

# **Modernizing Indonesian Fisheries in the Decentralization Period (1999-2007)**

*From Capturing to Culturing*

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## List of Abbreviations:

ADB	: The Asian Development Bank
APBD	: District Income and Expense Budget (Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah)
ARE	: Adaptive Research Extension
Bappenas	: National Development Planning Agency (Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional)
Bappeda	: Local Development Planning Agency (Badan Perencanaan dan Pembangunan Daerah)
BI	: Central Bank of Indonesia (Bank Indonesia = BI)
BPD	: Bank Nagari
FAO	: Food and Agriculture Organization
GBHN	: State Policy Guideline (Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara = GBHN)
GDP	: Gross Domestic Brut
GOI	: Government of Indonesia
GPG	: Good Public Governance
GWS	: Government of West Sumatra
MCMA	: Marine Coastal Management Area
MCRM	: Marine Coastal Resource Management
MFO	: Marine and Fisheries Office (Dinas Kelautan dan Perikanan = DKP)
MID	: Marketing and Industrial Department
MIO	: Marketing and Industrial Office
MMAF	: The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (Departmen Kelautan dan Perikanan Republik Indonesia = DKP)
NEO	: Nagari Empowerment Office (Kantor Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Nagari)
WB	: The World Bank

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Theme

The monetary crisis which led into wider social political crisis in 1997 forced Indonesia to reflect and revise its development programs.<sup>1</sup> It taught that centralized agricultural and industrial sectors were not sufficient and effective to build Indonesian economy because not all places were naturally blessed by fertilized and rich land. It also taught that accumulated dissatisfaction of the disparity in development could attack national sovereignty<sup>2</sup> (Dahuri and Dutton 2000, Kusumastanto 2003, Brown 2003).

In attempts to control the situation, the government agreed to change governance system from centralization to decentralization in 1999. It was expected that decentralization could effectively trigger prevalent development, manage local resources, empower community, and alleviate poverty. Efforts to find local sources for economic development were seen urgent and promoted (Dahuri 2003, Satria and Matsida 2004, Hidayat and Antlov 2004, Siry 2006).

One of the sectors that gained more attention is fisheries. As an archipelagic country, 70 percent of Indonesian territory is ocean. 60 percent of the people live along the coastal line. Yet, only less than 30 percent of its potentials have been explored (Maarif, et.al 2006). Historically, marine and fisheries sector has been marginalized and neglected in Indonesian development program.<sup>3</sup> Fishermen, the major stakeholders of this sector, have always been seen as the last resource and the poorest of the poor in Indonesian society. Studies related to their livelihood both at micro level (individual-community) or

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<sup>1</sup> In 1997 Indonesia was severely attacked by the regional monetary crisis which developed into wider social political crisis. It forced Soeharto to step down from presidency after 32 years ruled the country.(Brown 2003)

<sup>2</sup> Soon after the crisis, some provinces loudly expressed their intention to separate from the United Country of Indonesia.

<sup>3</sup> Tracing back into Indonesian history, the marginalization of marine and fisheries sector was institutionalized by the Dutch force planting (*culturestelsel*) policy in the colonization period. (Asnan,G 2006) In the early period of independence it was politically marginalized because fishermen were seen as the supporters of communist party (no longer exist) that tried to coup in 1966. (Mubyarto and Dove 1984) Later on, this sector, economically, had not been seen as advantageous.(Dahuri 1999)

macro level (related to government, market, etc) are very limited and insufficient to understand them. Those detain the development programs toward fishermen (Nikijulu 2001, Kusumastato 2003:46).

In the decentralization period, tremendous interest and efforts to develop and increase fishermen's livelihood gradually increased. Local government particularly from the coastal districts expected that modernizing fisheries would help them achieving the mandate of decentralization to alleviate poverty, to run district economy, and to earn significant amount of income. This study intends to enrich the acknowledgement of the actors working in the fisheries sector and contribute to the understanding of the process and challenges in conducting a development program toward the fishermen. It is also expected that this study could contribute to the future plan and policy in the development toward fishermen.

In relation to modernization, many scholars and practitioners agree that its implementation requires intervention (Koponen 2004). Intervention is the ongoing transformational process that is constantly reshaped by the participating actors toward their interest and benefits (Long 2001). It rhymes with the dynamic and the contest upon actors' actions toward their most advantages values and interests. These aspects mix with other aspects e.i. structural and paradigm change at the government and society level, the history and experience of development perceive by the actors, the changing in the environmental condition, etc often transform the planned development goals to the other achievements.

In order to understand the development practices toward the fishermen in the decentralization period after a 32 year centralization era; this study looks at how the development intervention takes place in Pesisir Selatan, a coastal district in Indonesia. Although basically a development is aimed to endorse a better future for its recipients, this aim could not always be achieved. Bringing two cases study, I will reveal why a development program for the fishermen fails to meet its intended plan.



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## 1.2 Research Aims and Research Questions

Based on the theme presented above, this study aims to explore the following:

- The dynamics and complexities within development interventions in the fishermen community
- The strategy or pattern used to cope with the problems that occur along with the interventions
- The relationship between decentralization and development

In order to achieve these aims, this study binds with several research questions as below:

- How do different actors perceive a development intervention?
- How do different actors cope with the problems?
- What have been changing in development practices during the decentralization period?
- Is decentralization system essential in development project?
- How effective could decentralization manage resources, empower community and alleviate poverty?

## 1.3 The Dynamics of Ideas and Paradigm in Development Intervention

The concept of development is dynamics and complex. Even though it is simply defined as an improvement or a change into something positive and good, the idea of what is positive and good is always changing, so does the way to achieve it.

Historically in 1950-1960s, development was seen as something which could be purposely managed and rationally planned. People were assumed to behave rationally and make decision based on available choices soon after they gained some knowledge about development (Koponen 2004:8). During this

period, the term development was often synonymous with economic growth and modernization. The main agent was government and the main mean to conduct development project was technology (Thomas 2000).

In the late 1960s, some scholars criticized this positivist-structural paradigm. They argued that this paradigm failed to explain the source and dynamics of social heterogeneity. They forwarded the need to understand development intervention as the product of past and present social struggles where the actors actively shape and shift the development interventions. The constructivist-cultural paradigm with an actor oriented approach was then advocated to understand development interventions. However not all scholars agreed on this concept. Its opponents argued that it would be insufficient and too personal to understand the dynamic of development intervention merely from the actors' perspective because within development intervention embodies many ideas, political aims, social values and contrasting theories of social change (Thomas 2000:23).

In order to understand the development practices, there are some approaches advocated by the scholars. One of them is the interface approach presented by Norman Long in the late 1970s. Long advocated the need to form the strong basis to understand development intervention as the interface of both paradigms. I agree with Long that it will be insufficient to understand development intervention either only from the structure or the actors. Therefore to understand the dynamics of development intervention practices in Indonesia particularly within the fisheries sector, this study will use the interface approach. However before going to the cases study, I will briefly explain the dynamics of development sector by presenting how global development idea and paradigm meet the national condition further influence and transform the development practices in Indonesia.

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## 1.4 Modernization and Democratization in Indonesia

In the first years of its independence, Indonesia faced extreme poverty, backwardness and internal conflicts. It took 15 years to pacify the country before start with the development programs. In order to develop the country, the government of Indonesia (GOI) assisted by some multilateral agencies adopted the modernization model in the 1960s. Basically this model promoted industrialization as the best way to speed up development. It assumed that industrialization would trigger economic growth and would have a multiplier and trickledown effect to increase prosperity. Having considered Indonesian resources, GOI decided to focus on the terrestrial based industry. Centralistic-structural-institutional approach was adopted to implement the development in Indonesia.

This approach helped Indonesia out from poverty. Within 30 years Indonesia managed to reduce poverty from 40 percent in 1970s to 11percent in 1990s (Booth 2000:83-85). However it failed in creating general prosperity. This approach created notoriously bigger disparity in economic growth. Some places and or some sectors were more developed than the others. Fisheries, the focus of attention in this thesis was left behind the development (Dahuri 2001).

The failure of the structural-modernization approach to create an equal prosperity did not only happen in Indonesia but also in many other countries. These countries had been trapped in debt and extreme poverty instead of prosperity. Pulling back this condition to the 1970s, actually some multilateral agencies had predicted this failure. The World Bank under Robert McNamara in 1970s had advocated the need to transform the development approach from modernization to poverty alleviation through the New Policy Agenda (NPA). Democratization and people empowerment were promoted as the ideal value to achieve this goal (Hewitt 2000:305). Those values implied that a development intervention should suit into the resources and needs of the beneficiaries. A transformation from centralistic structural paradigm to a more constructivist-

cultural paradigm gradually took place. In 1990s influenced by many other aspects in the world such as the collapse of authoritarian government in Soviet Union and East Asian Countries, the development of new rising agency and power such as Media and NGO, this transformation had been widely accepted (Hewitt 2000, Potter 2000, Koponen 2004).

This new paradigm promotes democratization as the principle value of development. Democratization is seen as:

the condition where political change moving in a democratic direction from less accountable to more accountable government, from less competitive (or non-existent) elections to fuller and fairer competitive elections, from severely restricted to better protected civil and political rights, from weak (or non-existent) autonomous associations to more autonomous and more numerous associations in civil society. (Potter 2000: 370)

In order to institutionalize this value, multilateral agencies wrap it within their aid and loan packages. They believe that democratic approach is more likely to be successful to develop people and alleviate poverty than the centralistic autocratic approach. Empowering people and increase their participation within the good governance system are seen effective and supportive to endorse development. In accordance to the economic development, this approach promoted the need to develop a more locally resources base sectors than the centralistic institutional sectors.

As one of the countries that fell into economic and political crisis in 1997, Indonesia was forced to reflect on its development approach. Pressed by multilateral agencies' loan and aid packages from outside; and by particular provinces' interest to separate from the United Country of Indonesia due to the disparity of previous development from inside, GOI changed its policy. In 1999, Soeharto, Indonesian president for 32 years resigned. The transition government gave way to reform the governance system from autocratic to democratic. The first democratic elected government (1999-2004) rejected the idea of changing centralistic form of governance into federation but accede the aspiration of autonomy for local governments. Equipped with two laws (Law No.22/1999 on

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local administration and Law No.25/1999 on balance finance), Indonesia officially implemented decentralization system in 1999.

Decentralization is commonly defined as the transfer of planning, decision making, or administrative authority from the central government to its field organizations, local administrative units, semi autonomous and parastatal organizations, local governments, or nongovernmental organizations (Cheema and Rondinelli 1983).<sup>4</sup> Different forms of decentralization can be distinguished primarily by the extent to which authority is transferred from central government to its local organizations and the amount of autonomy those organizations achieve.

There are three types of decentralization: political, fiscal and institutional. Political decentralization generally concerns with the increasing public participation through active citizen engagement in public institutions and government commitment to initiate the process. Fiscal decentralization is concerned with the ability to cover the costs of providing rural public goods and services. Institutional decentralization concerns with defining which formal government institutions are to be involved in decentralization program, what kind of relationship they have and what are their duty and responsibility (Parker and Kirsten 1995). Since Indonesia reformed its governmental system, these sectors are now changing. Consequently, so does the development sector.

From the brief overview above, we can see that the concept and practices in development are dynamics. Development, quoting Long, is the arena for many contesting interests to gain disposition upon others and shift them into one's advantage. It keeps on changing and adapting to the development of humans' needs and conditions. Even though that overview shows the trends at the global and national level, it will indeed shape and influence the paradigm and practices at the local level where I focus my study in.

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<sup>4</sup> There are a lot of definitions about decentralization but perhaps the most commonly used is the definition proposed by Cheema and Rondinelli.

## 1.5 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters which will be elaborated below:

### 1. Introduction.

Consist of introduction about the thesis and why it is critical both academically and practically. My aim is to elucidate the practices in development project. In order to contextualize and strengthen my argument, I review some related literatures including the trends in the development programs.

### 2. Contextualization and Methodology.

It starts with contextualizing development program and decentralization system in Indonesia follows by a discussion of the general development in fisheries sector. It continues with the general development interventions toward fishermen after decentralization. By the end of this chapter, method and its challenges in collecting data will be presented.

### 3. Introducing Actors.

This chapter presents the main actors, including their livelihood, social relation, values and interest which are critical to their social interaction and decision making process related to the development interventions will be elaborated.

### 4. Groupers Culture: A Better Future.

This chapter tries to reveal what happened on groupers project. It is a project to shift the way of fishing from capturing the fish to culturing the fish namely groupers. This project was introduced by the local government in order to modernize fishermen and eradicate poverty. Yet, it did not work very well as planned. Actors' interaction, battle upon knowledge and power, decision making process and profit taking activities will be explored.

## 5. Seaweed Culture: Dare to Retry?

One of the mandates of decentralization is to empower community. Bottom up development program is promoted. Since government intervention occurred in the middle of the process, some negotiations and adjusting process took place. I will capture the process and the outcomes, further elaborate the future of this project.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, I will summarize how different ideas, interest, strategies were used and competing in the development interventions. In the light of discussion, I will also present my argumentation about the relation between development and decentralization. In the end, I will mention some suggestions related to the topic and methodology.

## 2. Contextualization and Methodology

### 2.1 Country Background

Indonesia is a unitary state and the world's largest archipelagic nation. It has diverse coastal resources, coastal communities, culture, and customs. Its territory consists of more than 70 percent of sea area which is fragmented amongst 17,508 islands. According to the 2006 population census, the population in Indonesia is 242 million; 60 percent of which live within 60km of the coast. Indonesia is home to 20 distinct cultural groups and 300 different ethnic groups that speak more than 250 languages (Dahuri&Dutton 2000, Maarif, et.al. 2006). Governmental administration is conducted in five tiers: central, provincial, local (cities and districts), sub-district and village. Currently, there are as many as 33 provinces, 440 cities, and districts in Indonesia (Siry 2007).

Indonesia became a Dutch colony in 1602. In 1945 Indonesia declared its independency. As a relatively new country, Indonesia has been in the roller coaster ride in terms of finding a governmental system that would best suit the country. The first president, Soekarno, introduced a socialist system (1945-1966) while his successor, Soeharto, ran an autocratic 'democratic' capitalist government (1966-1998). The collapse of the Soeharto regime in 1998 gave birth to a democratic reform system.<sup>5</sup> The pattern of administrative governance shifted from centralistic (1945-1999) to decentralist (1999-present).

The idea of a decentralization of government and the need for strengthening development program, in fact, had been a national concern long before 1999 (Matsui 2003). This concept had gone through many transformations due to external and internal influences and pressures particularly that are related to political and economic policies. As a result, the Government of Indonesia (GOI) adopted a gradual decentralization system since late 1970s. In line with

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<sup>5</sup> Soeharto resigned on 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1998. Before the election on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1999, Indonesia was led by BJ Habibie (Soeharto's last Vice President) in the transition period.



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development, this system was expected to help the GOI in endorsing and expediting the development programs. However, its implementation was mostly rhetoric - until in 1999, the majority of the people urged for a decentralization. Hence, most people perceive decentralization as the period after 1999 (Turner, M 2001).

The word development implies social change. To provide a better understanding of the social change in the fisheries sector, it is important to elucidate the historical background of the sector. Barth on his study about social change mentioned that:

If we want to understand social change, we need concepts that allow us to observe and describe the event of change. Thus, we must be able to specify the connection that is the process that maintains a social form, an institution or organization. (Barth 1967)

It should also be noted that when analyzing the relationships and actions taken by the actors, even though those happen in current time, the background of the decision and actions are rooted in the previous actions and experiences.

## 2.2 Development and Decentralization in the Fisheries Sector

Similar with the idea of decentralization, the development of the fisheries sector also went through several reforms due to the revolutions in Indonesian politics and economics. During the Dutch ruling (1600-1945), the fisheries sector did not receive special attention as the Dutch considered that the targets for this sector was achieved. During the time, traditional fish catches were so high that the domestic market (here refers to Dutch's consumers) could not absorb it. Special attention was given to this sector during the Japanese occupation in 1942 to 1945. The Japanese government reformed the bureaus for terrestrial and marine fisheries and placed them as one division under the agriculture department. The Japanese also introduced some new capturing methods to increase production. Its main motive was to increase Japan's export in fisheries (Krisnandhi 1969, Kusumastanto 2003: 23-24).

After Indonesian independence, the GOI's attention to the fisheries sector had been fluctuating. Within the government administrative system, this sector went through many re-institutionalizations. In 1964, a special department to administer marine and fisheries sector was founded. The government under President Soekarno at that time gave significant attention to this sector. During the period of 1951-1967, the fisheries sector saw some growth but no significant development had been made. Due to high unemployment rate, more and more people decided to work in the fisheries. The number of fishermen increased by 165 percent. Fisheries sector was seen as a solution to unemployment as it offered access for everyone to yield from the sea. The production increased up to 97 percent. However, it should be noted that 70 percent of fishing boats in Indonesia were very traditional (non-motorized) and production was only aimed to meet the local market (Krisnandhi 1969, Bailey 1988).

Efforts to develop the fisheries sector began as the GOI declared its national identity as an Archipelagic State in 1957. The definition of an Archipelagic state suggest that the ocean, land, air and all of the natural resources it contains be regarded as a totality and the focus of the national development program (DKP 2007). Yet, this idea had faded before flourishing. There were some factors constraining the realization of this idea such as lack of resources in people and finance as well as in the technology to develop this sector. Soekarno's anti-western policy refused the idea of foreign investments in Indonesia. In addition, conflicts in the country had hampered the development of this sector.

After Soeharto took over the government in 1966, Indonesia saw a change in governmental policy. In contrary to Soekarno, Soeharto accepted foreign assistances. Having to deal with the issues of under-development, bankruptcy, and conflicts, he opted to cooperate with foreign (western) investors and multilateral agencies. Considering the situation in Indonesia and the advices from multilateral agencies, and observing the global trend, the GOI decided to harness its development programs on modern industrial sector. Terrestrial based natural resources were favoured for industrialization than the marine based natural

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resources. To conduct development, the GOI had to reorganize its administrative system. Centralistic type of government was chosen in order to maintain national stability and allow the development of effective and efficient departments. Since GOI's attention was mainly to the terrestrial sector, an autonomous department for marine and fisheries was considered unnecessary. Therefore, the GOI liquidated this department and put it under the agriculture department (Booth 2000, Brown 2003, Kusumastanto 2003:23-26).

The position of the fisheries sector under the agricultural department had contributed to the fact that this sector fell behind the terrestrial sector. The fisheries bureau was led by an inspectorate general under the administration of the minister of agriculture. Institutionally, it was very difficult for the bureau to conduct a development program because it had to compete with the other bureaus within the department in terms of programs and budgets. A lot of its program and budget proposals were not considered in the department's annual program planning (Dahuri and Dutton 2000).

However, even though GOI's attention to the fisheries sector was minimum compared to the attention given to the agriculture sector, efforts to develop this sector were still attempted. In the 1970s, the GOI opened opportunities for foreign investments to Indonesia. The considerations behind this policy among others were 1) to earn foreign exchange, 2) to accelerate industrialization and transfer of technology, 3) and to demonstrate a policy of non support to socialist-communism ideology (Kusnadi 1969).

The GOI received assistances and loans from some multilateral agencies such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, and the Japanese government to develop this sector. Their assistances had been very influential in shaping the direction of fisheries policy in Indonesia. In the 1970s-1980s, fisheries development was harnessed into the modernization and industrialization. With the aids and loans from these agencies, Indonesia started constructing some port facilities and fish distribution channels to support large-

scale offshore fisheries industry (Bailey 1988:31). The production was targeted to meet the international market through effective fishing. In order to increase the amount of fish catch, the industrialist or owner of large scale fishing unit such as trawls and purse seiners conducted excessive exploration. This activity caused over fishing and environmental degradation. The Fisheries bureau noted that in the 1970s, 3 percent large scale fishing unit produced 39 percent of total fish production and in 1980s, 2 percent large scale fishing unit produced 23 percent of fish (Bailey 1988:33, Nikijulu 2001).

In order to develop fisheries, Soeharto opened up the sector for business. Those in his close network, particularly the Indonesian Chinese businessmen, were given priority access. Consequently, despite a multiplier effect, it created monopoly and reduced the opportunity of traditional fishermen to yield from the sea (Kusumastanto 2003). Modernization and industrialization had failed to upgrade the status of fishermen from traditional to modern. Almost all of fishermen (90%) remained traditional fishermen until today. Traditional fishermen are defined as fishermen that have limited fishing skills, technology, vessel, capital, and organization skill (Dahuri, et.al 2001).

Feeling threaten by the activities of the large scale fishermen, the small-scale fishermen used molotov cocktails and other weapons to haul off their opponent. Many people died in this conflict. Similar conflicts also occurred in Malaysia and Thailand. As noted by the FAO, during this period the increase of large scale fishing not only occurred in Indonesia but also in other countries in Asia (Bailey 1988, Martosubroto 2001).

Being pressured by the internal conflicts among fishermen and by external pressure from multilateral agencies, the GOI decided to issue a law on zoning scheme and licensing. In 1980, with the Presidential Decree No.39, the GOI banned fishing practices using trawl. Unfortunately, the implementation of the policy on zoning and banning was low. The Director of Socio Economic and Community Study of the MMAF, Nikijulu stated that “the fishing zone approach

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had been applied since the 1980s but it had never been implemented effectively, therefore this approach was revised in 1999” (Nikijulu 2001). Moreover the MMAF noted that 70 percent of companies that were involved in illegal fishing in Indonesia did, in fact, have a legal permit to fish from the GOI (Asia Pulse 2006).

Another factor behind GOI’s lack of seriousness in developing the fishery sector perhaps can be explained by considering the contribution that this sector made to the national income. The Gross Domestic Bruto (GDP) from marine and fisheries sectors had never been promising. In 1960s, this sector contributed only 2 percent and slightly increased into 4 percent in 1970s (Nikijulu 2001). Later, the contribution continued to decrease. In 2000, even though Indonesia was the 9<sup>th</sup> largest fish producer in the world, this sector could only contribute 2 percent of the total national economy (ADB 2005). This insignificant contribution was the logic consequence of a weak management including the application of unlimited entry (open access-illegal fishing), lack of law enforcement, equipment problems, uneven distribution of earning, and human resources issues. The majority of fishermen who are the small-scale fishermen did not gain a significant income from this sector. They stayed traditional, under-developed and powerless.

