustainable development in three dimensions: economy, society and environment, and an action plan for people, planet, prosperity and world peace. implemented in the form of the SDGs Goals are integrated, inclusive, global in nature, universally applicable, take into account the realities of countries with different capacities and levels of development, and coordinate national policies and priorities. I am considering it. Therefore, the role of the state is very important in formulating a comprehensive strategy between social and environmental development and national characteristics and priorities collectively.

Indonesia as one of the countries that adheres to the SDGs is very committed to its implementation and success. To that end, several strategic steps have been taken in 2016. Specifically, the development goals and their SDG targets, including national priorities, availability of SDG data and indicators for all SDG goals and targets, compilation of

operational definitions for each SDG, draft Presidential regulation no.) 59/2017 on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals) and the Preparation of Regional and National Action Plans for the Implementation of the SDGs (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2016: 3). Most of the SDGs goals and sub-goals are listed in the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2015-2019. A total of 57%, i.e. 96 out of 169 SDG targets, are aligned with national development priorities.

2.2 RSPO Certification for Farmer Groups

Palm oil certification is one way to mitigate the environmental impacts, social problems, global warming, extinction of endangered species and other impacts caused by palm oil. The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and Indonesia Sustainable Palm Oil (ISPO) are palm oil certification bodies that will provide quality standards for products made from palm oil (Darussamin, 2012).

The concept of RSPO certification for oil palm farmer groups is based on experience in developing organic farming certification for farmer groups, which requires the existence of well-organised farmer organisations (cooperatives, farmer associations, farmer unions). The farmer organisation develops a standard conformity system for farmers who are members of the farmer organisation. The certification body then evaluates whether this system can work efficiently and correctly.

2.3 Business chains in the plantation sector and palm oil industry

The palm oil industry is a subsector that develops from upstream to downstream and is very varied, ranging from plantations, the crude palm oil (CPO) industry, palm cooking oil (RBD Palm Olein), food solids/oleofood fats (Cocoa Butter Substitute/CBS, Cocoa Butter Equivalent/CBE, Cocoa Butter Replacer/CBR), Oleochemicals (Fatty Acid/FA, Fatty Alcohols/FOH, Glycerine), and Bioenergy (Biodiesel). Meanwhile, downstream products for export are dominated by intermediate palm oil derivatives (e.g. Refined, Bleached and Deodorised/RBD Palm Olein or cooking oil, RBD Palm Stearine, RBD Palm Oil).

The production chain in the oil palm plantation and industry. In this chain, oil palm produces two main types of oil: palm oil from the fibrous mesocarp (fruit flesh) and lauric oil from the kernel. Each oil has its own production chain journey. However, Crude Palm Oil (CPO) has a much longer production chain and is used in a wider range of products. About 80 per cent of palm oil and palm kernel oil is used in food products, while the rest is used as raw material for non-food purposes.

Palm oil derivatives can be found in ice cream, cosmetics, soap, shampoo, biscuits, milk fat substitutes, butter, margarine, chemical industries, and so on. In a recent trend, by-products of the oleochemical industry and crude palm oil are utilised as energy sources for power generation and biofuels and biodiesel. Bioenergy companies are also playing a growing role in the palm oil subsector. (OJK, Sustainable Banking Book, 2019).

2.4 Co-operative

Widiyanti and Sunindhia (2009: 198) concluded that: Suitable for production and welfare purposes. Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Cooperatives and SMEs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12/Per/M.KUKM/IX/2015, a Cooperative is a business entity consisting of individuals. Protecting individuals or cooperative legal entities by carrying out activities based on cooperative principles and economic activities based on family principles, as referred to in Law Number 25 of 1992 concerning Cooperatives.

Cooperatives are formed and act on the values of justice, social responsibility and concern for others.

According to Rudianto (2010:51), "A savings and loan cooperative is a cooperative that accumulates the savings of its members and returns them to members who need financial assistance". In general, it can be said that a savings and loan association accepts deposits or lends funds from its members to members who need funds. The main activity of savings and loan cooperatives is to provide savings and loan services to cooperative members who do not have a high credit score and who comply with cooperative regulations. "A cooperative is a business entity consisting of natural or cooperative legal entities based on activities based on cooperative principles and an economic movement based on family principles." Indonesian Institute of Accountants PSAK No. 27, (2015): 27.3) Based on this definition, Cooperatives jointly fulfil the financial needs of its members based on the principle of Cooperation.

III. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach to analyse the role of village unit cooperatives in RSPO standardisation to oil palm farmers as members of cooperatives as well as the issues and strategies applied with the aim of increasing productivity and improving welfare. The subjects of this study were KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya. The survey respondents were cooperative management and cooperative members, namely farmers. Primary data obtained from interviews and questionnaires distributed to members and administrators who responded. While secondary data is taken from the Annual Members Meeting Report 2022.

The problem to be studied by researchers is a social and dynamic problem. Therefore, researchers choose to use qualitative research methods to determine how to collect, process, and analyse data from research. This qualitative research can be used to understand social interactions, for example by means of in-depth interviews and observations so that clear patterns will be found. According to Nana (2013; 94) qualitative research methods are research that describes and analyses phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, individually and in groups. Qualitative research methods are often also called naturalistic research methods because research is conducted in natural conditions. Qualitative studies are conducted on natural objects that develop naturally rather than being manipulated by researchers and researchers do not really influence the dynamics of these objects.

IV. Result and Discussion

3.1 Population Policy during Turki Utsmani 1512-1566 M

Based on descriptive analysis of the challenges faced in implementing the implementation of RSPO standardisation KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya as follows:

1. Not optimal technical management of the garden, namely Garden Management or called Garden Governance and the implementation of Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) by cooperative members who are also oil palm farmers so that it can interfere with the low yield of oil palm fruit which results in not maximum income which in this case disrupts the optimisation of the performance of KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai Jaya. Based on data on the realisation of standard seeds in 2019 only reached 92% overall. Likewise,

2020 has slightly increased although it is still below the target of only 96%. And in 2021 the realisation of the standard seedlings is still not optimal, only 97%.

2. KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya both get problems that can not be expected from nature, namely natural factors that can not be predicted where it is not very supportive for the achievement of palm fruit yields.
3. KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya there are some cooperative members who do not play an active role in the management of oil palm plantations resulting in land being sold to third parties. For this reason, the cooperative has not been able to provide solutions to cooperative members / oil palm farmers who have these problems.

3.2 Strategies to overcome challenges in the Implementation of Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Standardisation KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya related to the results of research findings

Based on the results of descriptive analysis research, the researcher uses the strategies that are carried out in implementing the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Standardisation on the basis of relevant previous research as follows:

1. Strategies to face the challenges of the implementation of less than optimal technical management of the plantation, namely Plantation Management or called Plantation Governance and the implementation of Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) by cooperative members and oil palm farmers in KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai Jaya. Referring to the findings of this study Stakeholders must run the governance of the plantation in a disciplined, consistent and responsible manner by improving the performance of resources by cooperating with the company in terms of training and providing training / literacy in theory and practice with the composition of training to cooperative members / oil palm farmers in theory in the classroom by 30% and provide direct training in the field by 70%. And this strategy is in accordance with previous research conducted by (Humphrey & Michida, 2021) entitled "National palm standards in Asia: motivations and impacts on trade and rural development. In The Diffusion of Public and Private Sustainability Regulations (pp. 17-46)". In this case, the theory of management strategy is very appropriate to the problems faced by KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai Jaya.
2. Strategies for dealing with natural & weather challenges to the environment of oil palm plantations owned by cooperative members and oil palm farmers at KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai Jaya. Referring to the findings of this study, stakeholders must carry out Oil Palm Plantation Management & Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) by considering the approach that needs to be done is to improve the quality and quantity of equipment, climate observations, improve understanding and ability to utilise data by making accurate simulation models. Oil palm plantations should start building a climate network by procuring Automatic Weather Stations (AWS). Integration between conventional stations and AWS is still needed in order to obtain a comprehensive and continuous climate data. so that there is a target of increasing FFB production in accordance with Good Agriculture Practice (GAP). And this strategy is in accordance with previous research conducted by (Hasril Hasan Siregar, Nuzul Hijri Darlan and Iput Pradiko, 2015). Which is entitled "Utilisation of climate data for oil palm plantations". In this case the theory and concept of the combination framework and strategy is very appropriate in the members of the cooperative at KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya.
3. Strategies to face challenges in the active participation of cooperative members in managing the plantation and advocating that oil palm plantations are not sold to third