More strategic attention to marine and fisheries sector began in 1988 when the State Policy Guidelines (GBHN) acknowledged the necessary to improve the management of marine areas to increase utilization and maintain sustainability. It was heavily influenced by the global movement for poverty alleviation programs, environment and sustainability. Since Indonesia had ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, Indonesia was required to give more strategic attention to sustainable development including development of the fisheries sector (Dahuri and Dutton 2000).

With the beginning of the decentralization era in 1999, the demands and pressures to pay more strategic attention to fisheries development increased

strongly. A number of NGOs, academicians, and political parties demanded for the establishment of an independent body for marine and fisheries. There were great attempts to shift the development paradigm from a terrestrial industrialization focus to exploration of marine and ocean natural resources. This awareness came as the government and the people realized the lessons from the previous economic crises where the terrestrial industrial economics' strategy failed to overcome the regional monetary crisis in 1997. By the end of 1998, the need to revive Indonesia's economics and politics was strongly advocated (Dahuri and Dutton 2000).

Following the crises, the GOI considered the exploration of neglected resources such as the marine and fisheries sector as one possible solution to build a stronger economy. In 1999, President Abdurrahman Wahid instructed the foundation of the Marine Exploration Department which was later renamed the Marine Exploration and Fishery Department and again changed into The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) in 2000. With the establishment of the MMAF, the potential for development programs in fisheries increased. This includes the allocation of budget in the National State Budget and funding opportunities from multilateral agencies. The MMAF also gained authority to reorganize offices at district levels and thus founded independent marine and fisheries offices (MFO) in some potential districts in Indonesia (Dahuri and Dutton 2000).

In relation to the fishermen as the main stakeholders of this sector, the values and system of decentralization required the MMAF to work hard in improving the prosperity of the fishermen. Attention for developing this sector should be focused toward the small scale fishermen. Efforts to empower fishermen and to organize as well as to mobilize them were seen as very urgent and essential. Harnessing the focus to the fishermen was the prerequisites for the implementation of decentralization in fisheries (Seilert,H. 2001).

Based on the brief explanation above, we can see the many challenges in the development of the fisheries sector that were influenced by many actors and their respective interests and needs. Modernization and industrialization had not been very successful in developing this sector and in creating general prosperity. Majority of fishermen, the traditional ones, were left intact in the development.

In the decentralization period, the focus of the development of fisheries sector has shifted from the large scale fishermen to the small scale fishermen, and from excessive exploration to a sustainable way of utilizing the sea. Consequently, some new methods of fishing were introduced. One approach of modernizing the fishing practices is through culturing or farming of fish or other sea biota.

This study will reveal the processes and challenges in modernizing fishing practices through culturing in one community of traditional fishermen in Pesisir Selatan Indonesia. Yet, since this study took place in a small community, the dynamic within development interventions would not be as complex as in the general development of fisheries in Indonesia as explained above. However, although not always directly related, the development of fisheries at the national and global level will influence and shape the development of fisheries at local level. Before proceeding with the case study, I will explain the methodology and analytical approach I use for this study.

## 2.3 Research Area and the Development Interventions

This study was conducted in Pesisir Selatan district in West Sumatra province Indonesia. The selection of this area was made based on the consideration of the area position along the 218 km shoreline area and the fact that since decentralization the district has put marine and fishery among the leading sectors for development program.

Pesisir Selatan is the largest district in West Sumatra province. It lies in 574.989 Ha mountainous areas along the 218 km shoreline. 74 percent of the land

area is protected national forest park. Most activities and settlement are located in 26 percent of land area that lies along the shoreline. The geographical condition of Pesisir Selatan makes this district vulnerable to earthquake both volcanic and tectonic.

This district has 25 islands and a population of 419.114. The Population is homogeneous. Islam is the single religious belief and most people come from the Minang Kabau tribe. Only few people come from other tribes or regions. Half of the population, 198.364 are in their productive age (15-64 years). The income per capita per year in 2004 was US\$ 400 which has placed Pesisir Selatan in the lowest rank income within West Sumatra province with average US\$900. The education level is low where 7 percent of population is illiterate and in total 41 percent of population had never passed elementary school. (Bappeda 2007)

Along with the decentralization system, there was a tremendous spirit and will of the government especially the district government to finance development programs, eradicate poverty and improve people's quality of life by increasing the exploration and exchange value of natural resources. In 2002, the district government of Pesisir Selatan launched a new development program which put the marine fishery and marine tourism in the front line (Kompas 2002). These sectors were seen as the fruitful future and were believed to contain unexplored treasures. Based on the Directorate General of Fishery survey 1991, Pesisir Selatan fisheries sectors had 95.000 ton/year potentials which up until 2007 only 13 percent could be explored.

Although this district has great potentials in the fisheries sector, fisheries has never been promising. Most of people who work in this sector stay in poverty and are powerless, therefore only 7 percent of population work as fisherman. Other people work in the agriculture sector (60%), services (15%), and other sectors (18%) (Bappeda Pesisir Selatan 2001). The number of fishermen continues to decrease every year. Most of them are categorized as traditional fishermen. Majority (80%) do fishing in zone I (0-4 mile) using long hand net,



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gill net, hook, lines, and traps. Only few can fish in zone II (4-8 mile) using machine fishing boat and purse seine. No fishermen can fish in zone III (8-12 mile). 80 percent of these fishermen do not own their own fishing equipments, especially vessel. Thus, most work as labour for more advanced fishermen (Fishery Faculty of Riau University 1999).

In order to achieve the decentralization program target in fisheries and to further improve the prosperity of people in Pesisir Selatan, efforts to develop and modernize fisheries sector and fishermen are needed. As the aim of this study is to see the dynamic in development intervention within the decentralization period, a micro scale study will be more advantageous. Therefore, I conducted my study in a small fishermen village named the Mandeh Village. To explore the development intervention practices, I propose two cases to be studied, the culturing/farming of groupers (a species of fish) and the culturing/farming of seaweed. The term culturing will be used within this study for two reasons. First, culturing of the groupers and seaweed are financed by the ADB, and the ADB uses the term culturing rather than farming. Second, the fishermen and government officers also uses the term culturing which in Bahasa Indonesia means “pembudidayaan” rather than farming which in Bahasa Indonesia means “bertani”. “Pembudidayaan” or culturing refers to live stock and can be done both in land and water meanwhile “bertani” or farming refers to cultivating plantations that requires the availability of land.

### **2.3.1 Research Site**

Mandeh Village is located in the sub-district of Koto XI Tarusan. This village can be accessed by boat that operates once in a day depending on the condition of the weather. Since the government has built a road to the village, people now can also access this village by car or motorcycles. This village is inhabited by 1410 people from 300 households. Most people (80%) work as fishermen. Others go to forest to log tree or cultivate some plants.

Lately, this village received much attention in the development program because it is located in a chain of some small islands that are surrounded by a calm sea and beautiful scenery. The islands are well known as the Mandeh resort area. This area was mapped in the National Tourism Development Plan 1998 as the future vanguard of Indonesian tourism destination. Ever since, the government has begun building this area for tourism.

Besides the tourism board, other government bodies also have a high interest in this area which includes the village of Mandeh. The Fisheries department's interest is in the area's potential in capture fisheries especially of tuna, baby anchovy and mackerel. The area is also suitable for fish culturing such as the culturing of groupers fish (*kerapu*) and mangrove crabs, and the culturing of seaweed. The Forestry department importance in this area is its national forest park. Meanwhile, other department such as the Ministry for the Development of Disadvantaged Regions concern is the eradication of poverty and the improvement of living standards of the population in the area. As the area is also believed to be rich in mining resources, particularly in steel seed, the Department of Industry also has an attention to the area. In conclusion, since decentralization period, late 90s till now, this area has been heavily intervened by the development programs.

In order to support those development plans, this area particularly Mandeh village has been exposed to many development interventions such as the construction of road (2001-not finished yet), electrification (2002), piped water (2002), social safety net (1999-2002), motorization for fishermen (2002), groupers culture (2003-now), seaweed culture (2003), organizing fishermen group and cooperation (2003), credit scheme for vessel (2004), credit for small scale economic (2004-now), etc

Those interventions took place within the era of change in the political system both at national and district levels as well as at the village level. In relation to decentralization or district autonomy, in 2001 the government of West

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Sumatra province reinstated the authority for village management from a centralistic hierarchical governmental system to a *nagari system* which is a traditional system of governance in the community. There are a number of definitions given to the *nagari system* which I would elaborate in the upcoming chapters. In short, this change in governance system had influenced and transformed the social system, power relations and livelihood of the community.

Since the community had been exposed to a number of development interventions, they have built their own perceptions about development based on their experience. This further consciously and un-consciously influenced their action toward a development intervention. I would elaborate more about this within the case study.

## 2.4 Case Studies: From Capturing to Culturing

As mentioned in the previous section, the fisheries sector in Indonesia have grown but it is still not well developed. Most of Indonesian fisheries activities are at small scale commonly known as artisanal fishery. Artisanal fisheries involve fishing practices that use simple technology such as the use of small boats and which production supplies the local markets. It is the most labour intensive type of fisheries. It usually involves small amounts of capital and the average of catch per fishermen is small (Zein 1998:12, Allison and Ellis 2001).

As identified by some scholars the fundamental problems of artisanal fisheries in a developing country include fishermen's extremely low income, low standard of living, and their backwardness, strong-mindedness and timidity both in their personality and in relation to their use of catching tools. Some people also hold these fishermen responsible for causing increasing depletion of sea environment. Most studies on small scale fisheries in developing countries in the last 50 years tend to define artisanal fisheries as "the occupation of the last resort" and the fishermen as "the poorest of the poor". This perception still exists

until today, including in Indonesia, and it influences the way people regard a fisherman (Zein 1998, Allison and Elis 2001, Bene 2003, ADB 2005).

In Pesisir Selatan, the statistic bureau (2004) recorded that only 20 percent of marine potential had been explored. 90 percent of this was conducted by the artisanal fishermen in the zone I. Consequently the fishing practices had already exceeded the marine ecological support system or overfishing (74.66%) in this zone (DKP Sumatera Barat 2000: III 36-37). As a result of competition in fish catch among fishermen, the Fisheries Faculty of Bung Hatta University in West Sumatera recorded that mangrove and coral reef in Pesisir Selatan especially in Carocok, Tarusan<sup>6</sup>, Teluk Betung, Air Haji and Lawang had been destroyed up to 70 percent in late 1990s (LPPM UBH 2001: II-34).

In order to cope with these problems, modernizing the way of utilizing the sea particularly in the zone 1 is seen essential. One of the solutions is through culturing the fish and seaweed. The culturing practices are considered as sustainable both for the fishermen and the environment. Culturing practices in this district began in 2002 and were supported by loans from the ADB. During the time Indonesia already has implemented decentralization of governance, the new governance system brought transformation in the practices of development intervention. The government, for example, are required to conduct development intervention programs within the principles of good public governance.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, the fishermen have become more empowered and aware of their rights. I will reveal these transformations through case studies presented in the following chapters.

In this study, two case studies will be highlighted. Both were aimed at providing a new, advantageous and sustainable means of livelihood in order to

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<sup>6</sup> Mandeh village, the field site, is located in the sub district of Koto XI Tarusan.

<sup>7</sup> This concept has 14 principles: (1) visionary, (2) openness and transparency, (3) participation, (4) accountability, (5) rule of law, (6) democracy, (7) professionalism and competency, (8) responsiveness, (9) efficiency and effectiveness, (10) decentralization, (11) private sector and civil society partnership, (12) commitment to reduce inequality, (13) commitment to environmental protection, and (14) commitment to fair market. (Bappenas 2003)

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increase fishermen's live. The first case is the culturing of the groupers project and the second case is the seaweed project. The MFO Pesisir Selatan initiated two approaches for the culturing program. The first approach was by inviting the community to participate in a culturing project that was promoted and financed by the government. Although the project provided room for participation and discussion as well as flexibility, this kind of approach is basically a top down development project.

The second approach was by providing assistance and support to a project that the fishermen have initiated. Considered as a bottom up development project, this kind of project has been promoted as the ideal type for future democratic development projects. In this thesis, I will take the seaweed project as my case study.

Comparing these two projects where the position and interest of actors were different, the complexities and obstacles of the projects were also different; consequently the result was then different too. The groupers culture survives until today but the seaweed culture failed to grow. What make these projects different is interesting to be revealed in order to understand the development intervention practices in Indonesia. Further perhaps to give some recommendation for a better practice in the future.

## 2.5 Analytical Approach

Silverman (2005) distinguished methodology as a general approach to studying research topics and also a specific research technique to gathering data. He distinguished methodology as:

..the choice we make about cases to study, methods of data gathering, form of data analysis, etc., in planning and executing a research study. So our methodology defines how we will go about studying any phenomenon.... Methodology cannot be true or false, only more or less useful (Silverman 2005:99).

In order to understand the complexities within development project, a qualitative method would be more fruitful and would give in-depth explanation

compared to a quantitative method. A qualitative method allows us to investigate more deeply on what others think and know (Rubin&Rubin 1995:5). Bringing the idea of people's perceptions, knowledge and interest into this study; I will use an actor oriented approach in designing my research method and approaching my informants.

### **2.5.1 Actor Oriented Approach**

An actor oriented approach develops in the social science particularly within sociology of development. Historically, this approach derives from the theories of symbolic interaction and social exchange that grew in the period of 1960s. Later, in the late 1970s, this theory formed the basis for a strong critique of structural and institutional types of explanation of a social phenomenon such as those offered by modernization, political economy and neo-Marxist analysis. (Long 2002:1)

Basically, this approach notes that the human being is an active subject with ability to perceive and cope with the situation and problems based on their capacity, knowledge and interests. When taking a decision, human beings as the active actors are always confronted by a series of possible alternative choices (models) of behaviour or courses of actions with probable outcomes and they will select which ever they consider as the most advantages for them (Long1977:128). This approach is looking at social processes and focusing on the life worlds and interlocking 'projects' of the actors. To understand this approach, we should be equipped with the methods and theories of social science that allows us to elucidate the social meanings, purposes and powers of the actors (Long 2002:1).

The term lifeworlds is used by Schutz to describe the taken for granted world of social actors. It entails the practical actions shaped a background of intentionality and values which are defined by the actors (Schutz 1962 in Long 2001:54).

Later, this term is elaborated more deeply by Bourdieu. Within his practice theory, Bourdieu used the term *habitus* to describe the lifeworlds. He argued that human beings are the actors where in their social life, they interact, adapt and react to the challenges they face and act in order to settle their disposition and gain the advantage for them. However in the interaction, actors cannot be separated from the social structure and *habitus* which embedded in their self (Bourdieu 1977). Within this theory, Bourdieu mentions that the actions taken by human beings are not always consciously influenced by their knowledge and interest but also by something that they taken for granted (*doxa*) that exist in their social structure.

The concept of social structure has been widely used and defined by the scholars within the social science. This theory emerged as a significant development in the European sociology in 1970s. Urry (1982) traced its origins to Berger and Luckman's (1967) concept of mutual constitution of society and individuals, and identified several different strands of structural analysis including the work of Bourdieu (1977) and Giddens (1976) (Jones, M 1999). However, perhaps the most common one is the structuration theory proposed by Anthony Giddens (1984).

According to Giddens, structuration theory attempts to explain the ways in which social system are produced and reproduced in social interaction. Actor is defined as a knowledgeable and capable entity. In their interaction, human agencies and social structure are not seen as two separate concepts or constructs but are two ways of considering social actions. Giddens recognizes that there is a duality of structures. On one side it is composed of situated actors who undertake social action and interaction and their knowledgeable activities in various situations. At the same time, it is also the rules, resources, and social relationships that are produced and reproduced in social interaction (Giddens 1984).

The theories above imply that in conducting their social life which involves social practices and social meaning, human beings are interacting with the others. Further, this interaction will influence and shape their design of social structure and means of livelihood as mention by Stølen:

Variation in organization forms and cultural patterns are to a large extent outcome of the different ways in which social actors organizationally and cognitively deal with problematic situations and accommodate themselves to the interest and “design of living” of others. (Stølen 1991: 2)

It must be noted that the actor oriented approach does not mean that the focus of analysis supposes to be harnessed into individual per se. It refers to individual who is acting in social situations where one’s action influences the others’ and vice versa. In relation to revealing development project, an actor oriented approach requires a broad understanding of situation. Thus this approach should be conducted by ethnographic study.

### **2.5.2 Framework of Analysis**

Data analysis is the search of pattern in data for ideas that explain why those patterns are there in first place (Bernard 2006:452). This study uses ethnographic approach to collect the data. According to Brewer (2000:105) there are three important steps when working with the ethnographic data: analysis, interpretation and presentation. Analysis is the process of bringing order to data, organizing what is there into patterns, categories and descriptive units, and looking for relationship between them. Interpretation involves attaching meaning and significance to the analysis, explaining the patterns, categories and relationships. Presentation constitutes the act of writing up the data in textual form.

The analysis does not come after finishing the data collection but being conducted simultaneously with the process collecting data until the report has been finished. It can create serious problem in a qualitative study if one delays the analysis until all the data have been collected, as mentioned by Potter:



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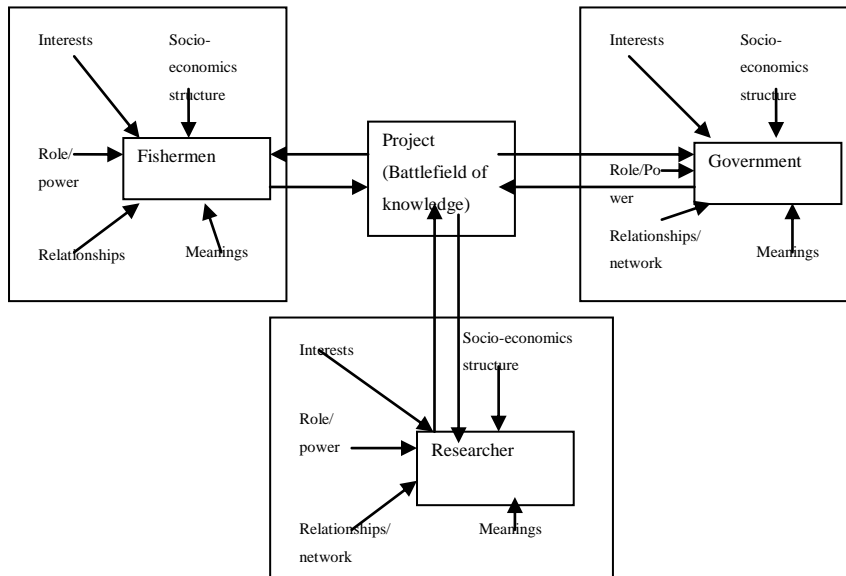
It is a serious mistake to wait until the data all gathered to begin the analysis because this faulty procedure's rules out the possibility of collecting new data to fill in the gaps, or to test new hypotheses that emerge during analysis. Furthermore it overwhelming task of having to shift through all the data to find the trends after being removed from research setting (Potter 1996:121).

When analyzing the data, it is very important for the researcher to be sure about her focus. In this thesis, my focus of attention is the fishermen group and officer group who participated in the culturing projects. There are two projects taken as the case studies. Then this study has two unit of analysis.

Considering my aims to see the dynamic of the development project, interface analysis is my choice. Interface analysis aims to reveal the belief that development project is a linear plan. Development project is not simply the execution of an already-specified plan of action with expected outcomes (Long 2001:30-31). It is the interlocking arena of contested interests over meaning and resources that exist within multiple social realities. It focuses its attention to social interface. Long defined social interface as:

The critical point of intersection or linkage between different social system, field or level of social order where structural discontinuity based upon differences of normative values and social interest are most likely to be found. When analysing this linkage or process, the study should not be confined to the minutiae of social interaction but broader to the institutional framework and power fields (Long 1989:1-2).

Methodologically, this analysis calls for a detail ethnographic understanding of social life and of the processes by which images, identities and social practices are share, contested, negotiated and sometimes rejected by the various actors that involved. It also requires an acknowledging of the existence of multiple social realities and look at how far specific kinds of knowledge are shaped by the power domains and social relations in which they are embedded and generated (Long 2002:2). In a simple explanation, interface analysis tries to see some aspects as below:



To see how these factors influence the actors and further mould into the actions negotiated within development project, I will analyze some aspects:

- The nature of actor's way of live and livelihood
- Project analysis including its historical background
- Actors' identity, interest and network
- Social structure

### 2.5.3 Data Gathering and Informants

This study uses ethnographic approach. Ethnography is usually used to explain patterns of behaviour of some social regularity (Brewer 2000:150). In collecting the data, ethnography facilitates researcher to adjust and change the questions and subjects of the study in engagement with case, people, and their practices. In relation to the sampling method, purposive sampling is the most often chosen by the researcher, including me. In this sampling, samples are selected after field investigations on some groups in order to ensure that certain types of individuals/persons displaying certain attributes are included in the study

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(Berg 2001:32). Therefore, it is important to note that this thesis is not intended to act as the generalization of the development project's implementation among fishermen in Indonesia.

In collecting the data, I used in-depth interview as my primer method. I conducted two forms of interviews, formal and informal. In the formal interview, I guided myself with the semi structured questionnaire. I started by introducing myself formally as a student doing a research and equipped myself with the introduction letter, recorder and note book. I generally recorded the formal interviews except if the informants refused to do so. I held formal interview particularly for the informants I only had one chance to meet and/or in the first meeting with informants I had chance to meet several times.

In the informal interview, I did not come to the informants with the questionnaires but memorized the questions instead. I rather dig into their opinion, perception and experience through informal chats. I used this kind of interview to confirm and clarify some information I got from the other informants. I rarely used recorder or notebook. Thus, I usually wrote all the information right away after the interviews. The interviews took place in many places such as informants' house, work place or other public places.

This study focuses on people that involved in the development interventions within groupers and seaweed project. I categorized my informants into two groups: the officer group and the fishermen group.

In the first category, the officer group, my main informants were people working in the Marine and Fisheries Office (MFO). Informants were chosen purposefully base on their position, status and involvement in the development interventions. To understand the general policy, structure and system in the MFO, I interviewed the head of MFO office. To understand the MCRM project, I interviewed the project officer, the field staffs and administrative staffs. The groupers and the seaweed projects are managed under the umbrella of a big project namely Marine Coastal Resource Management Project (MCRMP). I also

talked to officers from other division in MFO to get more information about the dynamic of the fisheries sector in Pesisir Selatan.

In accordance to the information I got, I enlarged the informants to some officers from other offices. I categorized them into additional informants. Basically, I decided to interview and talked to them because in conducting MCRM project, the MFO to some extent cooperated with the other offices. Moreover, in conducting their livelihood, fishermen were interacting with the government officers not only from the MFO. I talked to two informants from the Bappeda, two informants from the *Nagari* Empowerment Office (NEO) and one informant from environment office. I also interviewed the district secretary, the head of sub-district government of Koto XI Tarusan, district's bank representative, and officer in the tourism and industrial office. Overall, I formally interviewed six officers from the MFO and four officers from other offices. Informally, I interviewed at least ten officers. (See appendix)

In the fishermen's group, my informants were slightly changed from what I had planned and designed before the field work. In the beginning, my interest was to see how development programs were perceived by the fishermen and how that influenced their live. I had not really decided which kind of development intervention I would like to focus on. I knew that there were some projects conducted in the research village to modernize fishermen such as motorization, credit for vessel, the groupers culture, the seaweed culture, etc. Therefore I harnessed my attention to the fishermen who were exposed by the modernization programs and who were not.

I divided my informants into two groups: traditional fishermen (who capture the fish) and non-traditional fishermen (who culture the fish). I divided them into two other categories: with the intervention and not. I interviewed eight fishermen: six traditional fishermen consisted of two fishermen who owned the boat, two fishermen who worked on the boat owned by others, and two fishermen

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who both owned and worked in the boat; and two non-traditional fishermen who owned and worked in the culturing the groupers.

Later on, considering complexities of development interventions, modernization process, people, and my time limitation, I decided to concentrate on the efforts to change the pattern of fishing from capturing to culturing. I propose two cases in this thesis, culturing of groupers and culturing of seaweed. In the groupers project, I interviewed four of ten members. They were the notorious actors in the project. When I was there, I tried to contact other members but some were not in the village because they migrated or went to the sea, forest or the huts in the hill. I realized that it could be one of the weaknesses of my research since there is a possibility that I missed some information related to this project.

For the seaweed project, I talked to four fishermen who cultivated the seaweed. The informants were chosen based on some suggestions from the village leader and other villagers. In this village, most of community members knew what other do for their livelihood. It was not difficult to know and confirm who were involved in the seaweed project.

In order to get more information about the livelihood in the village and clarify some information from my informants, I talked to the village leader, *adat* (tribe) leader (*ninik mamak*), the youth organization leader, the head of school and some teachers, the health worker, other fishermen, farmers, and other members of the community. (See appendix)

In general, besides carrying out interviews, I also conducted two other data gathering methods. Those were observation and document analysis. Observing what my informants or people do was a very useful way to clarify and confirm the data I found from the interviews. The primary advantage of observation, as mention by Schwart and Jacobs (1979:46) is that it gives the researcher the ability to see if people “say what they mean and mean what they say” (Cited in

Potter 1996:46). For the groupers project, I conducted some observations in *keramba*.

These three methods have helped me to clarify and cross-check whether the data I got are consistent and support each other. It is important to use different methods and sources during field work especially in conducting ethnographic study. Patton said:

Multiple source of information are sought and used because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective on program. By using a combination of observation, interviewing, and document analysis, the field worker is able to use different data sources to validate and cross-check findings. Each type and source of data has strengths and weaknesses (Patton 1990:24)

#### **2.5.4 Some Ethical Considerations**

Prior to conducting my research, I informed my informants about the research objectives, the involvement of the informants and the length of time of involvement, and plan on the use of the research outcomes, including how these will be disseminated. Verbal consent was obtained from the informants.

In doing my research I presented myself as a student. My status as a student was well understood by informants from the officers group. I sensed that their openness and cooperation was due to their considering my work as a scientific research and that they considered providing information to a student as risk-free. However, my identity as student was not much of interest among the fishermen and other people in the village. Their main interest had been my clan identity. I explained that I came from the Melayu clan from another district but that my father came from the Chaniago clan which is from the district of my research. After knowing my clan origin they referred me to people who came from the same clan and further considered me as family. It is common among Minang people to be asked about their clan origin. As a migrating society, the basic philosophy of the Minang tribe is that the young men should migrate to another place because they do not yet have a significant function in their original village and that the first thing that these young men have to do in the new place is to look for people from the same clan.

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In relation to my informants' identity, I asked them whether they would agree on having their name mentioned in my thesis. I also sought for their preference on the kind of information they gave that I could publish and what would be off-record information. In general the informants were open about having their identity and information published. However, in the writing of this thesis, I considered that it would be unwise to reveal my informant's full identity fearing that it might create a negative impact on them. Therefore, I select and cover some of my informants' identity.

Yet, I have an ethical dilemma with the information I gathered from informal interviews because I did not explicitly inform them that when talking to them I was collecting the data for my thesis. Neither did I tell that their information might appear in my thesis and be used for my analysis. Nevertheless, I will argue that the use of collected data through informal chats is acceptable for the following reasons.

First, my presence as an outsider who came to the village to do a research had been widely known since I lived among the villagers all through my research. My presence was also announced to the community through the mosque and blow whistle activities. Second, as they have known my identity and aim of staying at the village, I assumed that the people were aware and knew that every time I interact with them, I was collecting data. Their willingness to respond to my questions and to dialogue with me could be considered as their acceptance and permission to my collecting data. However, I realized that there is a danger of misquoting or misunderstanding the real situation/information from these interviews. Therefore, I tried to reconfirm information I got from informal interviews to my main informants.

The other ethical consideration is related to my professional background with a two-year work experience in the development sector in the capital city of Jakarta. This status had sometimes affected my role as researcher because some of my informants did not see me as a student but as someone who has network in

Jakarta. Few times, I had been asked for my professional judgement related to the project. People even asked me to help them to open channels to institutions or NGOs in Jakarta.

In addition, as I frequently came to the district centre and met with government officers, some of my informants asked me to help bridge relationship with the district government. Some also requested me to advocate their aspirations to the district government. It was quite difficult not to do so because I lived with them for about two months and for some cases I saw the importance to voice their aspirations.

Thus, I did my best to convince them that I am a student who is doing research for a thesis. I did not want my judgment or considerations about a project to influence my respondents. However, in some cases I tried to bridge the relationship and placed myself as the messenger for both participating actors. I did not make any promise for something I was not sure I could do for them such as channelling to some NGOs or funding supports, etc.

## 2.6 Limitation of the Study

This study does not rely on random sampling methods therefore it can not be generalized and represents the development projects to modernize fishermen in Indonesia. Yet, since this study is using non-probability sampling method, it will manage to show the condition in the field. The implementation of project, its complexities and its relation to decentralization will be enough captured within this thesis. I am fully aware that by choosing non-probability sampling method, there is a possibility that I left some important actors and aspects that play role in the process.

I conducted the field work for three months. I stayed in the village for two months and lived at the district's centre for one month. I started my field work by surveying the villages and projects I would take as my case study during summer 2007. After completing the preparation, I returned to the district and started my



field work in November 2007-January 2008. I realize that it is insufficient to understand and grab all the complexities in the projects and actor's livelihood. Moreover one of the cases I explored had already finished (the seaweed project) so I could not observe what happen in the field. I had to rely my data so much on my informants' stories.

Language is one of my limitations in conducting this study considering that English is not my mother tongue. The language barrier can be a limitation for me not only in translating concepts and theoretical ideas, but also in expressing my true ideas, opinions, and observation of my field work. I conducted the research in local language. I read and analyze some paper works written in Bahasa Indonesia.

When analyzing my interviews, I realize that different informants have their own way to referring to themselves such as using "I" and "we" when they actually refer to themselves personally. Besides, I found many proverbs used by my informants. It is very common for Minang people to talk metaphorically by using proverb in their daily life. When I was in the field, I did not really pay attention to the way they use their language as I thought I could understand since I come from the same tribe. However, when analyzing my data, I found that deeper understanding is needed. I realize that it could also be a limitation of this study. However, I try my best to interpret it and write a readable and understandable text.

### 3. Introducing Actors

In the previous chapters, the background of the study has been presented. In this chapter and the following, the empirical findings and analysis will be presented. It will start by presenting two groups of actors that take part in the fishermen modernization program in Mandeh Village, Pesisir Selatan. The first is the fishermen group and the second is the officers group. It is important to elucidate who the actors are, their identity, culture, interest and network in order to understand the dynamic process of interaction toward a change.

#### 3.1 Fishermen: “We Live Like a Tiger”

*Iduik nelayan, kalau sedang mandapek mamborong ameh, kalau indak dapek tajua sadonyo.  
Iduik ko cando razaki harimau.*

Life as a fisherman is a life like a tiger's. When it gets a big catch, it can rest. When it does not, it will roar and hunt widely. “If we get a big catch we can buy lot of gold, but if we don't we have to sell everything and fall in debt”. This is the common philosophy of fishermen's live in the research site. This philosophy infiltrates deeply and colours the lifeworld and livelihood of this fishermen's community.

Lifeworld is the way of life which is taken for granted by the social actors. It is defined by the actors and entails practical action shaped by a background of intentionality and values (Schulz 1962 in Long 2001:54). Livelihood is the idea of individuals and groups striving to make a living base on their needs and capacities. Before describing further about the lifeworld, livelihood and everyday life of this fishermen's community, I will begin this section by describing the nature and situation of Mandeh village.

##### 3.1.1 The Nature of Mandeh Village

Mandeh village lies on the flat basin in the edge of a mountainous rain forest area which is protected as the national forest of Kerinci Seblat in the sub-

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district name Koto XI Tarusan, Pesisir Selatan, West Sumatra, Indonesia. Geographically, this area lies in 01°11'05''S and 100°26'55''E (DKP Pessel 2004). There are two ways to reach this village, by boat and by car/motor cycles. The Road to Mandeh was built in 2000 wrapped in the development program to eradicate poverty and promote tourism. Due to financial problem, this road has not finished until today.

The settlement rows neatly along the main street that connects three sub-villages (*orong*): Taratak, Kampung Tengah, and Kampung Baru. Behind the houses spread rain cistern rice fields. In the left side of the village, the river from the mountain's spring flows to the sea. Before 2002, the river was used as the main source for drinking water. People usually gathered to bath, wash or even only to chat with the others. River was the main gate toward the outside world mainly because the available transportation was boat.

In the aperture of the sea live a horde of mangroves. There also lives the mangrove's ecosystem such as shrimp, crab, eel, etc. This village does not have a beach. As it lies in the verge of ocean with the average height of 0-2 meter, this village experiences the rise and fall of the tides every day. In the evening, the sea water rises and washes the ground and street. It falls back to the sea after a while. Some houses with low terrace particularly those located in the *orong* Kampung Baru are flooded for a few hours every day.

The sea of Mandeh lies in the gulf of Indian Ocean. The water is so calm and almost without waves. Here, live many pelagis fish (shallow water fish). Therefore fish hookers love coming to this area. There is not much big fish live in this area, but if one sails 4-12 nautical mile further, one can find a great variety of big fish such as tuna that passes this area when they migrate.

### **3.1.2 Demography, Means of Livelihood, and Education**

Mandeh village is inhabited by approximately 1,410 people distributed in 300 households (Village data 2007). It is quite difficult to know the exact number

of population since many people are not registered to the government. The higher rate of migration in this village complicates the number as well as different interest and purposes for the data. For example, the village leader notes 1,410 people meanwhile the village health worker notes 1,100 people and the youth organization note 1,316 people in 2007. Comparing by the gender status, there are more men than women in this village. In general, women are likely to migrate out of the village either to work or study because there are not many things they can do in the village. Fishing is a manly job.

The village leader admitted this difference. He included the number of people who had already moved and worked in other places because it is very common that those people return home after working temporarily in other places. In accordance to development and decentralization, the focus of this study, this difference has another reason:

“We want this village to be a *nagari* that has bigger autonomy and gets more funds from the government. The minimum requirement to upgrade a village into *nagari* is 1,600 people. Considering that we live in an outreach area, we hope the government can accept our current number. Besides historically, this village was a *nagari* ” (Zainal: interview 10.07.07)

Based on the means of livelihood, according to the village leader, around 80 percent of the households' income comes from fishery, 10 percent from agriculture and forestry, and 10 percent other sources such as trading and services.

The level of education is quite low. According to the headmaster of the village's school (interview 28.11.07), the average level of education for men in the last 10 years is elementary school (6 years education). Compared to men, more women study in junior high school (9 years education). There is only one school in the village, the elementary school. If someone wants to continue, they have to study in the other villages or in the nearest city. Therefore, it is common that people outside the village including some officers considered the fishermen as un-educated people.

### 3.1.3 The Origin and The Social Relations in Mandeh Village

In order to understand the interaction between actors, it is essential to understand the social relations owned by and binding the actors. Editiawarman (2004) found that traditional fishermen in Pesisir Selatan live and survive mostly by forwarding their social relations. In this study, I also find that social relations hold an important aspect in shaping and shifting the livelihood of the fishermen including those related to the development interventions. Although my focus of attention is the individuals within community, these people cannot be detached from social relations and the structure of their life. Referring to Giddens, this structure derives from a long history of social system which are produced and reproduced in the social interaction. One way to acknowledge Mandeh people and their social relations is by revealing the story of its origin.

#### *The Origin of Mandeh Village*

Based on the story passed on from generation to generation, Mandeh was the exile place of Tuanku Sombong (Mr.Snob), a tribe leader from the Chaniago clan. It goes on follows: (Dt. Manti Kayo: interview 07.12.07)

Once upon a time, Tuanku Sombong fell into a conflict with his nephews and nieces. They submitted a complaint to Tuanku Tarusan, the representative of Minangkabau's Kingdom in Tarusan about the snobbish and cruel behaviour of Tuanku Sombong. They did not want to follow him anymore and suggested Tuanku Tarusan to replace him with the other *mamak*.<sup>8</sup> Considering their report, Tuanku Tarusan called Tuanku Sombong and asked him to clarify this case.

Irritated with his nephews' action that he considered as betrayers, Tuanku Sombong said that "if they do not want to obey me anymore, give me a land and I will make my own *nagari*". All agreed and asked him which land he wanted. Tuanku Sombong chose 'Mandeh', a part of Tarusan mainland found by the sailor of Muko-Muko inhabited by tigers and could only be reached through the

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<sup>8</sup> In this matrilineal tribe (Minangkabau), the clan is led by *mamak* or mother's brothers which is chosen by the clan's member.

sea or by walking through the dark and dangerous forest. Everyone shocked with his choice but he said arrogantly, “I am brave”. Later on, Tuanku Sombong moved to Mandeh with his wives and some loyal nephews. There, they started cultivating the land. As they lived near the sea, they started fishing.

Even though he moved out, he was still a member of the Chaniago clan in the mainland. Some of this clan’s members frequently visited them and maintained their relationship. It was lucky that Tuanku Sombong had three generous wives, two were from the Jambak clan and one was from the Tanjung clan. People who came to this place were served very well by his wives. Therefore people named this place as Mandeh House or mother’s house. More people came to this place. After observing the land and the sea, some decided to settle.

When more people lived in this place, Tuanku Sombong wanted to realize his dream to make a *nagari*. Based on Minangkabau administrative system, a *nagari* could only be built if there were a commitment and an agreement from four clans. In addition, the area had to also be equipped with some facilities consisted of market, mosque, rice fields, bath area, and cemetery (Editiawarman 2004:33). Therefore Tuanku Sombong invited some *mamaks* from other clans to cooperate. He got support from three clans: the Tanjung, the Jambak, and the Melayu. By the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, they declared the *nagari* Mandeh acknowledged by Tuanku Tarusan. It was led by the consortium of clans. In relation to the time frame when actually this event took place, nobody really knew. However, I would assume that it happened in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century because my informant mentioned the existence of Tuanku Tarusan which means that Minangkabau was still exist as an independent kingdom.

That story shows that people in this village used to live in a democratic and egalitarian type of lifeworld. When people felt dissatisfied, they were quite brave to submit their complaints and demanded for a change. This story also tells us that people in this village kept maintaining their relationship with people who

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lived outside the village. The migration in and out from the village took place since the foundation of this village. In relation to the fisheries practice, it can be seen that originally villagers in Mandeh came from the agriculture (farmer) society. They conducted fishing basically because they lived near the sea and fish was seen as one sources for food (subsistence fishing practices). Perhaps that is why the growth and development of fishing practices worked slowly in this village.

### *The Nagari Governance System*

Nagari is the old form of local administrative governance system where a village receives a high degree of autonomy to manage their village based on their local needs, culture, values and resources (Kompas 2004). It had existed in West Sumatera long before Aditiawarman founded Pagaruyung Kingdom in 1347. The leader was inherited by bloodline. After Islam came in 1560, it was changed. Nagari was then led by a *wali nagari* which was elected through a consensus in community. The consensus was made through a nagari meeting attended by *tigo tungku sajarangan* consisted of representative of religious leader (*ulama*), intellectual leader (*cadiak pandai*), and cultural leader (*ninik mamak*) (Naim 2004). Using current democratic political terminology, the *wali nagari* acted and hold the executive power and the *tungku tigo sajarangan* acted and hold the legislative power.

The existence and form of nagari went through many reforms due to the social and political changes in Indonesia. During the Dutch period, nagari was placed as part of its governmental administration. Policies in nagari had to be reported and agreed by the Dutch government (Nafis 2006). After the independence, the governance of nagari was returned to the consortium of clans' representative. Yet, due to a riot in the 1950s supported by many nagari's leaders to endorse the federalist country of Indonesia, GOI put tight control on nagari. In 1959 GOI announced the centralism state which meant no longer autonomy region.

This control was then institutionalized by reforming nagari (and the other traditional governance system in all over Indonesia) into village (*desa*) as the last chain of the governance system in 1979. Actually the GOI offered the Government of West Sumatra (GWS) to change only the name of nagari into village without changing the existing system. However, as this reform related to the budget for development, where GOI would disburse budget as many as the number of villages, the GWS decided to divide 543 nagaries into 3.138 villages based on the geographical scale and number of population. It changed and destroyed the existing system where nagari was build base on the consensus and similarity of some clans (Asnan 2006:251-270). When the decentralization government (1999-present) opened an opportunity to re-implement autonomy system, West Sumatera people grasped this opportunity and implemented “back to nagari” in 2000 with the Province Law No.9 about “Back to Nagari” (Nafis 2006, Asnan 2006). Pesisir Selatan since then founded 37 nagaries. To develop nagari, the district government disburses annual block grants under the mechanism of *Dana untuk Alokasi Nagari* (Allocated Budget for Nagari).

Mandeh was given the authority as village not as nagari as in its history. Mandeh village is part of Nagari Nanggalo. The government reason was simple because the number of people who lived in Mandeh did not reach the minimum number to declare a nagari which is 1.600. Despite of its history, being nagari rhymes with the development aid. Therefore, until today many people in Mandeh village try to regain their status as the nagari.

### *The Social Relations*

Generally people in this village are genealogically related. Everyone is the relative of some others particularly through the marriage system. Minangkabau cultural system does not allow marriage from the same clan because the same clan means the same mother. A clan is a group consists of families from the matrilineal line. It is led by some *mamaks* (maternal uncles) who are responsible in managing the livelihoods of the clan’s members including the clan’s property such as houses, land, rice field, and plots in forest; the cultural activities such as



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marriage and cemetery; or other general things such as giving advices to the clan members. Once someone is chosen as *mamak*, he will hold that status until he dies. Nevertheless, it is possible that the status is taken out from him if he does not perform well. Shortly, through this marriage, the relationship and connection among clans are created and maintained.<sup>9</sup> This situation is mentioned by Datuk Manti Kayo, the leader of Jambak's clan as "*bak urek lah babaliak-baliak, bak rantiang lah basaluak-saluak*" or endless thread relationship.

It is very important for all community members to understand and practicing the way of lives in the village since they live in the tight kinship's relationship. Their basic philosophy is: "*anak dipangku, kemenakan di bimbiang, urang kampung dipatenggangkan*". It means that in his life one should take care of their children, advice their nephews, and always bring the villagers into their consideration. Further, this value shapes into a *segan* or loath/bashful attitude. *Segan* refers to a situation when someone feels uncomfortable and reluctant to do something due to their relationship with the other or with the potential embarrassment the action could create. Even though, at one point, this value acts as one of the social control mechanism in the village, it also acts as the barrier in conducting their livelihood, including the ones related to the development programs.

Within this tight social relation and values, Mandeh people live and survive with their limitations in the outreach location<sup>10</sup>. Basically, this is the basis why all people manage to work and fulfil their (basic) needs. I will explore more about this relationship in the pattern of fishing practice as discussed below.

### 3.1.4 The Pattern of Fishing Practices

The introduction of technology gives man a second nature or different character, by extending his power through adaptive skills and re-directive thought (Bell 1999:107)

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<sup>9</sup>In order to implant this value, many stories and tribal laws are produced. In Mandeh, people still hold this value. Inter-clan marriage is still seen as taboo. However in other places in West Sumatra due to the increasing number of population and the adoption of Indonesian and Islam regulation, this practice has changed.

<sup>10</sup>Even though there are boat and road to reach this village, it is still considered as outreach because it is still not easy to reach this place.

The modification of fishing practices' pattern in Mandeh village comes along with the development of people's knowledge, skills and environmental change. It is shown in the development of their technology. In the old days, people only used hooks, traps and nets to get fish. Hook and trap were used by individual while net was used in group. When the number of people increased, catching fish using hook was no longer adequate, therefore people invented and/or used other tools. People of Mandeh started using pulled net (*pukek tapi*) in around 1950s continued with *sampan colok* (boat with additional light) in the 1960s.

Basically pulled net needs 8-20 people to work together depends on the size of the net. First, some have to row and bring the net to the sea meanwhile some other - divided into two groups- have to hold the left and right side of the net. After throwing the net to the sea and waiting for approximately 2 hours, they start pulling the net to the shore land. It has to be done calmly and patiently in order to keep the fish stay inside the net. The catch was divided using sharing system. 50 percent goes to the owner of the boat and net, and the other 50 percent is divided evenly among the members. This group does not have the exact members. If the owner wants to catch fish, he will call on some people to help him. If some people want to use the boat and net, they will contact the owner. When a group gets a big catch, some people from the village will come and help taking the fish from the net. All that helps (usually women and children) will get some fish enough to cook in a meal time called "*sasamba*".