parties in KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai Jaya. Referring to the findings of this study the initial process in the selection of oil palm farmers to become members of the cooperative that nota bene cooperative will be a partner of the company is very important. The criteria required is that oil palm farmers are really willing with full awareness and serious to manage their oil palm plantations. And also the party together with the company carries out socialisation related to active participation in the management of oil palm plantations if done optimally, it will get good palm fruit yields (yields) and high palm fruit selling prices. And this strategy is in accordance with previous research conducted by (Idsert Jelsma, Ken Giller and Thomas Fairhurst, 2009). With the title "Smallholder Oil Palm Production System in Indonesia: Lessons Learned from the NESP Ophir Project". Where this research discusses the development of RSPO sustainable palm oil plantations with the application of involvement by all stakeholders.

3.3 Findings related to SDGs in KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai Jaya

The United Nations (UN) launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a global agenda to follow the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The SDGs have 18 goals, including life without poverty, without hunger, good health and welfare, quality education, and gender equality. One of the Indonesian government's strategies to support the SDGs is to empower cooperatives and microfinance institutions in rural areas or districts where the majority of incomes are small.

One form of support from the Government of the Republic of Indonesia for the development of micro-enterprises and KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya is to provide loans to cooperative members/palm farmers who need business capital. KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya are cooperatives whose members and administrators are oil palm farmers who have oil palm plantations. Oil palm plantations are expected to contribute to increasing family income and overcoming economic problems by fulfilling daily living needs (Trivendi et al. 2011). It is expected to improve family welfare (Seng, 2018).

One cooperative activity in rural areas is a savings and loan business, especially for farmers from low-income families that is managed together and can be mutually beneficial. The government issued Regulation of the Minister of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises of the Republic of Indonesia No. 02/Per. /M.KUKM/II/2017 on the amendment of previous provisions on savings and loans. The regulation is in line with Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution. The existence of cooperatives provides benefits for oil palm farmers to contribute to the improvement of their families (Kramer, 2010). Several studies have shown that cooperatives help their members fulfil social needs, improve welfare, and increase business (Mujanah et al, 2019). Cooperatives can also provide support in developing rural economies and supporting family welfare (Sungkawati and Suarniati 2015; Widiyanti et al. 2018; Sungkawati et al. 2018). For this reason, research was conducted on the impact of cooperatives in supporting the achievement of SDGs in rural areas.

The existence of cooperatives in rural and low-income districts is to a) encourage economic activities in these villages and districts, b) encourage formal education participation among low- income families, c) strengthen the social capital of the rural population. All of these can support the achievement of the SDGs. Nonetheless, some members of the village community are still in contact with moneylenders in the village. Therefore, village cooperatives need to be supported and further developed in terms of quality and quantity so that the SDGs can be achieved more comprehensively.

With the challenges and strategies expected KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Permai jaya can do sustainable economic development (SDGs) as in point 1 and point 8 and point 9 and point 17, namely:

- a) SDG No 1 on poverty alleviation: Encourage economic activities in rural areas and the region to alleviate poverty,
- b) SDG No 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth: Encourage participation among low- income families in decent work and grow the economy.
- c) SDG No 9 on Reduced Inequality: Strengthen the capital of rural populations to aim for reduced inequality in society.
- d) SDGs No. 17 on Partnerships for the Goals: Strengthen rural residents' capital for partnerships that can grow family businesses to achieve economic growth goals.

V. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research conducted, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Based on the analysis of the implementation of the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Standardisation to members of oil palm farmer cooperatives. Routine activities to disseminate information about the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Standardisation to cooperative members / oil palm farmers who need and members take advantage of the program in accordance with the Mou between cooperatives to increase the productivity of oil palm farmers in KUD Teratai Biru and KUD Pemura.

Based on the analysis of the impact of the implementation of the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Standardisation on oil palm farmers that the impact of standardisation on cooperative members can improve the management of oil palm plantations and also have an impact on increasing the welfare of oil palm farmers and with the existence of the program can overcome the problems that have been a problem of cooperative members and oil palm farmers.

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