This type of catching (pulled net) is not practiced anymore because people have found another tool that enables them to catch more marketable fish with less efforts and time. It is called *bagan* and introduced by Pak Syarif, a fisherman from North Sumatra. In 1967 he arrived in Sungai Nyalo, Mandeh neighbour village, to hook the fish. Interested with the potential of the fish and the calm water, he decided to settle. He then made *bagan* and put it in the sea. *Bagan* is two high poles planted in the sea with a net tied to each side. It can be pulled up and down. Basically it works by pulling the net down very slowly and calmly

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then waits for a while so that fish gather there and pull it up as fast as possible so that fish cannot run. To attract fish, *bagan* is equipped with some kerosene lamps. Syarif got the idea from some fishermen in Sibolga who used similar technique.

By using *bagan*, he got more fish than the local fishermen. He fell into trouble because people were jealous at him. Some people later on burned his *bagan*. Realizing that he was an outsider in the village and needed to protect himself, he then asked one particular local family from the Melayu clan to adopt him as a son. He chose that family because “they have 11 children, all are men. I think I will be safe if I am adopted by that family”. This family agreed because Syarif came from the Melayu clan in Deli, a district in the North Sumatra province. They believed that the melayu clan in Deli and the melayu clan in Mandeh were from the same ancestor.

However, the jealousy was still in the air. To protect Syarif, his foster family suggested him to marry a woman from the village. He chose a woman from Mandeh, the neighbour village. Being married to a member of a matrilineal clan, he moved and stayed with his wife’s family after married. In Mandeh, he worked together with a local fisherman named Sanip. Together, they made another *bagan*. The same thing happened.

“People demonstrated<sup>11</sup> upon me, they said my *bagan* disturbed their activity using pulled net. They said I took over their fish. But I did not catch fish, I catch *teri!*<sup>12</sup> They burned my *bagan* and asked me to make another one further to the sea. So I made one with the boat. Lucky me, it gave me even more catch. Seeing I am success, people adopted it, not only here but also in other district.” (Syarif: interview, 30.11.07)

Later on, Sarif and Sanip cooperation broke up. Sarif then worked alone further to the sea by a boat *bagan*. This is the origin of today’s *bagan* boat.

*Teri* or baby anchovy is a small fish live in group in shallow calm water. The sea surrounding Mandeh village is rich with this kind of fish. *Teri* is sold in the fish market in Padang, the capital city of West Sumatra. It was not easy to

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<sup>11</sup>The word demonstrate or demo became very popular after the economic and political crisis in 1997.

<sup>12</sup>*Teri (bada)* is a very small fish known as baby anchovy. The size is around 1-3 cm. Local people do not categorize it as fish because fish is something bigger in size.

reach this market particularly before the road could be used. One had to use boat and travelled when the weather was calm. Considering that *teri* decayed easily, fishermen sold it dry.

At the beginning, finding the merchant was very difficult because they were unsure whether market would like *teri* or not. After some trying, a merchant agreed to sell *teri* with a commission system. He asked for 7 percent commission. Syarif who did not have access to the market agreed with it. Fortunately, market liked this fish. Later on many merchants agreed to sell the *teri*. The 7 percent commission was adopted as the type of cooperation between merchants and fishermen even until now. Syarif was successful. Seeing him successful, other people asked him to transfer his knowledge. He then consciously shared his knowledge because it was impossible not to do so as he had already become part of the big family of Mandeh. In the late 1970s, almost all fishermen in this village converted into *bagan*. Some who had money bought the machine for the boat by themselves. Some who had no money borrowed from the other.

The share system of *bagan* is adopted from the pulled net, 50 percent for the owner and 50 percent for the members. The share is divided after all cost paid such as for the kerosene, cigarette, coffee, etc. The membership system to work in the *bagan* is also adopted from pulled net. People do not use the term worker but member instead of it. According to the fishermen, fishing is a teamwork job. Everyone is equal but differentiate by their ownership of vessel and function. The owner is responsible for the vessel, equipment, drying the *teri*, and marketing. The member is responsible to catch the fish. There is no tight relationship between the owner of the *bagan* and the workers. Usually before fishing, the owner will look for some members. Members can work daily or monthly base on their agreement. Although some owners of the *bagan* favour some people to be their members, they try to hide this preference. They do not want to create any conflict in their social life since they believe that all villagers are family. It means that everyone should have the same opportunity to fishing together. This is quite different with many fishermen communities in Indonesia captured in some

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anthropological studies by Mubyarto, Dove, Satria, etc where the position between the owner of the vessel and the workers is tied within patronise type of relationship where the workers are more powerless than the owner and have to work only with him.

The same pattern applied with the merchant, fishermen can cooperate with one merchant as long as they like and are satisfied with their relationship. If not they will choose another merchant. It will not harm both of them because whoever the merchant is, the share taken from the fishermen is 7 percent commission.

The growth of *bagan*'s was also triggered by the introduction of machine/motor in the 1970s. To go further to the sea, save man power energy and yield more from the sea, people added a motor to their boat. A *Bagan* was no longer still but moving. The number of *bagan* sharply increased from 1 in early 70s to 200 in the 80s. In this period, *bagan* reached its golden age. The catch was so large. It changed the livelihood of people in Mandeh. One of my respondents described this situation as below:

“At the time, we were very rich. Everyone was working. Fishermen caught *teri*, very much *teri*, some men picked up fresh *teri* to the sea and brought to the village, women boiled the *teri* and children helped drying it. With *teri* we built our houses. Before, we lived in wooden houses separately, some near to the river, some near to the forest. But today as you can see, we live together along this road” (fisherman#1)

However this condition did not last long. In the late 1980s, the catch decreased sharply. According to the government's papers, it happened because of an overfishing. During 1970-1980, there were so many fishermen caught fish in the zone I (0-4 nautical mile) (Yayasan Sinergi Padang 2004). Referring to the sustainable yield (SY) theory, it is very possible that today's scarcity is the outcome of the overfishing in this period.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> SY consists of two concept, maximum economic yield (MEY) and maximum sustainability yield (MSY). It coincides with the level of harvest or efforts that maximize the sustainable return from fishing. Usually MSY will be reached before the MEY (Grafton 2006).

In contrast to the scientific explanation, all fishermen I talked to rejected the idea of overfishing. “The fish always breeds. Today there is less *bagan* but why is it still so difficult to find them?” Instead of accepting this theory, the fishermen came out with their own theories particularly by referring to their daily observation and experience. A fisherman assumed that it happens because the corals had been destroyed due to the usage of fish bombs and cyanide. The other mentioned that lack of technology as the cause because they could not compete with other fishermen who had bigger boat and stronger machines. Bad luck, fate and neglecting some traditional ceremonies to the sea were also seen as the causes of the decreasing of catch.

When I asked my informants at the MFO, I was quite surprise. Almost all rejected the idea of overfishing. In general they said “on the paper, it is said that we are overfishing. Maybe they take it from the FAO, the World Bank or the ADB report, but we who work in the field do not see that it is true” (officer#2). Only one officer I met rather agreed on it. He said that he read and heard about that overfishing. However, he was unsure about it. When I asked an officer on the mechanism to measure overfishing, he answered that there was no system so far in this district. “Don’t ask about overfishing, we are even not sure on how many fish produced by the fishermen in this district” (officer#3).

Today the amount of catch is drastically decreasing. At the same time the oil price to operate the vessel is crazily rising. In order to survive, the fishermen in Mandeh modify or change their jobs or migrate. “*Hiduik kini ma batang nan ka tajua selah*” or today’s life is wherever we can earn, is the common way people express their coping strategy. Even though many are still fishing, the type of vessel they use or the status they have in the fishing organization have changed. Some sold their *bagans* and became the members of others. Some returned to the hook; some were trying a new way to yield from the sea, such as culturing seaweed or groupers. Some go to the forest to (illegally) log the trees<sup>14</sup>,

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<sup>14</sup> This practice is illegal because the forest is considered as part of national conservation area. Yet, people understand that the forest belongs to their clan so everyone can use it.

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some start planting *gambir*<sup>15</sup>, and some start selling or downing their properties. These types of coping strategy are commonly adopted by the poor and or people without sustainable fix income resources (Sjerdal 2005, Kusnadi 2000, Zein 2006).

Considering their condition, some development programs to take them out from poverty are seen essential. Thus the government of Pesisir Selatan launched some modernization programs in fishing practices such as culturing groupers and seaweed started in 2002.

## 3.2 Government Officers: Toward a New Paradigm

One of the consequences of implementing decentralization system is reorganizing and restructuring government authority and offices. In 2001, Pesisir Selatan founded the marine and fisheries office (MFO). This office was given a mandate to achieve district's goals "the prosperous community" and at the same time building the solid organization. It meets many obstacles particularly related to the system and man powers.

### 3.2.1 The Founding of Marine and Fisheries Office

The vision of the autonomy district of Pesisir Selatan is to achieve the prosperous community. It is very urgent because 50 percent of people live below the poverty line. In 2000, Statistics Indonesia noted only 43 percent people had a job in Pesisir Selatan in the period of 1997-2000 (BPS 2000). Many of them (61%) worked in the primary sector such as agriculture and fisheries with traditional tools and limited skills (Bappeda Pesisir Selatan 2001:IV-8).

In 1998, Bappeda Pesisir Selatan in cooperation with the National Bureau for Fishery Stock Assessment and the Riau University started a research project in fisheries. Their basic aims were to find fish potentials of this district and how it could contribute to the economy. They found that Pesisir Selatan has 95.000

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<sup>15</sup>Gambir's leaves are the main ingredient for colouring the textile or paint. It is exported to Singapore and India.

ton/year fish potency where until 1998 only 19 percent had been explored (The Fishery Faculty of Riau University 1999, Bappeda Pesisir Selatan 2001: IV-15). Considering this potentiality, the need to eradicate poverty, open job opportunity, and the new opportunity offered by the decentralization system (Law 22/1999 article 18), the government of Pesisir Selatan (GPS) restructured marine and fisheries authority from a bureau under several offices into one independent agency (*dinas*). It was legalized by the District Law No.03/2001, later revised into District Law No.01/2003 ( Bappeda Pesisir Selatan 2006b: II-2).

As an independent agency, the MFO hold the decentralization authority (Law 22/1999 article 62 and Law 32/2004 article 124). This office has the authority to plan and implement development program, issue permits, give technical advices, and propose budget to both the district and the central government. It does not have to report and be approved by the province and the central government for all of its activities. In accordance to the development projects, the MFO can report their activities directly to the funding i.e. the MMAF, the ADB, etc as long as it is approved by the district secretary and acknowledged by the Regent.

### **3.2.2 Strengthening the Organization and Conducting Development Programs**

The MFO was given a mandate to manage marine and fisheries resources effectively in order to improve the usage of this sector and earn a significant amount of income for the district. In the beginning of the decentralization period (1999-2004), there was a tremendous hope that this potentially rich and unexplored sector could significantly contribute to the district's income and open job's opportunity for people. To work effectively, district government restructured and transferred officers from different offices and bureaus to work together in the MFO.

As the officers came from different offices, at the beginning it was quite difficult to agree on the type of working environment and the methods to achieve



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the goals. The officers faced many obstacles to adopt and adjust themselves to the system. Even though the officers were equipped with the organizational and working guideline under the principle of good public governance (GPG), this guideline and principle were still new and had not coherently been accepted and understood by them. With this principle, government officers should now see themselves as the public servants who give professional, honest and fair services to the public. They should be neutral from political interest and work harder to empower community (Law No.43/1999 article 3).

The MFO started operating in 2001 with seven identified limitations and obstacles. They as stated in the Action Plans for Five Major Development Area of Pesisir Selatan 2001-2010 are: (1) the terrestrial minded development practice and policy, (2) the low quality in skill and knowledge among officers and fishermen, (3) the insufficient organizational and system support, (4) the backwardness of technology, (5) the weak and limited access to investment, (6) the un-integrated planning among district's offices, and (7) the weak control and law enforcement for marine and fisheries sector (Bappeda 2001:IV-1).

In order to achieve effective and productive outcomes, the MFO designed an action plan consisted of four development programs which would be conducted in four areas: Carocok Tarusan (where Mandeh lies), Carocok Painan, Muaro Surantih, and Air Haji. They are: (Bappeda 2001: 37-73)

1. Program to increase the production of marine and fisheries sector.
2. Program to increase productivity by developing professional fisheries infrastructure such as port, cold storage, ice factory, etc.
3. Program to increase productivity and empower fishermen.
4. The target to achieve these goals was divided into two phases, the first in 2001-2005 and the second 2006-2010. Basically the first phase would be focused on assessing resources and planning and the second would be focused on implementation.

In accordance to the financing of the development program, decentralization system gives opportunity for district government to directly propose development budget to central government and other possible sources. It is different with the previous period because at that time all proposals should be submitted and approved by the province government before could be submitted to the central government. In relation to the type of budget, the central government is now giving a block grant so that district government can use and manage it base on its needs and target (Bappeda 2001:27).

Even though this new approach and system looked simpler and flexible, it was quite difficult to adapt and implement it due to the officers' abilities and skills at the district level. Some officers I met expressed their feeling such as: "it is confusing and stressful" (officer#4) or "we have no experience on this before" (officer#4) or "we are not certain how to do it" (officer#3) or "this new system is just a new source of problem for us" (officer#5).

Moreover the situation in the MMAF at the central level somehow contributed to complicate the situation at the district level. This department had been steadily criticized and investigated upon its programs and budget. It was predicted that only 30 percent of the program worked well (Nugroho,T 2003). The ministers of this department Fredy Numberi (2000-2001) and Rokhmin Dahuri (2001-2004) had been investigated and sentenced 7 years of jail for corruption though until today the judicial process has not finished<sup>16</sup> (Kominfo 27 July 2007). Consequentially, officers at the MMAF and the MFO had always been in the unsecured situation because there was a strong pressure to reform and close this office (Nugroho,T 2003).

In 2004, Indonesia started direct political election.<sup>17</sup> It was the people who chose the member of parliaments and the Regent not the political parties as

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<sup>16</sup>Their case is not merely seen as the corruption or criminal actions but political case, therefore the court process takes very long time and still not finished until today.

<sup>17</sup>Direct election started in 2004, the second general election in after decentralization. In 1999, the major was chosen by the parliament's members that were chosen by the parties.

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before. In relation to this system, Law 32/2004 article 59 point 5 states that district's development programs should refer to the vision and mission of the elected regent<sup>18</sup>. The elected Regent (2005-2010) focuses his program on law enforcement, restructuring government offices and officers, and endorses economic development (Bappeda Pesisir Selatan 2006a: III.1-10). In order to achieve his vision, some adjustments and revisions in development plan should be taken. Understanding the financial condition of Pesisir Selatan where it relies so much on the support from the central government (97%), consequently the development programs should be coherence with the programs at central level. "...then it must be realized that the change of planned programs will frequently occur especially for the programs supported by central or provincial government" (officer#5).

This change, again, created unsecured working environment. In addition, since the power to appoint the head of district's offices is in the Regent's hand, the prejudice and jealousy occurred among officers. Some officers moan that the placement is based on preferences and (pay off) political interest not the experience and professionalism. To some extent, this situation restricts the implementation of development program. It creates internal conflict where many heads of offices try to gain sympathy and look better in front of the Regent. In order to do that, quite often they do not talk or coordinate their programs with the other offices. This condition is sometime used to justify the failure of a development program.

There is also a transformation with regard to officers-community relationship. It requires a big transformation of the identity and paradigm of the officers. Historically since the Dutch colonization period to the centralistic form of governance, the officers were not seen as the one who gave support and services to community but the one who managed and gave aid to community. They should be respected and placed at the higher status in community. Usually,

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<sup>18</sup>Regent is the leader of district. It is similar with Major.

a development project was often used as a mean to achieve and maintain this status.

The officers face some challenges to change their identity and principles in current (decentralization) development practices. It could be notoriously seen when they interacted with people, for example when introducing a revolving type of development project. The officers often choose the word *bantuan* which means aid rather than *hutang* or credit. Consequently, people use this as a justification not to pay the credit.

Those are several problems concerning the development interventions in the decentralization period. I will explore more within two cases study present in the following chapters.

### 3.3 End Note

From the overview above, I try to generally introduce who the actors taken into consideration within this study. This background information will be used to give a sense for actors' action in the two cases I will present later. Since I am using the actor oriented approach as my analytical approach, I also try to describe that human is an active actor that always adapting to many aspects such as knowledge, technology, needs, politics, kinship, social network, etc.

A change certainly needs a process and intervention. When perceiving a new thing or idea, humans rationalize and negotiate it with his and others' concerns before choosing and adopting the most advantageous one. Often individual actor gathers with some others who have same interests to cope with the new thing.

## 4. Culturing the Groupers: A Better Future?

This chapter reveals the development of government interventions to modernizing fishing practices by means of culturing the groupers. Intervention as the interface arena for the contesting interest toward the advantages of different actors will be described. Their decision making processes and actions will be highlighted in this chapter. Further, how it shapes and transforms the planned development intervention into the other practices and outcomes will also be elaborated.

### 4.1 Project Background

Specifically, the major purpose of culturing the groupers, later will be written as the groupers project, is to find a more profitable, sustainable and environmentally friendly means of livelihood for fishermen in order to increase their living condition and eradicate poverty. It is a small part of a big project, namely Marine Coastal Resource Management Project (MCRMP) funded with US\$ 50 million loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Generally, MCRMP aims at promoting sustainable management of natural resources for environment and socio-economic development under a decentralized government (ADB 2007).

There are four objectives of this project: (1) strengthen local capacity to plan and manage a sustainable marine and coastal resource, (2) improve availability of and access to spatial data and related information, (3) adapt and enforce natural resource management laws at the local level, and (4) improve social economic and environmental conditions in selected coastal areas (ADB 2007). The first three objectives are aimed to be implemented at the institutional/government level, while the last one is aimed at the community level.

In order to achieve the last objective, central government, represented by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), gives the authority to the local governments, represented by Bappeda (planner) and MFO (co-planner and the executing agency) to assess their potential resources, choose the type of project they would conduct and choose the implementing villages (Maarif, et.al 2006). In all over Indonesia, MCRMP has been conducted in 42 districts in 15 provinces. It was launched in 2002 and scheduled to be finished in 2009.

Although most of the project is financed by the ADB loan, district government is required to contribute a small amount of money to financing the project. It is usually taken from the annual District Income and Expense Budget (APBD). The amount varies according to the district's ability. The budget sharing practice is a new form of financing development projects promoted by the central government and the donor agencies in order to implement a more democratic and sustainable development programs. It is also one of the concrete forms to implement the mandate of decentralization that gives more authority, entitlement, and responsibility to the local government toward development projects (Sumutprov 2008).

In Pesisir Selatan, the implementation of MCRMP was preceded with the Marine Coastal Management Area (MCMA) project financed by the other scheme of loan from the ADB in 2001. The MCMA was aimed to assess and select potential areas in marine and fisheries sector in some coastal districts. The main goal was to assist the local government to develop this sector so that it can be the significant source of the district's (future) revenue. On 20<sup>th</sup> November 2001, Pesisir Selatan declared the MCMA through the Regent Decree No.620/i83/IPT-PS/2001. Mandeh resort area was forwarded. Mandeh village, the focus area in this study, is located within this area.

The MCRM project officially began in 2002 and conducted in some villages recommended by the MCMA research. In order to precisely acknowledge the potentiality of the villages, the MFO conducted a more detail

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need assessment research by using an Adaptive Research Extension (ARE) approach. ARE is commonly used in agriculture sector. It refers to research that validate, modify, or calibrate a new technology in order to specific soil, climate, socioeconomic, and environmental characteristic of a particular area (Departemen Pertanian 2003).

Based on the results of ARE research, the district government came out with the idea of culturing groupers, seaweed and mangrove crab. However, there was only one type of project that could be implemented in 2003 due to the budget constraints. District government then decided to culturing the groupers, particularly for some major reasons below: higher price, more adaptive to environmental change, and more preferred by the international market particularly in Singapore and China as compared to seaweed and crab. It was expected that it could be the entry point to penetrate the international markets in fisheries in order to give more income and prestige to the district. In addition, groupers' project had been tried by some other MFOs and was quite success. It was easier and practical to conduct something that has been tried before than something completely new (Yosmeri: interview 01.07.07).

The groupers' project consists of the following activities: need assessment research, socialization, training, and technological transfer. Following the need assessment research, which is discussed earlier, socialization meetings are aimed at giving in depth explanation about the project, its procedures, its utility and its future prospect. Training sessions are aimed at giving the practical way to take care of the fish. Those are held in the village and in the floating net cage (*keramba jaring apung*- later will be written as *keramba*). For the first three months, the MFO officers lead and guide these activities. After three months, the officers hand in the project to the group. Officers only supervise the progress. In accordance to the budget, the MCRM project will finance activities mentioned above. The MCRM also support the budget to feed the fish for the first three months. After that, the group is expected to be independent.

This project was piloted in three coastal villages: Mandeh, Sungai Pinang and Sungai Bungin. It was started in 2003 and would end in 2009. Today (as of April 2008), only one project that is still running i.e. the Mandeh village project.

In relation to decentralization, even though this project was endorsed by the idea to facilitate the decentralization of governance and aimed at empowering district government by finding a new source of income, this study found that this idea has vanished or distorted before reaching the field officers and the group of fishermen. I barely found any of the MFO officers or fishermen that connected this project with the decentralization idea. It happened primarily because there are different knowledge (understanding, definition and perception) about decentralization among central government, local government, and community. However, I also found that actually the idea and spirit of decentralization permeated the groupers project. I will explore more about these in the following sections.

## 4.2 Brief Information about the Groupers

Groupers are fish of any of a number of genera in the subfamily Ephinelhelinae of the family Serranidae. There are many species of fish that are categorized into groupers. At my research site, people call these fish *kerapu*. In the beginning, the MCRM project cultured *kerapu macan* (latin: *Epinephelus suillus*). Today, besides *kerapu macan*, the fisherman continuing the project also tries to culture *kerapu bebek* and *kerapu tikus*.

According to the habitat, groupers are categorized as coral fish. Although they naturally live along the coast with coral reef, these fish may also be cultured in the floating net cages in the sea. According to some studies on Indonesian fisheries, groupers are generally found in the west coast of Sumatra Island. In West Sumatra, they can be found in two districts: Pesisir Selatan and Mentawai (WS Prop Government 2000).



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Groupers live for about one to two years, depending on the species. In their life cycle, young groupers live in the coral seashore with the depth of 0.5-3 meters. The adults move to deeper water between 7-40 meters. Groupers often hide in the coral reef during the day, while in the night, they actively search for food. The life of this species depends largely on the environmental condition. It can live well in particular clearness, temperature, depth, water speed, PH, oxygen, etc.

Groupers are carnivorous. Young groupers eat larva of molusca while the adults eat other fish, crustace and chepalopod. As carnivorous, groupers tend to catch the active moving preys in the water column. The cultured groupers are usually feed in the morning. The amount of food generally ranges from 3-5 percent of their body mass weight.

Groupers are one of the maritime resources that have high economic value and favoured by the international fisheries market. The demand gradually increases every year. Even though the MMAF does not have the exact data on the demand, the fact in the field notoriously shows that all groupers production is fully absorbed by the market. Generally, groupers production from West Sumatra is exported to Singapore and Hong Kong.

The groupers production rate in West Sumatra is relatively small but gradually increase. It was less than 1 percent before 1994. During 1995-1998, it slightly rose to 5 percent of the total general fish production. The low rate of groupers production has much relation to the traditional capturing method of producing them. In order to increase the production, more plan and strategic efforts to meet the demand and supply are needed. Culturing the groupers is seen as the prospective and sustainable solutions. It also contributes to more job opportunities, increase people's prosperity and manage natural coral resources. (West Sumatra Provincial Government: Regional Investment Coordinating Board 2000)

### 4.3 Introducing the Project

This project was introduced to the community in early 2003. There was a slightly different pattern in the introduction of the groupers project to the community compared to the previous projects in the New Order period as said by Ir. Mustaf, the chief of the MCRM project in Pesisir Selatan:

Since autonomy, there are no unattached aids and projects. In the New Order period, all projects and aids were unattached or freely given. Now they are attached such as credit. Our aim is to develop responsibility. In addition it was also aimed so that other people would get benefit from it (Ir. Mustaf: Interview 02.07.07)

In the form of recipient, current development program promotes cooperation among community members and between community and government. Therefore, development project is given within the group scheme. In the previous period, it was individual who usually received the development aids/programs. According to Ir. Mustaf, this change was aimed to give more responsibility to community, empower them, help them to become independent, and simplify government approach to community.

In the beginning, the groupers project was informed and socialized in the sub-district office. Even though it seems to be following the centralistic pattern of New Order development intervention where meetings took place at the sub-district office and the participants were invited using government hierarchical line,<sup>19</sup> this meeting was heavily influenced by the spirit of decentralization and its new principles of a good public governance (GPG) system. Participants of this meeting consisted of the village representatives such as the village leader, clan leaders (*ninik mamak*), women leader (*bundo kanduang*), and some other representatives. Usually in Indonesian development projects, they are called as village stakeholders and always invited in the socialization part of development intervention.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> From the MFO to sub-district down to *nagari* office and end in the village. Using this line is considered as the quick and practical way to gathering people.

<sup>20</sup> It is very common that when conducting a development intervention, government gathers people to inform them about the project (socialization meetings).

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When implementing GPG in the groupers' project, the MFO was required to be more transparent, open and empowering. Therefore in the first meeting of this project, the officers mentioned the importance of the community to be the subject of development project despite merely the object. They invited the community to take an active role in the project by internally discussing and deciding who would be involved in the project.

In addition to the principles of the good public governance system, the MFO officers had several other reasons to empower community. They had realized that de-jure and de-facto community became more powerful and critical since the decentralization period. They became more active and critical toward development projects. "It is better to ask them to organize themselves so that there will be no complaint for us in the future", (officer #6). Moreover, giving responsibility to the community was expected to give the entitlement of the project so that project would likely to be more successful.

Although the officers gave authority to the community to organize themselves, they had not fully believed on community's organization skill. Their previous experience in development interventions had shown that it was very difficult for the community to cooperate and work together as a group. However, considering the new type of development intervention that favoured group, they tried to advise participants by giving a strict guide on how to build the group i.e. the group should include ten people, they should be fishermen, they should be poor, etc.

When introducing the project, the MFO officers stressed their information on the project origin. They stated many times that the project was financed by a loan from the ADB within the scheme of revolving fund. A revolving fund project means that if the first project is a success, the second group can join the first group and replicate the project. The officers have learnt from their previous experiences in modernizing fisheries programs such as motorization project that the revolving fund project was very likely to be defaulted. Therefore they tried to

convince people on the urgency to rotate the project to the others. In order to convince themselves, officers repeatedly asked the participants for community's commitment to hold and obey the scheme of revolving fund.

Zainal, the village leader memorized that the officers stressed the point that this project was financed by 'Jakarta',<sup>21</sup> under the scheme of loan.

They mention many times that it is financed by a loan from Jakarta and we have to pay it back when we produce something. Maybe they are worry that this project will end up like the previous projects where everything was defaulted. (Zainal: interview 25.11.07)

One of the officers worked for MCRMP in Pesisir Selatan confirmed Zainal's assumption. He said that it was important to stress the information about the source of the project so that this project could run well and could be rotated to the other groups. According to him citing the central government was attempted to give power on the seriousness of the project. From their experience, the officers learnt that fishermen community would respect more and bashful (*seگان*) to a power from outside their community. "If it is a local project, they will think as if it is their family project and no need to be responsible" (officer #3). I discussed this perception with my informants and many of them agreed on this statement.

Consequently, despite of promoting decentralization, repeating and bringing the idea that this project was financed by the central government through the ADB loan left intake and gradually erased the background idea of decentralization. Moreover, the existence of different perception and understanding of decentralization among community's members and officers faded the original 'decentralization' spirit of this program.

Many people in West Sumatra defined decentralization or district autonomy as back to nagari governance system. It is understood as returning

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<sup>21</sup> Jakarta is the capital city of Indonesia. Local people and local government officers usually say Jakarta to mention central government, aid agencies, or even national companies.

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local culture and *adat*<sup>22</sup>, natural resources<sup>23</sup>, region and governance to community through nagari (Pador 2002:22).

This definition grew from the widespread ideas and discourses among people about decentralization which later being institutionalized by the Central Government through the Law No.22/1999 on local government. Province and districts government were given authority to restructure their government hierarchical line. Government of West Sumatra took this opportunity and conducted the reform of villages. By Province Law No.9/2000, the government of West Sumatra transformed 3000 villages into 543 nagari. It is called as returning to nagari. This is what many West Sumatra people understood about decentralization. Decentralization rhymes with nagari government system equipped with its traditional culture/*adat* and resources.

In general, the same condition applied in my research site. Many people defined decentralization or district autonomy as “returning to nagari and tribal values”, “direct election”, and/or “the opportunity and need to earn something from their natural resources and being independent in developing and financing the development in their district”. Consequently if the resource or finance of the project does not come from nagari or the district government, people do not consider it as part of decentralization.

It was not only common people who perceived and understood decentralization as returning to nagari. Many government officers also understood it in the same way. In relation to the groupers project, the MCRMP leader mentioned that: “there is no correlation between this project and decentralization because it is financed by a loan from the ADB and some by the APBD (District Budget)” (Mustaf: interview 02.07.07). Further, one of the MFO administrative officers said that:

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<sup>22</sup> Adat is the traditional tribal governance system.

<sup>23</sup> In the New Order period, government in the name of development took over the ownership of nature and its potencies from community.

Decentralization is returning to nagari, it means that nagari under district government will plan and work on the project, but we got the plan from the central government. Even though we can modify it with our need, for me it is not a practice of decentralization. (officer#7).

In accordance to these perceptions, the chief of Nagari Empowerment Office agreed that there have been different understanding of decentralization. According to him:

Decentralization is related to the re-structuring government hierarchical line. Basically there is no difference between village and nagari except the number of people and geographical authority. I think there has been a complete fallacy and misunderstanding about decentralization. People and many officers think that decentralization is rejuvenating the old culture practices and bringing back the *mamak* and *adat* into the social system. In relation to development, they think that decentralization is when everything comes from the district, the source, finance, etc. (Nazrizal: interview 10.07.07)

Referring to these opinions, it is unlikely that culturing the groupers project is seen as related to decentralization.

#### **4.3.1 Organizing Resources and Establishing a Group**

A village meeting was held in the mosque soon after the village representatives returned back home. A meeting takes place in the mosque means that the topic is important and related to the life of community. As he learnt from previous experiences on development interventions in this village, the village leader realized that introducing groupers project would be challenging. He was fully aware that some people would be very critical upon him and upon the development project. Instead of only inviting the fishermen, he decided to invite all the community members. Invitation was spread from person to person. It was also announced through the mosque's loud speaker.

The village leader informed community that government through the MFO planned a development project to help them came out of the poverty. He also told that the government had a good will to provide fishermen with a new way of utilizing the sea in order to create a new and sustainable livelihood particularly for the poorest among them. Regarding the budget, he explained that the project was limitedly financed by the loan under the scheme of revolving fund (*dana*

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*bergulir*). In the first three months, the group would be given training conducted for several hours everyday. Considering that the participants would not be able to work, the government would compensate them “*uang lelah*” IDR 10.000 or US\$ 1 daily. The amount was equal to the district’s basic income in 2003 that was IDR 300.000 monthly or IDR 10.000 daily. Since the groupers would need 8 to 12 months before could be harvested, the village leader reminded the community to think twice before appointing themselves or others to participate in the project.

In order to avoid a perception that he had a personal interest toward the project, the village leader chose to use neutral tone and positioned himself as the messenger of the government. Giving the opportunity to the community to discuss and decide who would be the members of groupers project was seen as a solution to pacify the situation. “It will be safe for me unless they will complain me why A gets it but B does not. Why it is like it and why not,” (Zainal: interview 27.11.07)

Actually, the situation in the village was not as calm and peaceful as it was seen. When I was in the village, I could smell and feel the tense of conflict among some community members. Some people told me that this condition was the result of the development interventions and aids that suddenly pour upon them. One of my informants said:

You know, since there were so many projects and natural disaster aids, this village broke into some latent and open conflicts. People do not trust the village leader. They said that he always decided everything himself and chose his close relations and network to be part of the projects and aids. The circumstance here is so hot, too much prejudice, blaming, suspecting and complaining in this village. (Fisherman#3)

This conflicted situation also occurred in the introduction of this project. Some people who had been critical said that the socialization meeting was unfair and useless. One said: “the meeting had been set up by the village leader and his cronies. People who would get the opportunity to participate had been chosen or at least had been known,” (fisherman#5). The other said that often, people who were considered as vocal were un-invited to the meeting. “If we were invited, it was only for a formality. We were not expected to be there”, (villager#6). To

confirm this negative feeling, I tried to elaborate general situation in the village by talking to some random people. Many of them were aware and confirmed that this perception indeed exist in the village.

Regarding the members of the group, it was quite difficult to select ten people to become the member of the first group while 80 percent of the villagers work as fishermen. When the village leader told that the government wanted the poorer among them to be prioritized, many people who attended the meeting refused this idea because their economic condition was relatively the same. “All of us are poor here”. This objection came out because people were traumatic with the scheme of social safety net programs after the crisis in the 1997<sup>24</sup>.

Having considered this experience, government's and community's<sup>25</sup> needs, and some other considerations, the community decided to make some criteria for the members of the groupers group. They should be fishermen with capacity to learn the skill which would be taught by the government. They should be hard workers, responsible and serious because the success of the first project would be followed by the next projects. They should also have an ability to continue the project without budget support from the government after the first three months. Community wanted to choose the best people among them because they wanted the first project to be success in order to get an opportunity for the next projects and regain trust from the government. They were conscious that the government felt unsecured about the sustainability of the project due to previous experiences on the revolving projects where all were defaulted and never revolved.

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<sup>24</sup> As written in the chapter 2, after Indonesia faced the monetary crisis, the government conducted many programs (as suggested by the IMF and the World Bank) to help people coping with the crisis. This program was entitled as social safety net program consisted of four activities: sale for subsidize rice (1998-now), employment creation (1999-2000), scholarship and block grant for schools (1999-2003), and subsidized health (1999-2002). (Sumarto, et.al. 2000).

These were aimed at the poorest of the poor and later created high tension of jealousy and conflict in the village. In Mandeh village people coped by making their own revolving scheme, if A got the aid this month then B would get it next month. According to the community, everyone should receive the same treatment from the government.

<sup>25</sup> Basically community here refers to people who attended the meeting. However they did not left the aspirations of people who were absent because this meeting also took the aspirations of absent people into their considerations.



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Using these categorizations, the community selected some people. Some agreed and pledged their commitment to take part in the project. Some refused because they were afraid that this project would fail like some had done before. By the end of the meeting, ten people were selected. Nevertheless there were some people who wanted to join the project without being chosen for some reasons such as not a fisherman, absent in the meeting, etc. Some of them came to the village leader in person and persuaded him to use his power to put their name in the list.

It is dilemmatic because they usually come and bring the issue of my (family) relationship with them. If I don't help them I will get some social consequences, at the minimum they will murmur upon me. To reduce potential harm upon me, I usually explain that the government has made some requirements for the project. Often, I have to promise them that I will try to put them on the list and see if there is an opportunity for them to be in the project. (Zainal: interview 30.11.07)

Besides approaching the village leader and officers in a positive way, some people also did some negative approaches. They spread negative opinions and thoughts about the project and people that involved in the project such as “the village leader was being partisan”, “the member of the group were the desperate people who did not have a job”, “they were the poorest and the hopeless”, “they were only used by the government to take care of its fish”, etc.

When I discussed these opinions with my informants, they admitted that the jealousy was on the air. One of my informants assumed that some people who were not on the project were jealous because they received *uang lelah*. *Uang lelah* in Bahasa (Indonesian language) is understood as the payment after working in temporary/informal type of job. One of my informants memorized what those people said about them (the member of the group):

They were very lucky. They did not have to work physically hard everyday, just attend the meetings and followed the training. They got food in the training and they got money when they went home. (Fisherman#6)

Some criticisms were also intended toward the officers particularly by relating the project with the corruption practices. I think it is related to the discourse on the urgency of the law enforcement at every level in Indonesia in the

decentralization period. Since the MMAF was one of the departments that got special attention in the corruption cases, people who were unsatisfied with the groupers project found their way to criticise this project.

The other reason was that they were unsure that this project would revolve as planned. Previous experience showed that the development project could only benefit the first group.

I did not believe at all that this project would revolve. They said that after the first group success, the second could start. So far, none of the revolving fund projects worked well. The motorization project was defaulted. The credit for small shops was also defaulted. No one paid the credit, so we who were in the waiting list would never get anything. (Fisherman#5)

When I tried to explore why the revolving fund project failed, my main informants both from the officers group and the fishermen's group gave me several similar reasons. According to them it happened because the community refused to pay back the credit. "They do not want to pay" was the phrase to explain it. However when this statement was explored further, there was a slightly differentiation in the fishermen's opinion and the officers'.

According to the fishermen's group, there were several reasons why people refused to pay the credit. First, everything from the government was perceived and understood as aid. Second, they did not have money to pay. Third, they had money but they did not want to do it because the other did not pay. Fourth, the government was never serious in asking for the payment. And lastly they had never seen the consequences of not paying. Using their social network, fishermen in Mandeh knew that it was not only them who did not pay the credit.

In one discussion with Dr. Alfian from Bung Hatta University, he confirmed this situation.

The problem is that there are too many projects within the revolving scheme. Consequently, people think that the projects are aid as they used to have. That is why the credit payment was very low unless default. (Zein: Interview 21.06.07)

Point one to three was agreed by both groups. Yet some officers were reluctantly admitted point number four and five. They said that they had tried but

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were not successful, particularly because it was the nature of the fishermen to refuse paying the debt and being responsible. “They are fishermen. They always make excuse for everything. They cannot be trusted,” (officer#6).

When I discussed this opinion with the chief of the MCRM project, he admitted that this perception did exist among officers. But he did not agree with the behaviour to blame the fishermen because according to him, “it is the impact of the New Order pattern in development. In Soeharto’s period all development projects were form in aid for people. People think that development is for free” (Mustaf: interview 08.01.08)

Even though, the project members and the officers heard some negative voices toward the project they kept on continuing the training sessions. Ignoring what people said was seen as the best solution. “That’s the way living in the village, people know everything we do and have. They talk and criticize us. If we think about it we will be crazy”, (Mawardi: interview 25.11.07).

Ten fishermen were chosen. One withdrew from the project and was replaced by an impermanent merchant. They named the group as Jala Sela. Once the group was established, the members were required to start working immediately. They had to discuss and decide the organizational structure and the acting personnel. Under more pessimistic rather than excited feeling, they elected the chairman, secretary and treasurer. This pessimistic feeling has a tight relationship with community’s previous experience on development projects as well with the culture of Minang people. One of my informants said:

As long as we are still Minang People, we can not be united within a group. Chairman, secretary, etc. will not have any authority to govern. *Akh* you know our philosophy of live, you can be stupid only for 2-3 days after that everyone think that they are clever. We, Minang people, talk big, plan great, criticizing heavily on the others, but run when we have to take an action. We cannot be trusted. (Fisherman#7)

However, as it was a necessary condition for the project to have an appropriate type of organization, the members of the group had no choice but working together. The members of the group realized that government would

only support them for the first three months and they would have to continue it for the next nine months. Working in group was then very essential.

In order to pace and control the project's operation, the MFO assigned some officers to live in the village. The MFO built a project office in the village.<sup>26</sup> When I stayed in the village, this office was never been used. It was in a bad condition, the window glasses were broken, dusty and dirty. People said that since the training session finished and the MFO officers left the village, this office was rarely used.

## 4.4 Obstacles and Coping Strategy

### 4.4.1 Moving From the Village to the Sea

The transfer of knowledge and technology will not be effective without practicing. To practice, government gave two floating net cages (*keramba*) as well 1000 groupers' seed for the group. The *Kerambas* were located in the Mandeh's water. It needed for about ten minutes to reach it by boat from the village. To manage *keramba*, the group divided themselves into two sub groups consisted of 5 people.

*Keramba* is a floating pool consists of six or more cages. Each cage is made of a net measured as 3x3x3 meters. When it is joined with the other net cages in order to form a floating raft in the shore, each measured 4x3x3 meters. Two cages are not used as the fish pool. One is closed and used as the hut for the fishermen. The other is used as the pool to bath the fish. Groupers produce mucus all over their body. They produce more when they live in a small swimming area such as in *keramba*. Too much mucus will disturb their respiration and eating habit. Therefore, fishermen have to bath them at least once in a week.

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<sup>26</sup> It is very common in Indonesian development programs to start the programs by building the physical infrastructure. During the new order period, development has a tight correlation with construction. The term development (*pembangunan*) is understood as awakening (*membangun*) and construction (also *membangun*). The practice of construction has been criticized as un-efficient and the means of corruption. (Heryanto 1998, Li 1999:200)

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The group member received the practice sessions in the *kerambas*. Usually they went in the morning and returned home in the evening. In order to take care of the fish during the night, the group made a rolling schedule. One member had to stay in each *keramba* during the night. Living in *keramba* was different from living in the village. There was only one small hut used for multi purposes such as sleeping and cooking. People who lived in *keramba* had to adapt with the unpredictable weather in the sea as well the dark and lonely environment. In order to cope with this situation, some members had a thought about bringing their family to accompany them in *keramba* on their schedule. The officers agreed on that idea because it was seen positive and supportive for the project.

After following the training session and knowing more deeply on what kind of job they would have in culturing the groupers, some decided to quit from the group. They had several personal reasons but in general their main concern was insecurity. They were uncertain whether this project would success or not. They were afraid of the need to provide food for the fish after the third month. “I have seen, this fish eat a lot. It was difficult to feed ourselves, how could we think about spending our money to feed the fish?” (fisherman#8).

However the idea of some to quit and break the group was strongly objected by some other. They reminded the others with their first commitment to make this project successful, regain trust from government and not to disappoint them anymore. This idea and tension could be blocked inside the group until the end of the training. After that and after the officers were detached from the village, this internal conflict broke into the air.

In an effort to sustain the project and find the solution, the group members reorganized how they would take care and feed the fish. It was decided that there would be a rolling schedule. Mr. A would work today followed by Mr. B and so on. Regarding the food, the group decided that they should do their best to provide the food i.e. by collecting money, buy it from other fishermen or personally fish it.

This agreement and this peaceful situation did not work long. Some conflicts such as scheduling and feeding frequently occurred. There were several factors why people refused to do their duty taking care of the fish. Economic concerns are maybe the most important. If they go and take care of the fish, they would not have time to work in a day. It means no food today for the family. Another concern is related to the social life. It was difficult for them staying in the sea because they felt bored and lonely. Mandeh people as Minang people in general love to live communally, gathering and mingling with people.

After some internal discussions (sometime the village leader attended the meeting and acted as the moderator), the group found that their main problem was related to the fish food. As carnivorous fish, the bigger the groupers, their need for food (fish) is increasing. It means that the group would have to provide more fish in the upcoming 7 months. Feeling unable to do so, the group decided to ask for the MFO's help.

Unfortunately, the MFO did not plan this kind of budget. They were a bit afraid to modify the plan or take the money from the other post due to a very strict control in the government officers regarding the corruption issue. Even so, they realized that the success of the project depended on the success of the group. This condition complicated with the similar situation in two other groupers projects (Sungai Bungin and Sungai Pinang) stressed them. The officers were in the complicated situation. They were thinking that:

- If the project failed, it would decrease their credibility in front of local government and central government.
- There is a possibility that the next budget would be either reduced or suspended.
- The budget for the project was taken from loan. Some felt that it was morally wrong to give more burdens to the country with the failure project.

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Therefore, the officers went to the village and talked to the group. They tried to convince them to be patient and did their best to continue working meanwhile the officers would discuss the most advantageous solution for both of them. The MFO officers then contacted the MMAF in Jakarta. It took long time before they got answer from Jakarta because –as far as my informant knew- there was a problem with the consultants and the administrative of the MCRM project at the central level. Consequently, it took long time before the officers returned to the fishermen.

Meanwhile, it seems that patience is not a characteristic of the fishermen. Some members convinced the others to sell the fish in the local market despite of waiting until the harvest. This idea was triggered by the action taken by the groups in the other pilot villages. Selling the fish was seen as the best way so that the members did not have to find the food for the fish, did not have to stay in the sea to take care of the fish, and they would earn something. “Four of my sub-group wanted to sell the fish, it was only me who refused it”, (Mawardi: interview 25.07.07).

Mawardi, a member of the sub group 1, and Kasman, a member of sub group 2, argued that selling the fish in the local market was insane because the price was so low. To convince the others, they forwarded the experience of Sungai Pinang’s group when selling the fish.

They did not get anything. (Local) market could only buy it for IDR 5.000-10.000 per fish. Meanwhile if we wait, we will earn more. Government had promised us to export it abroad with better price IDR 100.000/kg (Kasman: interview 29.11.07)

Considering this argument, the group cancelled the intention to sell the fish. They decided that two of the group members, one from each *keramba*, would take care of the fish. It was Mawardi and Kasman that had been appointed to continue the project. Mawardi and Kasman are indeed originally from this village but they had been living and working in some other places. Both had just returned home and started a new life in the village. Both did not have a permanent job at that time. Mawardi was occasionally working as a merchant and

Kasman was working randomly. Both also did not have *bagan* to capture the fish. Basically taking care of the fish was the best thing they could in order to live in the village.

However, assigning Mawardi and Kasman to continue the project did not mean giving all the fish to them. The other members felt that they had the ownership of the fish since the government gave them to the group. Therefore the group decided the profit sharing mechanism after harvesting the fish. It was agreed that 50 percent for Mawardi and Kasman (the worker) and 50 percent for the group members (the owner) after taking out all the expenses such as food, maintenance, etc. As the owner, members were still required to take part in providing the fish food. This mechanism was adopted from their common practice in fishing.

Agreed on the condition, Mawardi and Kasman then moved and started living in the *keramba*. Living in the *keramba* was very challenging. Regarding the fish food, not many of the other members helped them. Mawardi and Kasman were disappointed and called for a group meeting. This meeting decided to officially cancel the condition and give the fish to Mawardi and Kasman. Yet, considering what they have been through, they agreed that other member should get some share “sasamba” after the harvest.

After a while, Kasman decided to find another job. He moved back to the village and seldom came to the *keramba*. Mawardi who lived in *the keramba* felt sorry for Kasman’s fish. He tried to take care of those fish. After discussing with his wife, he proposed to buy Kasman’s fish. In the 4<sup>th</sup> month, Mawardi officially owned all fish.

Even though Mawardi was supervised by the MFO officer, the growth of the fish was not really good. In the 7<sup>th</sup> month, most of the fish died. Mawardi and Kasman accompanied by the village leader, in the name of the group, officially reported the situation to the officers. The MFO suspected some causes for this failure such as: (1) the group was not well trained, (2) the food given for the fish



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were not good and not sufficient, (3) lack of good maintenance, and (4) environmental change (Yosmeri: 01.07.07).

The MFO then called for a meeting. They asked the group members whether they would like to continue the project or not. At the beginning most of the members refused the idea because they did not see the advantages of this project. Realizing un-advantageous situation, the officers tried to push and convince the group to continue. Later the group decided that it would take the second chance to culture the groupers.

After this meeting, the MFO officers reported the situation to the MMAF in Jakarta. However they covered the information about the internal conflict within the group. On their report, the MFO only mentioned that the group was not well trained. In order to increase the group's skill, the MFO sent Mawardi and Kasman to a training in culturing the groupers in Lampung.

Later on the MFO asked for the permission and finance for the next batch. Approved by the MMAF Jakarta, the MFO distributed 1000 new groupers seed. These seed were given in the name of the group but in fact it was practically managed by Mawardi. Both officers and fishermen were aware of the real condition but that was the most advantageous decision for them. It was better to have someone willing to continue the project than no one. In addition to the seed, the MFO also gave 4 other *kerambas*. These *kerambas* were transferred from the two villages that had already failed the project. Therefore in 2004, there were 6 *kerambas* in Mandeh.

#### **4.4.2 Continuing the Project: A Story of Mawardi**

Mawardi (50 years) father of five children had just returned home from his migration place (*rantau*) when the groupers project was introduced.<sup>27</sup> He used to live in many places before married. After married to a Mandeh's woman, he started a living in Air Bangis, Pasaman the other district in West Sumatra.

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<sup>27</sup> Migration is one of the essential values in Minang society. The young are encouraged to migrate. Their basic philosophy is the young men should migrate because they are not yet essential in the village)

Actually Pasaman is not a coastal district but it is bordered with the North Sumatra's fishing harbour in Sibolga. There, he worked as the crew in the modern fishing boat.<sup>28</sup> He lived with many people from different origins and cultural background.

Mawardi decided to return to Mandeh due to his wife's health condition. She had been sick for quite sometime after the family faced some harsh situations. His first son died in the school camp accident. One year later, his second son got the motorcycle accident. The family thought that returned to their big family in Mandeh was the best solution. Being with extended family was expected to neutralize pain and sorrow they had faced.

Mawardi was bankrupt when he returned home. He had to start his life from zero. In the village, Mawardi had neither productive boat nor rice field. He wanted to buy one *bagan* as his mean of livelihood but he did not have enough money. Working in *bagan* as a plain member was not a good choice because he was getting old and weak for a physical fishing job<sup>29</sup>. Cultivating the land was not a good choice either. His wife's rice field<sup>30</sup> was too small and arid to be cultivated. Therefore, he started his new life as a small merchant. He sold whatever he found or he could to fulfil his family needs day by day.

After hearing about the groupers project, he discussed with his family whether they should try it or not. All family members agreed to try it. "Whatever it is, we are going to do our best, that is our future," (Mawardi's wife: interview 25.11.07). Unfortunately, he was not chosen in the first place because he was not a fisherman. His name did not appear when the community discussed who should be given opportunity for the project. Understanding that it was difficult to openly express his interest about the project in the mosque meeting, Mawardi

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<sup>28</sup> He and many villagers at Mandeh defined modern fishing boat as a vessel that could go to the zone 2 and 3 (4-12 nautical mile) equipped with various nets and could stay in the sea for quite long time (2 weeks or longer)

<sup>29</sup> The average age to work as the member of *bagan* in this village is 10-35 years. After that, usually someone has already had their own boat or other job

<sup>30</sup> Rice field is inherited by the women member of family (matrilinal system). The type of inheritance in this village and some fishermen's village is slightly different with the other Minang's clans because capital related to fishing such as boat, net, etc would be inherited by the men in the family.

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approached the village leader personally. His wife also approached the wife's of village leader forwarding her family relationship with her. Mawardi got the opportunity after some people cancelled to join in the project.

Mawardi and his wife lived in *the keramba* for about 1 year 7 months.<sup>31</sup> Living in *keramba* was not easy. The hardest part is in the beginning. His wife memorized:

At that time, it was very harsh. We were often judged by the community. They said we were crazy, we were hopeless or we were Maduranese. But we did not care about it because in this village whatever you do people would talk about it. Thus, we took it as the challenge for our success.<sup>32</sup> (Mawardi's wife: Interview 25.11.07)

To fulfil their daily need, Mawardi and wife hooked the fish. Once in a week they returned to the village to buy food, took drinking water and sold some fish. When culturing the fish, some officers from the MFO frequently came and trained him. Both Mawardi and officers had a committed to make this second chance a success project. By the end of the year, the groupers were ready to be harvested. At that time 1000 seed grew quite good. The harvest reached more than 450 kg. 450 kg were sold and the rest were shared to the ex member of the group and some villagers. They got "*sasamba*" fish particularly because "that is the way of life in the village." It was sold at IDR 80.000/kg. Mawardi earned IDR 36.000.000 (US\$ 3600). He did not know where exactly the fish was being exported or how much it was cost because he trusted everything related to the marketing to the MFO.

The first harvest was perceived and used differently by the actors in this project. For Mawardi, it was the achievement of his efforts. It was the gate for a better future and status in the village. For the MFO officers, it was the symbol of success as they could endorse a new pattern of fishing in the traditional community. It was also the mean to show that they had worked hard in order to

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<sup>31</sup> They lived there for one year in the second project and seven months in the first project that failed.

<sup>32</sup> Maduranese is a tribe in Java. Most of community work as the fishermen and some live in the sea. There were many prejudices about this tribe. It locates in Java but never been accepted as Javanese people. They were (prejudicely known in this village) as rude, backward, un-patient, stupid, poor, etc.

be acknowledged at least at the district level as the new prospectus office. For the community, it was the symbol that they could finish the project well. Even though in general the community did not take part in the project, in this village achievement of one of its members were usually regarded as the achievement of the whole villagers. It was also the symbol of dignity that they were better than the community in two other villages. Despite how the actors perceived this harvest, in general it had made everyone happy.

After the first harvest, Mawardi's life changed. His existence was then acknowledged by the villagers. He achieved new status as one of the rich person in the village.

According to the villagers, we got (*mendapat*) a gift. With that money, I made a small shop in the village, I bought a *bagan* to be operated by my son in law, and I bought a motor cycle. Our position was extremely changed. Today people considered us as the rich men in this village. (Mawardi: interview 30.11.07)

*Mendapat* is people's expression when someone earns quite a lot in one time. Literally *mendapat* means get something. It is also often expressed by saying tiger's gift (*rezeki harimau*). Usually this term does not relate to the efforts someone used to get it. Perhaps it is because the working philosophy of fishermen is yielding something from the sea so it depends on God's kindness not human's efforts. In Mawardi's case, even though what he earned was through a long process and hard work, many people kept using the word *mendapat* to express his success.

Generally people in this village will say that one gets something (*mendapat*) if they see a notoriously change in their life such as new *bagan*, new motorcycle, new mobile phone, fix the house etc<sup>33</sup>. Those things are seen as valuable. In addition, those can be sold easily. Selling the things in the crisis situation is a common practice in the fishermen community, not only in Mandeh but almost all over Indonesia (Mubyarto and Dove 1984, Satria 2001). Fishermen

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<sup>33</sup> Since there is the development of road and spill over of mobile, the motor cycle and mobile phone are two among several things people should buy when they have money.

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tend to buy the easily resale things when they earn quite a lot because living as fishermen is unpredictable.

After the first harvest, Mawardi cleaned and made some essential repairs in the *kerambas*. He then contacted some officers at the MFO to ask for their permission to use the *keramba* for himself. The officers agreed. He also contacted the officers to supply him with the groupers seed. It took a while before the government could provide the seed. The Fish Seed of West Sumatra in Teluk Buo, Padang failed to develop the seed. Most of the seed died prematurely. Therefore, the MFO officers had to buy the seed from the MFO office in Lampung province. It cost Mawardi IDR 10.000 (1 US\$) per 10 cm seed. He filled in *keramba* with 1000 seeds. Actually he wanted to fill it more but the Lampung MFO did not have much seed. In the middle of 2005, the third trial was begun.

At that time, Mawardi did not live in the sea anymore but staying in the village and opened a small shop in front of his house. He paid someone to take care of the fish. Finding someone to stay in the *keramba* and take care of the fish was very challenging. Mawardi had to change the pattern of cooperation and people to work many times. In the beginning, he asked someone to guard the fish and proposed him their traditional scheme of sharing usually used in the agriculture sector such as *gambir* planting, rice field or sheep herding. It was 1/3 for the worker and 2/3 for the owner after all the cost paid.

This type of sharing could not satisfy both parties. Besides, it was also not easy to count the expenses they had already disbursed. In addition to the sharing system, this cooperation failed because the guy who he worked with was not patient to wait until a year. Therefore Mawardi and his wife had to return to the sea while still searching for the next partner. The fish were getting bigger and being the target of thieves. "Some of the fish were stolen, it was easy to steal and also very easy to sell. Just bring the fish to Cubadak Island (tourism resort) and they will buy it at a high price. Tourists love this fish", said Mawardi. Based on

his experience, Mawardi concluded that it was difficult to work with people who are originally from this village.

Mawardi then decided to hire person instead of engaging in the traditional cooperation. He tried to approach some non-originally Mandeh people who stayed in the village. At the beginning, he hired Budi who came to the village to follow his sister which married to a Mandeh man. Mawardi had to change workers many time. When I was there, the worker was Suri.

Suri (45 years) came from the other district in West Sumatra and lived in Mandeh because he married to a Mandeh woman. He used to live and work in Riau province. He and his wife returned back to Mandeh because he had a problem working in Riau. After a year returning to the village, his wife returned back to Riau because one of his children wanted to continue his study. For a while, he stayed alone in the village.

Actually he planned to move out from the village and went somewhere to work. He is not a fishermen, he usually works logging the forest in Riau. That was when Mawardi's wife approached him. Considering that Mawardi's wife is his wife's relative, he agreed to take care of their fish.

If she is not my wife's relative and she is not sick, I will not work here. That is not the type of job I wanted to. People known me as a story teller, very socialize person who spend days in the *warung* (coffe shop). Living in the sea is lonely and people would say something negative about me such as too poor to live, desperate guy, or being sea man, etc, but I could not say no. Besides my son wanted to continue his study, I also need money. (Suri: Interview 21.11.07)

Kinship is still highly valued in this traditional village. As mentioned earlier, after married to a Minang woman, a man is considered as the member of his wife's tribe. He usually moved out from his village and lives with his wife's family. That is one reason why it was difficult for Suri to refuse Mawardi's wife proposal. Moreover, Mawardi offered him a very high salary IDR 1.200.000 monthly. This is far higher than a salary of government officer graduated with a bachelor degree in this district where the rate is IDR 650.000 monthly (2006) (Depnakertrans 2006). Basically his job is to take care of the fish and the

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*keramba*. The food for the fish was supplied by Mawardi. Yet, sometime Suri had to catch the fish if there was not enough supply.

#### **4.4.3 Continuing the Project: Demand for the New Group and Project**

After seeing Mawardi success with his first harvest, some members of the community expressed their interest to get the same opportunities. They advocated the government especially through the village leader and Mawardi to give them a try and continue the project, because based on the plan, the project would revolve (continue) until 2009. In 2006, the MFO responded to their will. The MFO then asked the community to organize the second group. The MFO also asked Mawardi to be their advisor, practically because he stayed in the village, the officers could trust him, and he had experience working with the groupers. Mawardi was chosen as the chairman of the group. For the member of the group, choosing him as the chairman was seen as fruitful due to his performance, credibility and relation with the government officers.

This second group was slightly different regarding the financial resources because it was planned to involve some investors to support the financial need for the group in addition to the ADB's loan and the APBD. As written earlier, the budget for the next project was supposed to be taken from the previous project. Nevertheless as the previous project failed then there was little budget available from the loan and the APBD. Moreover according to my informant at the MFO, the investors were needed so that they could manage the groupers project more professionally. The investors were expected to help financing the group in constructing *keramba*, feeding the fish and marketing the harvest. Meanwhile the seed would be provided by the MFO.

In order to support the new group, the MFO gave two new *kerambas*. Therefore, there were ten *kerambas* in Mandeh. The group began the project by training. Before starting the training, the group was informed that there was an investor who wanted to professionally culture the groupers in their village. This

investor came and presented his aim. People in the group were very happy and received him very well. They were hoping to get a sustainable and bigger job opportunity from this investor. The investor said that he was serious on the project and asked people to collect sufficient amount of wood to make at least 20 *kerambas*. Together with the community, the members of the second group logged the trees from the forest in the village.

Unfortunately after the woods were collected, this investor suddenly cancelled their plan. “We did not know what happen but we were very disappointed. People got angry and asked who would pay for the wood,” (Zainal: interview 12.12.07). Consequently, it rejuvenated the tension not to fully believe in the government for the development project involving local community.

In order to know what really happened, the group asked the chairman to ask the investor. “Actually, I’m not sure what happen but from what I heard this investor cancelled the project due to the tax. They said that it was very high and after they recalculated they decided to withdraw from the project”, (Mawardi: interview 15.12.07). However, when I tried to explore more information about this, he said that he could not really remember who told him and what exactly happened.

Being not satisfied with that explanation, the group then asked the village leader to get more information from the MFO. Zainal went to Painan to meet the MCRM project officer to ask why the investor cancelled the investment and postponed the project. He did not get precise answer either. He just got an impression that something had happened in relation to coordination and budget between the MMAF in Jakarta and the MFO in Pesisir Selatan. He returned to the village and informed the group that he was not sure what had really happened. He told them that something out of their power had happened, that was something inside the government.

When I conducted my field work in the village in 2007 this question was still on the air. Some of group members asked me to confirm and clarify what had



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happened to the project when I talked to people at the MFO. They assumed that since I am a student who worked on my research I had more power to talk to the officers and knowledge to explore what happened and further explained it to them. I agreed to facilitate the gap between the group and the officers on this issue.

The project officer of MCRMP explained that the project was postponed because the national consultant for the MCRMP in the MMAF cancelled the cooperation. However he admitted that he was not really sure what had really happened in Jakarta but he had been told that the consultant walked out from the project. He added that it was a bit inaccurate to say that the project was cancelled because as far as the MFO understood there were some budgets for that and the central government had not issued any cancellation for the project.

In relation to the investor, he said that the practice of tender for the investor was not sufficiently guided in the district law. Since decentralization there were some changes in the district laws. The investor tried to avoid this uncertainty and decided to roll back from their plan. Moreover the uncertainty was not only covering the relation with investor but also with the project management. The MFO officers felt unsecured to continue the project. They tried their best to avoid the grey area of development project particularly due to the time implementation and corruption.

We submitted the plan on January. In February we were asked to revise the proposal. On April, we got the oral approval. The MMAF said that it was approved and we could start the project. After discussing with the other officers, we decided to wait for the written approval which we finally got in August. But it was too late to start the bidding for the project on September. They would only have two months to work because on December everything should be finished and reported to Jakarta. So, we decided to postpone the project. We did not want to be suspected or blamed for corruption. Today, they keep on watching on us, everything could be related to corruption. (Officer#7)

I returned to the village and explained the reason behind the postponement of the project. Responding to this explanation, the group expressed their regret. Mawardi said that:

“That’s the government. They always postpone informing something bad. If there is no budget or there is problem they should inform us so we do not wait uncertainty and keep on hoping.” (Interview: 22.12.07)

Similar with Mawardi, Zainal the village leader also criticized government about its not-transparency and “not- gentleness”. Until January 2008 when I left the site, the second group had not started culturing the groupers. It was only Mawardi who continued culturing the groupers on his own capital and efforts. The government still helped him in relation to providing the grouper seeds and marketing the harvest. At the village level, it is seen as the proof that revolving fund is not suitable for them and very likely to be fail.

Actually, I had some questions regarding the continuity of the project. I met some fishermen that expressed their intention to start culturing the groupers. I was wondering why they did not start culturing the groupers by themselves since there were some empty *kerambas* left in the sea. I got several answers for that. However, perhaps economic (capital) is their main concern. In order to start culturing the groupers, one needs to fix the *kerambas* because those had not been used since 2004. Next, one has to buy the seed. It is quite expensive, IDR 10.000/10 cm seed. If one wants to get a sufficient amount of profit, he should fill in the *keramba* at least with 1000 seed which will cost them IDR 10.000.000. Later on one will have to provide some amount of money for the food. No one in the village has the ability and capacity to do that. When I asked my informants about working together within a group or cooperative, they answered that it is not a good choice. “It will create a lot of conflict among us” or “we cannot work in group” are some answers I got from them.

Back to December 2007, Mawardi gained his fourth harvest. His *keramba* produced 870 kg of fish sold at IDR 90.000/kg. It was actually less than what he and the MFO officers had expected. They were expecting 1000 kg of fish so that the importer from Hongkong could come with their own boat and paid IDR 125.000/kg on spot. One officer from the seed section that came to the harvest assumed that lack of sufficient food and maintenance were probably the main cause why the fish did not grow in the same size. Since the production was less

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than one ton, all of the fish should be collected in Lampung province before exporting to Hong Kong.

There were many people came to *keramba* to see the harvest. A government media (antara) was also invited to cover this event. Regarding to the existence of the project, I observed an interesting situation during the harvest. Before the harvest, people through Kasman had been informed that a media and some officers from the province MFO would come to the harvest. Therefore it was important to give them an impression that the groupers were belonged to the group. During the harvest, I saw that the MFO officers took over the process. At least 10 officers were there at that time. Some officers kept on looking at the fish and criticizing the maintenance of the fish. Some other weighted the fish and made some notes. Some others involved in a serious conversation about the seed, the marketing and the development of the groupers.

When I chatted with the journalist, I found that they actually knew that the group had no longer exist. However, they told me that they would cover as if the group still exist because this harvest was seen as one achievement of this district. “If not us, who will promote the potential of our district”, said a journalist (8.12.08). Actually, I-personally- quite upset with the news regarding this harvest because it was presented as if the fishermen did not do their best to gain a good harvest as said by the (temporary) chief of MFO: “there is a delay in harvest and the quantity and quality of the fish are quite low because the group is not well trained,” (jurnal nasional 2007).

In accordance to the next term, Mawardi planned to grow more fish. He discussed it with the MFO officers. Fortunately, Central Bank of Indonesia (BI) had a micro credit program to support small scale economic sector. This budget would be disbursed through a local bank, the *Nagari Bank* (BPD). Mawardi has been granted a loan IDR 50 million for his business. Understanding that the bank needs collateral and understanding that no fisherman in this district has sufficient

capital to be the collateral<sup>34</sup>, the MFO signed by the Regent released the guarantee letter. However it was not enough, Mawardi faced many challenges when trying to withdraw the money.

When I came to the bank to withdraw the money, the bank officer asked for my collateral. I showed him a letter signed by the BI, the MFO and the Regent. After a long discussion, he gave me my money. I took IDR 15 million. He said if I came again, I should bring the collateral. I asked him why the guarantee letter was not enough. He did not answer. I don't know... maybe he did not understand this or he just wanted to "play" something. I was confused, the BI, the MFO and the Regent had already submitted their guarantee, why they still asked me a lot of thing. I told him, BI is from Jakarta. I think he felt a bit afraid and then asked me not to tell anyone from the BI. But yesterday, I told BI. I think BI was angry at BPD because today, BPD told me that I can come and withdraw the money. Hmm I don't know everything has changed now. Since this decentralization, people in this district think that they are powerful now. Even BI from Jakarta, they did not listen. (Mawardi: interview 12.12.08)

I did not have time to ask people from the BPD but I tried to elaborate my informants on why people at the BPD did that. Many of my informants assumed that it happened because in the previous time, Mandeh people had received a credit from the BPD and they did not pay it.

A problem concerning the coordination among the government offices in this district is expressed within this case. Some confusing regulations and laws indeed exist. Sometime it is not fit with the condition in the district such as regarding the collateral. Lack of trust among people and officers based on their previous experience also exists and complicates the situation. Decentralization is indeed giving more courage and power for people to work in this district. However, it is interesting that people and government officers were still forwarding the relationship with the central government when they face a problem such as in this BI-BPD case or in the introduction to the project or investor case I have written before.

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<sup>34</sup> No one in the village has at least land certificate or house certificate because they live in their clan's land or *tanah ulayat*. If they are the members of the clan, they can take some land to make house with the approval by the clan.

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## 4.5 End Note

The explanation above shows that actors are active in finding strategies and negotiating the development interventions toward their interest and aims based on their knowledge and capability. The actors will make the most advantageous decision for them both as an individual and as a member of a community. Economic is their main consideration. However other concerns such as kinship, social value, network, dignity, and politics are also taken into consideration.

The development project cannot be regarded as simply a matter of planning, execution and result. It is a dynamic process. Development intervention faces many challenges and often has to be shifted from its original plan. Citing Long (2001:27)

Intervention is an ongoing transformational process that is constantly reshaped by its own internal organizational and political dynamic and by the specific condition it encounters or itself creates including the responses and strategies of local and regional groups who may struggle to define and defend their own social spaces, cultural boundaries and positions within the wider power field.

In relation to decentralization, the idea has already vanished before the groupers project was introduced to the community. However actually the idea and value of decentralization such as good public governance system existed and coloured the implementation of the project. A process toward a more democratic government and empowered community regarding a development intervention was indeed taking place. The pattern of power and relationship between the recipient of the development program and the government has been slightly changed. Both are now more aware that they need each other. Conducting a development program is no longer strict to a top down approach and policy. Community's concerns are taken into government's considerations. Nevertheless as culturing the groupers is a new pattern in fishing practice, complexities and challenges are indeed emerged in many aspects.

## 5. Seaweed Culture: Dare to Retry?

One of the mandates of decentralization is to empower community. Bottom up development program where government acts as the facilitator is promoted. Since the government's interventions occur in the middle of the process, some negotiations and adjusting process take place. The dynamic and challenges in culturing the seaweed program will be captured in this chapter. Further, the future of this practice will also be elaborated.

### 5.1 Brief Overview of Seaweed Culture in the District of Pesisir Selatan

Seaweed or *rumpit laut* is the market name for sea algae. Basically, it is not categorized as weed (*graminae*) but as the market in around the 1900s perceived it as weed, it is called as seaweed until today. Seaweed has been utilized as vegetable since hundreds years ago by people who lived along the seashore. Today, seaweed is used for many purposes such as the ponds for cosmetics and medicine. In Indonesia, the production of seaweed for industrial was initiated in 1973 but it did not grow very well (Mubarak 1981). In the 1980s, the Fisheries Department (at that time was part of Agriculture Department) proposed the idea to seriously culture the seaweed. Again, it did not receive much attention from the government as in that period Indonesia focused its development program on terrestrial agriculture and industrialization.

In Pesisir Selatan, the idea to culture the seaweed has actually emerged and discussed since the beginning of 1990s. This idea was recognized in 1999 when this district was required to work harder in developing marine and fisheries sector. In 2000, the MFO with the support from the MMAF initiated the seaweed culture project in Pesisir Selatan. The project was attached into ARE (Alternative Research Extension) project under the Marine and Coastal Management Area (MCMA) program and funded by a loan from the ADB. The main target for the first phase, 2000-2002, was to inform fishermen about the alternative way of

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utilizing the sea and made some pilot projects. Therefore, two villages which are located in Mandeh resort area were chosen as the pilot area: Sungai Nyalo and Simpang Carocok. Both villages have calm water, protected from strong wind and have a distant from the river mouth (P3P UBH and DJKP3K 2001). By the end of 2000, there were 83 units of seaweed culture in the 0.830 ha area in the sub-district Koto XI Tarusan. The main intention to culture the seaweed in these two villages was to produce the seed (DKP 2001:17, DKP and Yayasan Sinergi 2004).

The seaweed species being developed in Sungai Nyalo and Carocok was *Euchema sp.* To culture it, people used a floating bamboo rack measured 5x10 meters and anchored to the bottom of the sea usually as deep as 7 meter. Around 9 to 15 clumps were tied to a rope along the rack (DKP 2006). The seaweed project in Sungai Nyalo and Carocok began on the first week of November 2000 involved 50 fishermen from each village. It was fully supported by the government including the training, the rack, and the seed. The seaweed grew quite well in the first three weeks. In the fourth week, Pesisir Selatan experienced a non-stop heavy rain and landslide. It made sea water yellowish because it received too much water from the river and land. It destroyed the seaweed. The first crop failed.

On March 2001, the situation was much better. The MFO facilitated by The Centre of Research and Fisheries Development University Bung Hatta restarted the seaweed project. In this period, the project was being executed in Sungai Nyalo only, as the project in Carocok was cancelled due to the construction of a fish harbour in this village.

Despite the fact that the seaweed grew very well, the marketing process of the seaweed became very challenging as fishermen had no idea where to sell it. At the same point, the MFO and the Bung Hatta were uncertain and still searching for the right channel to distribute the production. The crop was then sold dried in the local market mostly for the food and beverages with the price of

IDR 5.000/kg. Actually the fishermen expected higher price because based on the MFO's information, the dried seaweed could be sold at IDR 12.000/kg. Even though the price was not a good price, it was quite good as an additional income.

During the process of culturing the seaweed, the MFO contacted some businessmen in Padang to be the distributor. One agreed and promised that if people in Sungai Nyalo could continuously produce a sufficient amount of seaweed, she would distribute it to Batam (an Indonesian island locates very close to Singapore) and Malaysia. The MFO informed the situation to the fishermen and invited her to come and see the seaweed culture. Astonished by this development, more people began cultivating seaweed in Sungai Nyalo. Later on, it attracted people from some other villages to replicate the practice.

## 5.2 Initiating Seaweed Culture in Mandeh Village

The seaweed culture in Mandeh village was begun in 2003. It was Afrizal, a fisherman, who initiated this practice. He was thinking to culture the seaweed after he saw some fishermen in Sungai Nyalo, the neighbour village earned some additional income from it. Moreover, he heard that that the minister of the MMAF had come to this district to celebrate the first crop of seaweed culture someday in 2003. He gained sort of confidence in trying it. Afrizal discussed this idea with his family. Getting their support, Afizal went to Sungai Nyalo and bought the seaweed seed from a local fisherman. He spent almost all of his saving around IDR 2 millions to start culturing the seaweed. .

The growth of his seaweed was very good. Usually seaweed needs 1-1.5 month to grow before it can be harvested. In the 40<sup>th</sup> day, Afrizal harvested his first crop. He was not really sure where to sell it. He had neither knowledge nor experience on marketing the seaweed. After talking to some people, he decided to cooperate with some fishermen in Sungai Nyalo. Afrizal did not really know where they sold the seaweed but he assumed that the MFO had helped them



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selling it abroad. He earned some money. “It was not a lot, but it was ok.” Villagers noticed that he earned something and said that he was “mendapat”.

Seeing his success, many people asked him about culturing the seaweed. With his blowing whistle knowledge from the Sungai Nyalo’s fishermen, Afrizal tried to explain what he knew. He said that as far as he had already known some industries needed seaweed and they could earn money from it. He also said that there was a possibility that the government would help them culturing the seaweed, or at least they could ask for its assistance. Afrizal then persuaded villagers to culture the seaweed for their future.

It was not really difficult to do so as people saw that he was successful with his seaweed. Culturally, he was the leader of the Jambak’s clan in the village. Moreover, at that time (2003) people desperately needed a new and sustainable source of income. The price of oil to operate fishing vessel was rising very high at that moment. In addition not many of them could capture a lot of fish due to the overfishing as I have written in the previous chapter. Villagers realized that they could not rely their life only on fishing.

In 2004, many people started culturing the seaweed. They needed several equipments to culture the seaweed such as bamboo, rope (for anchor and for the seed), anchor, and seed. In addition to that people needed a boat, a rack to dry the seaweed and other equipments such as basket, knife, hammer, etc. Most of people in Mandeh have already had boat, drying rack (they used *teri’s* rack) and the other tools. Shortly, they needed only bamboos, seed and ropes which cost about 1 to 2 millions IDR. To start culturing the seaweed, people usually used their saving money or borrowed from the others. Regarding the culturing area, similar with planting the *gambir*, people could choose whichever part of the sea that they wanted as the sea does not belong to anyone but common property.

When I asked Afrizal about how many people who were culturing the seaweed, he said that he did not remember but there were many people. To

confirm his information, I randomly interviewed people and they confirmed that.

One of my informants told me:

At that time, the sea was full of bamboo racks for the seaweed. Many people cultured the seaweed, not only the men but also the women. We (woman) helped taking care of the seaweed and drying it. The dried seaweed was as high as mountain in this village.  
(villager#4)

### 5.3 Government Intervention

Actually when Mandeh people started culturing the seaweed, the MFO kept on observing them. The MFO had some field officers who were responsible to advise and support fishermen. There was one field officer in this sub district, Rasmi Hendri. His main job was to visit and assist the fishermen. At least once a month (often more), he went to the MFO head quarter in Painan, the district centre, to report what he had done and or found in the field.

When more people cultured seaweed in Mandeh village, Hendri went to the village to observe what they were doing and to discuss about the development of the seaweed. As he was responsible for 1858 fishermen in this sub-district (DKP 2001), he did not have a lot of time to focus on Mandeh's fishermen. He then asked the fishermen to keep him informed on what they did. Usually, Hendri and the fishermen/villagers met in the sub-district office or market on Tuesday<sup>35</sup>. In one of those Tuesday, some fishermen asked for serious assistance from the government to develop the seaweed culture. Understanding that he did not have the authority and capability to decide anything related to their request, Hendri went to Painan and reported the situation to his supervisor. After several internal discussions based on Hendri's and some previous information from other field officers who had worked in Mandeh village, the MFO decided to assist the fishermen particularly regarding the transfer of skill and knowledge in culturing the seaweed and providing the seed.

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<sup>35</sup> Tuesday is the market day in this sub-district.

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There were several reasons endorsing this decision. First, the officers felt that they had to assist them because they had the ability for that. Assisting community was the ideal value of being the civil servant as repeatedly promoted in the decentralization period. Moreover assisting fishermen was seen as a mean to empower people and a mean to apply the bottom up approach in development. Second, developing seaweed culture was seen as one of solution to eradicate poverty as seaweed culture was expected could provide a future sustainable income for the fishermen. Third, at the time the MFO was working on the ARE project. There was a possibility to attach some activities to assist the seaweed fishermen in Mandeh village into this project. And fourth, the MFO as a new office was really encouraged to show the successful evidence of their work. District government in particular and central government expected them to pace up the development in the fisheries sector.<sup>36</sup>

The MFO then sent some officers to the village to discuss their decision with the villagers. These officers approached the fishermen who had already started culturing the seaweed. They offered technical assistant including the transfer of knowledge (training) and providing the seaweed seeds for free. For this, the MFO ordered the seed from the MFO in Lampung Province. The budget for the seed was partially taken from the ARE project (MCMA) and partially from the MCRM project. It was possible to modify the budget and development plan because due to the decentralization, the district office was given authority and responsibility to make some adjustment. The MFO did not need an approval from the province government but it was enough only with acknowledgment from the district government such as Regent or District's Secretary.

Apart from assisting the fishermen who had already cultured the seaweed, the MFO also offered assistance to the villagers who wanted to try but had no capital. A pilot project under the revolving scheme was proposed to the villagers. The MFO officers then asked the villagers to organize themselves into a group.

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<sup>36</sup> On my interview with the head of MFO (Yosmeri 01.07.07), he told me that the expectation for them was very high even the Vice President Jusuf Kalla wanted them to increase the production of the marine culture from 1% to 20%.

Organizing people into a group was favoured in this period as it was one possible way to get the budget from the development's account especially from the central government and donor agencies.

The transfer of knowledge worked very well. Zainal, the village leader, honoured the officers. He said

In general the seaweed culture is different from the other revolving fund project. It by nature was the transfer of knowledge. For this type of activities, government was always very good. They were diligent and very capable. (Interview 17.11.07)

During the training sessions, the officers were very positive. They repeatedly informed the fishermen about the future of seaweed.<sup>37</sup> Seaweed was promised as the new way to take them out of poverty. Resonance with officers' spirit, the fishermen's spirit was multiply. They worked harder to realize the future. It did not only involve men but also women and children.<sup>38</sup> Men were responsible to culturing the seaweed in the sea meanwhile women and children were responsible in taking care, drying and storing the seaweed. The result could be seen in the production. Tons of seaweed was produced in Mandeh. One of my informants told that the situation in the village looked like in the early 1980s where they produced so much *teri*. Everyone was busy working with the seaweed. The village was much lively.

Regarding the group, there was a group established for the seaweed project. Yet, this group did not work well. The cooperation among the members broke up before they reached their first crop. It happened because some members felt uncomfortable to work together (fisherman#2). Quite similar with the groupers project, there were several problems with trust, leadership and group management. Since the group lasted only for about one month, my informants could not really remember what had already happened at that time. "I cannot

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<sup>37</sup> People who cultured the seaweed refused to be called as sea farmer. They preferred to be called as fishermen because first their main job is fishing and second because they yield something from the sea not from the land like farmer.

<sup>38</sup> Some studies on the seaweed culture in Indonesia such as in North Sulawesi, Bali and Pulau Seribu found that women and children could participate in this job because it does not require much physical strength. (Crawford 2002)

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really remember what happen but the group certainly did not last long, it broke up. They just could not work together”, said Afrizal (interview 07.12.07).

## 5.4 Culturing the Seaweed: Success but Fail

Three months after Afrizal cultured the seaweed in the village many villagers adopted and began their own seaweed culture either using their own capital or the government’s. In general the practice run smoothly. Only a small conflict and misunderstanding occurred in the beginning of the process. Some *bagan* fishermen complained to the seaweed fishermen because their floating bamboo racks were placed scattered in the sea that disturbed the transport line for *bagan*. In addition, the existence of seaweed bamboo racks in the near fishing area disturbed the activity to capture the fish as most of fishermen in Mandeh capture *teri* fish that live in the shallow water surrounding the reef. To solve the problem, the village leader and the MFO officers arranged the meeting involving the conflicted parties. Both parties agreed that what they both did was only the same mean to run their livelihood. Considering this argumentation and considering their kinship where everyone is relative, this conflict could be clarified and stopped before worsens. The solution was that the capturing fishermen allowed the culturing fishermen to put their bamboos on the sea but they had to rearrange the position and spare sufficient area for fishing.

As stated earlier, the fishermen produced a huge amount of seaweed in their first crop. Yet, it faced problem in marketing. Both government and fishermen were not ready with tons of success crop. The fishermen relied the marketing of the product to the government. However the government was uncertain on where to sell the product. The life circle of seaweed (40 days) was very short to find the buyer or distributors. Tons of seaweed failed reaching the market. Fishermen were very disappointed. One of my informants said that the government was not ready. “They helped us disorderly. They were uncertain of what they were doing”(fisherman#4).In relation to this, one of my informants from the MFO said that it happened because there was no cooperation and

coordination among offices at the district level. “Since seaweed is the product from the sea and promoted by the MFO, then the MFO should hold the responsibility from the head to toe”(officer#2).

Regarding the coordination among government offices in this district, in general I can say that the cooperation between one office and the other is quite difficult. While I was in the field, I got some information and impression about a latent competition in the government’s bodies. At the individual level is the competition among the officers especially the head of government offices and at the institutional level is the competition among the district’s offices. Particularly, the aim is to gain the dignity and being notified by the Regent. Therefore it is difficult to ask other officers and or offices to seriously take part in other office’s responsibility especially when it is not planned before.

Regarding the plan, one officer told me that market failure happened because the MFO did not plan it before.

The idea to support people with what they have already had was very good, but it was challenging to conduct especially when we did not have sufficient plan and strategy before. In addition the seaweed culture was very fast, only 40 days, we were not ready. (Officer#4)

The un-readiness of the MFO officers was notoriously seen by the fishermen. Afraid of the possible bad consequences toward their harvest, they tried to push government to work harder both directly and indirectly i.e. represented by the village leader and or the other leaders/respected stakeholders. Unfortunately it did not work well. According to my informant, the MFO officers chose to say nothing on this issue (villager#5). It triggered unsecure feeling and a motion of no confidence to the MFO. People were very afraid of losing their investment. In order to pacify situation, the seaweed fishermen facilitated by the village leader and tribe leaders arranged several village discussions.

Regarding tons of production, the seaweed fishermen decided to approach the local market in Painan, Padang and Pekan Baru. These destination cities were chosen based on practicality from their knowledge and network. Painan is the

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capital of Pesisir Selatan district, Padang is the capital of West Sumatera province and Pekanbaru is the capital of Riau province. Those cities are the main migration destination of Mandeh villagers. Some people were chosen by the seaweed fishermen and community went to those cities to sell their seaweed. It was very difficult. They had no idea where to sell and who to approach. They tried to sell it in the local market as well in the street where some food vendors that perhaps needed seaweed worked. They had to be satisfied when there were some people bought their seaweed even with a very low price. "It was better than nothing. At least we need money to go back home," (fisherman#3)

Fishermen lost in their first crop. After counting the effort and cost whether it was better to sell the seaweed or not, fishermen came into conclusion that letting it naturally decay was the best option. Some of the seaweed were thrown to the sea and eaten by the fish and turtles. Eventually, many fishermen decided not to retry culturing the seaweed because they were disappointed with the first crop, being insulted by the government which was seen by some fishermen as irresponsible, and run out of money.

Understanding the disadvantageous situation regarding the seaweed program, the MFO evaluated their program. Having considered that the seaweed had a potential value in the future, Pesisir Selatan in its five years plan (1999-2004) wanted to place the marine and fisheries sector as the vanguard, and there was an open possibility to develop this sector through some loans and support from the central government<sup>39</sup>, the MFO made some strategic preparations. In addition to that, the MFO tried to gain more supports and cooperation from other district's government offices and the central government. The MFO frequently presented and informed others about the seaweed culture in several district's coordination meetings. Finally the MFO gained support from the district government and other offices to develop the seaweed culture.

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<sup>39</sup> During period of 2000-2004, there were some opportunities to propose the development of seaweed financed by several multilateral agencies through the MMAF such as the coremap project (financed by the USAID, the World Bank, the AUSAID and the ADB), the MCMA project, the MCRM project, etc. (Crawford 2002)

To solve the marketing problem which is the main problem in the seaweed case as defined by many of my informants, the MFO increased their efforts to find the distributors or buyers. Some personal approaches, seminars and socialization for investment were taken into action. It was very challenging because the MFO faced some internal problems with its capability especially regarding man power and channelling. “Even though we had the production division, we did not have experience and professional people in marketing and we also did not have direct channel to the seaweed market,” (officer#4).

In order to develop this sector, the MFO asked for some assistance from the MMAF in Jakarta. The MFO also proposed more serious budget to develop the seaweed culture. Being quite well prepared, the MFO officers returned to the community and approached them to retry.

It was not very easy convincing people because some were already traumatised. Some had already bankrupted because they had invested their saving money to culture the seaweed. Nevertheless after considering their uncertainty income in fishing, the future prospect of the seaweed, government preparedness and support for the seaweed culture, guaranty for marketing from government, and their existing investment in the farm (floating bamboo, ropes, etc), some fishermen agreed to give it another try in the end of 2004.

Unfortunately, the success was too far a cry from them. This time the seaweed culture failed due to some diseases and natural disaster. “The growth of seaweed was not very good because some viruses attacked the seaweed”, said Zaitul (interview 02.07.07). He, who has background in marine biology, suspected that it happened because the natural condition of Mandeh water such as acidity (Ph) and wave were not really suitable for culturing the seaweed although it was still tolerable. Based on his explanation, I asked some seaweed fishermen about this issue. Many agreed with him regarding the water condition. Base on their experience, the failure happened because Mandeh’s water was very calm so that some fungi could live as the parasite in the seaweed. When I asked the



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fishermen and the officers why the seaweed that had been planted in the same water at the beginning produced a very successful crop but not today, I did not get an exact answer. The fishermen assumed that maybe there had been some changes in the water environment or the quality of the seed they used was not good. I could not dig more on this issue as my informant at the MFO said that there was no evaluation research on this case (officer#2).

The situation worsened due to the frequent natural disaster. On 26<sup>th</sup> December 2004, there was a big tsunami in Aceh. Mandeh's water locates in the west side of Sumatra Island. It is in the same side of the tsunami centre in Aceh. All of the seaweed farms in Mandeh were destroyed. When the tsunami happened, there were continuously huge waves attacked their seaweed. All of the floating bamboo racks untied and destroyed. After Aceh's, frequent small tsunamis happened in Mentawai, an island not too far from Mandeh. Frequent earthquake with the sea epicentre also happened. It made people more traumatic to retry culturing the seaweed.

The weather condition changed as well. It was not really supportive for culturing the seaweed. The raining session came soon after the tsunami. The seaweed was exposed by too much rain water. The wind blew stronger than before. It made the flower of seaweed fell to the sea. Shortly, it destroyed the seaweed. After this disaster, fishermen refused to retry. No one dare to retry it again. They were afraid. Many of my informants said that perhaps culturing the seaweed was not their *rezeki* (bless and gift from the God). They said that maybe their *rezeki* came from the other sources such as capturing the *teri* fish (bagan), culturing the fish, planting the *gambir*, etc.

## 5.5 New Proposals from the District Government

As stated earlier, the MFO reported the situation of the seaweed project to the other offices in the district's coordination meeting. Some of the problems presented were the marketing, lack of coordination, capital, natural disaster and

the nature of the fishermen who were not ready to transform their fishing practice from capturing to culturing. In accordance to the marketing problem, the marketing and industrial office (MIO) was asked to give more support to the seaweed culture. In general, the MIO was endorsed to pace up their work in promoting marketing and industrial sector in order to reduce poverty and earn significant amount of income for the district. After decentralization, its position was more significant than before because the district was required to be self sufficient.

It took quite awhile before the MIO could find a potential support and strategic planned program to develop the seaweed sector. Central government especially the Marketing and Industrial Department (MID) was their main target to get support. The MIO sent a proposal to the MID in 2005. By the end of 2006, the MIO's proposal was approved. The MID would disburse some budget to develop this sector under the scheme of micro finance revolving fund. The MIO then was demanded to start working immediately by approaching potential fishermen.

Besides the MIO, some other offices such as the MFO, the Cooperative office and Government Banking Institution did some efforts to support seaweed program. The MFO proposed some budget to the MMAF. The MMAF through some loans budget approved it in around 2007 and asked the MFO to restart the process. This time, there was no free aid anymore. The MFO had to offer the fishermen assistance within the revolving fund scheme loan that would be given to the fishermen in a group.

In relation to the capital, the district government facilitated by the *Bappeda* and the MFO approached the cooperative and banking institutions. One of the institutions that fully supported this program was Bank Perkreditan Rakyat (BPR) Samudra. BPR Samudra was founded in 2003. It had been initiated by the National Madani Capital where the MMAF is one of its stakeholders. One of the goals of the BPR Samudra is to strengthen fishermen's economic livelihood.

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Today, there are 9 BPR Samudra in Indonesia. In Pesisir Selatan, BPR Samudra was founded in 2006 (Depkominfo 2006).

By the end of 2006, with more preparations, the MFO and the MIO returned to the village and tried to persuade villagers to restart the process. However most of the seaweed fishermen were still traumatized with their previous experience. They refused another try. The MFO which had previous bad experience with the culture projects (the groupers and the seaweed) in this village decided to postpone the new proposal and wait for a better circumstance.

In contrary to the MFO, the MIO which had no experience in offering/assisting the development program in this village decided to start approaching the fishermen soon after they got approval from the MID. The MIO then sent one of its personnel to the village in order to inform the program and identify people. They offered community to take part in a micro finance program under the scheme of revolving fund. Similar with the other type of development interventions in the decentralization period, this program was also required the fishermen to work in group. People refused the idea. Instead of culturing seaweed, some people proposed some other ideas.

I was in a small shop when an officer came and offered the villagers to participate in the new seaweed project. I observed their conversation and saw that both officer and fishermen were actively negotiating for a new project. Even though the idea for the new project came from the government, it was originally taken from the community. Both actors had power and knowledge on this issue therefore their position was slightly equal. Below I will describe the interface situation between the officer and the fishermen.

Officer : I come here by the command from my supervisor to identify villagers who wants to participate in the seaweed program. We will give you some training. We will also support you with the capital under a micro finance scheme. I am

looking for 15 people, equal by gender.<sup>40</sup> They should not come from the same family.

Villager 1 : We have tried it before and it failed. Our sea is not suitable for the seaweed. At the time we copied the villagers in Sungai Nyalo who had already success. When we did that, the MFO came and offered us some helps.

Villager 2 : Today nobody wants to try because almost none from us was successful. We lost. Our seaweed was attacked by some viruses and natural disaster. The racks had already been destroyed. Besides, the government could not help us and guaranty where to sell the product.

Villager 3 : Yes sir, we are traumatic. If you really want to help us perhaps you can give us another aid such as cows or *gambir*. Not the seaweed. It will not work, we had already tried it.

Officer : But sirs and madam, my supervisor told me that it is the seaweed not the other thing, and I have to go back to the office with the list of participants. Perhaps we can start to identify and make the list. Later on, I will inform my supervisor about the condition.

Villager 1 : Sir, I have a question for you. Do you exactly know what we are going to do with the seaweed, what is it for, food or industry and where is the market?

Officer : Not yet sir. But don't worry we will give you trainings and capital, after that we will search for the market.

Villager 2 : The MFO tried it before and it did not work. It's better for you to talk with the MFO and discuss with other offices there (Painan-red) before coming back to us

Officer : Hmm since I am asked to come back with the list of people who can be grouped, perhaps we can start write it down first. I don't know why but she really wants it to be the seaweed, but as far as I know her husband works in the MFO. So I think she has more detail and accurate information than us.

Then if she stubbornly wants to conduct this project, let's give it a try. If after the training, it does not work, then we stop. It will be ok. Besides during the training sessions, you will get the transport money<sup>41</sup>.

Villager 1 : Maybe we can talk to the village leader or some more people before deciding who would be put in the list. It is risky for me to choose them.

Officer : I have checked him. He is not home. Perhaps we can propose the list, if later we need to revise than we can do that. Oh ya, by the way, are there any office or place we can use for the training?

Villager 3 : Just use MFO office, it is empty.

After the officer left

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<sup>40</sup> I think the requirement for gender equality within the seaweed program has much to do with some research on seaweed culture in Indonesia, Philippine, India, Tanzania etc where women's participation is essential in the project. This is perhaps also related to the policy of the donor agencies.

<sup>41</sup> Transport money is usually given to people who attend government's training and seminars despite whether they will really use the money for transport or not.

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- Villager 1 : These people make us tired. I will not do it if they ask me to do that.
- Villager 2 : You heard that (talked to me), he looks like a drug sales. He comes here and offers (development) program. Every time they come, they ask us to make a group. The group is not working here. Moreover, if they start this program, for sure there will be a new conflict in this village, why A is on the list and B not. I just wrote the names that I remember. He comes for few hours and wants everything to be ready. Well if that what government likes, it is up to him. The government is fine, after the program they go out from the village. We who live here would get complaint and being cursed by the villagers.
- Villager 3 : That's true. It is common here that one does not talk to their relative because all of this government programs.
- Me : If you don't want to and think that it will be risky, why did you still write down the name, including yours there?
- Villager1 : Well, he is the government officer anyway; he came quite far to this village. It's inconvenient and impolite to let him go without the result. I feel *segan* to him.

Before this officer went out from the shop, I took part in the conversation. Actually, at the beginning I had planned just to be the silent participant. Yet, since I was there, it was impolite not to take part in the conversation. After the villagers introduced me to the officer, I joined their conversation. I used this opportunity to talk and to ask him some questions particularly related to his experience being the field officer that “selling” the development project to people. It was an open conversation. The villagers who were also in the shop could listen to this conversation. Below is his story:

Our problem after this decentralization is not the coordination. In all of district offices, there is a coordination meeting every month. According to me, a small and lower level government officer in this district, the problem is putting the wrong people in the government offices. For example, the head of the personal affairs bureau is the veterinary. Does he think that we are animals to be managed? People who hold the position within the government's offices are the people who have relationship with the Regent. At least being part of his success team in the election Next is the capability of the officers. We could not develop the natural resources without having the competent people. Here in Pesisir Selatan, we don't need to be blind; we have to admit that this district is the poorest and the stupidest in this province.

Compare to the previous period, if there is something wrong, we should report to the province and the central offices, but today decision making is in the Regent's hand. Even worse, the district's monitoring bureau is under his authority. So who will monitor him?

I experience many challenges in conducting development program. However, I am just a lower level officer. If my job as the field officer is to identify people, I will just do it. Today I am assigned to identify people, talked to them and explained our plan. I have to return with the list.

If my supervisor says that we should conduct the program, then I will follow her. Therefore (looking at the fishermen in the shop) we should just do it at least the training. We will look after that whether it is possible or not. At least we have already tried.

In my own opinion, why a lot of (development) programs fail is because in general our human resources are stupid. In addition we are lazy. For me, as long as the budget goes to a productive thing such as to buy the machine, or start the shop, etc I would a bit relieve. Even though it is miss-targeting but there is still a usage for that. What is really not miss-targeted in the development programs in Indonesia? But what makes me very disappointed is when we give people a capital (revolving fund), they go to Padang and spent the money in the cafe. After that they cry to us asking for help and say that they are poor.

Realizing that he talks in the small shop in front of many villagers, the officer added “not in this village”.<sup>42</sup>

He then continued, therefore in relation to the aid or credit or other kind of development projects, we feel traumatic. It’s not only we the officers but also the institutions such as Semen Padang Tbk, Bank Nagari, etc.<sup>43</sup> The revolving fund for sure is not working.

But the problem is there is the budget in the central government. If we don’t take it, we will lose. The other district will get it. If we don’t take it, we don’t have anything to do. Everything we do here is supported by the central government. If we cannot spend the budget, next year when we apply to the central government, they would give us less. Talk about utility, it is money. There must be a utility of it. Money is always useful.

In relation to the development programs, as I wrote in the previous chapters, this district is heavily relied on the support from the central government to run their activities. 97 percent of the district’s budget comes from the central government. Losing the project or budget infuse from Jakarta could jeopardize their situation in the future.

## 5.6 End Note

From the case above, we can see that in the maze of despair regarding their economic condition, the fishermen are more willing and braver to try something new. A success story happened around them can persuade and trigger many people to adopt and try a new thing. People have more concerns and responsibility toward something that belongs to them. Ownership is indeed

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<sup>42</sup> Based on my experience and understanding as part of this tribe, using the phrase “not in this place” after saying something inconvenience or bad is common in public talk such as in the religious lectures in the mosque, briefing with people, or coffee shop talks. Blaming the other is one of solution if something does not work well.

<sup>43</sup> These are public companies own by the West Sumatra Province Government as understood by the common West Sumatra people but actually for the mining company (Semen Padang), more than half of stock belongs to central government. Oil and mining sector is not included in the decentralization power.

important. Adopting new knowledge and skill are not that difficult for the fishermen. Most of them manage to absorb the knowledge and skill given by the government regarding the seaweed culture. However, working in a group does not seem workable for the fishermen in this village. Even though people use to work in a group within their traditional fishing practices, they do not feel comfortable working in a group for the government's project. I assume there are several problems regarding the idea of a group and the way to organize themselves within a group for a government project.

Regarding the seaweed, this case shows that the fishermen did not have a sufficient knowledge and capability to develop this sector. They need government's help. It also shows that the fishermen have more courage to approach the government to tell their concern. In the other side, the government is also more flexible when interacting with the community. However, intervening in the middle of process is challenging. Without a sufficient and mature plan and resources, despite of successful it will be a failure. The impact will include both material aspect such as money, equipment, etc and immaterial aspect such as courage, credibility, trust, etc.

There are several factors influencing the failure of the seaweed project. The marketing of the product and the plan for the future are among the essential aspects. Without plan or channel to this, the seaweed culture will not work well and people will not dare to retry again. Coordination among government offices is essential. For this case, it is true that the initiative comes from the fishermen but with their limitation they could not survive or develop without the assistance and guaranty from the government.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

Within this chapter, the dynamics related to the efforts to modernize fisheries in Pesisir Selatan Indonesia by shifting the way of utilizing the sea from fish capturing to fish/seaweed culturing will be discussed and summarized. There are two projects to be discussed, the groupers project (2003-current) and the seaweed project (2003-2004). In light of discussion, the relation between development and decentralization will be presented. In the end, some suggestions related to the topic and the methodology will also be presented.

### 6.1 Understanding the Modernization Process: It is Dynamic

From the cases presented in the previous chapters, we can see that the efforts to modernize fisheries do not occur all at once but through the continuous dynamic and challenging processes. This study agrees with Long's study that a development program could not be detached from the interventions either coming from an individual/society or the government. Long defines development intervention as:

An ongoing transformational processes that is constantly reshaped by its own internal organizational and political dynamics and by the specific conditions it encounters or itself created, including the response and strategies of local and regional groups who may struggle to define and defend their own social spaces, cultural boundaries and positions within the wider power field (Long 2001:27)

According to Long, intervention is a contesting arena for many interests from the actors both those are directly involved and those who are absent.

Instead of being passive, the actors that participate in the process are active in shaping the process and shifting it to their utmost advantages. Different actors have different interest, knowledge and power which will be negotiated with the other actors'. Regarding the development intervention, it is very common that the outcome is not precisely similar with what had already been



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planned before. An outcome is the result of the negotiation process of all those differences.

### **6.1.1 Perceiving Development Intervention**

In relation to the research question number one, *how do different actors perceive a development intervention*, this study found that different actors perceive a development intervention differently. Knowledge, experience (both of the actors and that of their network), capability, social structure, needs, interest, and other people, are some factors that influence an actor in making a decision. Even though the goal of the modernization of the fisheries sector is to improve the livelihood condition of the fishermen, in these cases not all the potential beneficiaries see it positively. Some see it in the other way around particularly because they are quite afraid and feel unsecure with regards to the new practice in utilizing the sea and implementing a development program.

In the decentralization period, the revolving fund type of development intervention is preferable. A revolving fund project means that if the first project is successful, the next project can be initiated with a support i.e. financial and human resources from the previous project. Both groupers and seaweed projects are categorized as this type. Consequently, only some people could get the opportunity to be involved in a project in the first project. This provokes jealousy and conflicts both latent and open in the community especially between those who are selected to participate in the first project and those who are not. This situation is worsen by the fact that since the revolving fund type program was promoted in this village (after 1999) such as the motorization, the credit for vessel, the micro-credit program, none of these projects are successfully evolved. Therefore, a chance for the others being involved in the next project is very low. This triggers unsecure feeling among the community when perceiving the groupers and seaweed projects.

Regarding the type of knowledge, there is a difference between fishermen and officers. The fishermen tend to acknowledge, accept and adopt something

into their realm of knowledge based on what they see in their daily life (experience based knowledge). Meanwhile the officers tend to accept something as a knowledge based on scientific learning from books and research produced by the academicians, donor organizations, etc (scientific based knowledge).

In a top down development program such as the groupers project in this study, the officers usually develop their program from this type of knowledge. As mentioned earlier, Pesisir Selatan is categorized as a poor district. Most of its development programs are supported by aid and loan from the central government and donor agencies. Therefore, the concept and milestone of a development program in general has been discussed, planned and decided at the central level. Even so, the district officers are indeed having a possibility to adapt and adjust the program into their condition and needs. Yet, this study in accordance to the groupers project found that having considered their capacity and capability i.e. human resources, finance, knowledge, skill, and experience, the officers in this district is more likely to be a passive implementing actor that depends so much on the finance and advice from the central government than an active implementing actor.

The difference with regard to the knowledge triggers dilemma within the officers. They are bound to conduct a development program based on scientific knowledge which sometimes is not suit to the situation in the field. The overfishing issue as one major reason to endorse the need to shift the way of fishing from capturing to culturing is one example. On the paper, it is said that there is an overfishing practice in this district which causes the environmental depletion. Yet, the officers and also the fishermen do not see this knowledge as true as they do not see the practice in this district. Therefore, the officers do not bring this idea when introducing the culturing program.

The dilemmas with regard to the knowledge can constraint the implementation of a development program. The seaweed project can be one of the examples. The officers know that on the paper there is a huge demand of the

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seaweed for industry. Based on this knowledge, they encourage the fishermen to work harder in culturing the seaweed. Moreover, the officers are very capable in transferring the technical knowledge of seaweed culture. Resonance with their knowledge and spirit, the fishermen multiply their effort to culture the seaweed. Tons of success crops are achieved. Yet, reaching the harvest time the officers know that they do not have a direct channel to the market. They become insecure and doubtful regarding the marketing of the product. Even though they try to hide this feeling, the fishermen capture it. It triggers the same feeling (insecurity and doubt) among the fishermen. Consequently, it degrades the credibility of the officers among the fishermen.

In relation to the process of modernization, this study found that even though the community in general and the fishermen in particular at the beginning were worried and reluctant in receiving and adopting a development program, they decided to give it a try. Considering their limitation in knowledge, skill, technology and network; the fishermen are aware that they need assistance from the government to improve their livelihood condition. In general, the fishermen perceived government efforts to modernize the fishing practice as a positive thing.

Problems with perception, trust, and credibility permeate the intervention process. Lack of mutual understanding of the actors both the fishermen and the officers constrains the development intervention. Many officers still have a top-down attitude and behave as a saint giving aid to the poor, uneducated, pessimist and paralyzed community in the name of development program. Meanwhile many fishermen still perceive of the government as incapable, untrustworthy, irresponsible and corrupt. Nevertheless, these negative perceptions gradually decrease with the improvement in communication and relation between them.

### **6.1.2 Coping With The Challenges**

Human being as an active individual actor and social actor has a capacity to process social experience and invent ways of coping with the problems,

challenges, and conflicting situations even under the most extreme form of coercion (Long 1989:223). In accordance with question number two, *how do different actors cope with the problems related to the development intervention*, this study found several strategies: kinship-social network, reorganization, instruction-postpone, silent-ignoring, and blaming. Below is a short explanation and example extracted from the groupers and the seaweed cases.

Human beings tend to draw on their kinship and social network to cope with the problems and challenges in their life, including the ones regarding the development intervention. This coping strategy has been used and reused by human beings in general and the actors in particular, and proven to be quite effective. One example can be seen in the groupers case. Mawardi who was not selected as the member of the groupers group, successfully used and manipulated his wife's kinship with the village leader in order to be put on the project. The other example can be seen when the seaweed fishermen contacted some migrated villagers to help them selling the seaweed in their migration place i.e. Painan, Padang and Pekan Baru.

A similar type of coping strategy is also practiced by the officers. They use their social network perhaps also their kinship i.e. in approaching the possible investors to develop the groupers and seaweed projects. In contrary to the fishermen, the officers have another type of network that they use very often to cope with the challenges in a development program that is professional network. The officers use this network to get assistance and budget from the central government and the donor agencies. They also use this relationship to get assistance from the other offices such as the Lampung province MFO with regard to the groupers seed when the West Sumatra province MFO failed to develop the seed.

The second strategy is reorganization. After defining the problems and challenges in the development project, people try to find the advantageous solution by negotiating their concerns, condition and capacity with the others.

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The pattern of reorganization can be seen for example when the groupers group decided to hand in the management of the groupers and *keramba* to Mawardi and Kasman with some conditions. The other example is when the MFO urged the district's government to share the responsibility of developing the seaweed project with regard to the challenges in marketing. Having considered the MFO's concerns, the district government assigned the MIO, the cooperative office and BPD to cooperate with the MFO. When Mawardi gave up using the traditional type of cooperation in the groupers culture and decided to adopt the modern type cooperation based on monthly salary is also one example of reorganization in order to cope with the problems and challenges in the development programs.

The third strategy is by seeking advice and instructions from the central government and/or donor agencies. As written earlier, the new decentralization system brings some changes in the governance system as well as the regulations. These changes are quite often confusing and stressful. In the top-down type project such as the groupers, when facing a problem, the officers at the district's level choose to seek advice and instructions from the central government. If they find that the advices and instructions are suitable for the case and their condition, they will adopt it for example with regard to model of the group and the type of project (revolving) because it is easier and safer. Yet, if they do not find the rationality of the advice or instruction, among several choices the officers in this case chose to postpone the project for example with regard to the financing the second group of groupers project. Postponing the project is taken in order to avoid misinterpretation in conducting the development program and handling the expenses that can harm the officers and the district's government.

Ignoring what others say or keeping silent is also a strategy to cope with challenges in development project with regard to different kinds of interest and knowledge. At the community level, the member of groupers' group and the officers choose to ignore the negative tones from the other community members toward them and toward the project such as "the groupers is a project for the hopeless", "the village leader is being partisan", or "the officers are corrupt"

because based on their experience the negative tones will always permeate the development intervention. It is the way of conducting a development program as well as the way of living in the village. People will always comment of what others do. Instead of wasting too much efforts and energy to counter these tones, ignoring or keeping silent is seen as more advantageous.

Silence is also chosen when the actors are unsure about something for example with regard to the continuity of the groupers project. The officers have not gotten any written approval for the next project, neither has the cancellation. Instead of giving inaccurate information that could trigger a future problem, the officers choose to be silent. However, from the groupers and seaweed cases, this kind of strategy has some unintended negative consequences. It can decrease the actors' credibility, trigger lack of trust, insecure feeling, etc.

The other coping strategy is by blaming other people, culture or system around the actors. From my observation, this kind of coping strategy is usually used when the actors need to make a justification of something vague i.e. when they are unsure and unsecure about the causality of something or what actually happen. Blaming the culture of Minang tribe is forwarded to explain why the group system does not work in the development projects. Blaming the other is used to justify why the credit always default. Blaming the system is used to justify why the seaweed products fail to reach the market.

In conclusion, the groupers and seaweed projects show that actors have different strategies to cope with the problems and challenges in the development intervention programs. The actors will choose the most advantageous decision. Their coping strategies are reflected in the forms and practices of their lifeworld, as mention by Stølen:

Variation in organizational forms and cultural practices are to a large extent the outcome of the different ways in which social actors organizationally and cognitively deal with different life situations and accommodate themselves to the interest and "design for living" of others. (Stølen 1991:2)

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When these coping strategies are repeatedly practiced, it becomes a structure in people's life.

As stated before, both the groupers and the seaweed projects fail to evolve. In general, I found that most of the problems and challenges are related to the management of the project. The human factor is the major constraint. Tough in the seaweed case, natural disaster i.e. Aceh tsunami in 2004, also takes an important aspect constraining the project.

The seaweed project has already stopped but the groupers project is still "survive". Actually the groupers project is no longer part of the MCRM project. It is no longer a group work. It has been taken over by Mawardi who is continuing the project by himself. Nevertheless, for some needs and considerations, it is still forwarded and reported as the MCRM project i.e. in relation to the central government, donors, and media.

Based on my observation and discussion with some people in the village, I note some characteristics why some people survive or last longer in the project compared to the others. Limitation in choice is perhaps the major factor. As written in chapter four, Mawardi was bankrupt when he returned home from the migration place. He did not have many choices on how to survive in the village. The groupers culture basically is the best solution he could do. Meanwhile the other members of the group who are used to live in the village have more choices. They decided to quit working on the project because had better opportunity to gain a living.

The other characteristic perhaps is the working experience and work ethos. Mawardi had been living and working in other places for about 20 years before he returned to the village. He has seen and experienced many new things and challenges. Besides being a fisherman, he also experienced working as a merchant. Perhaps it influences his working method and ethos. He is more likely to adopt a new practice and is more patient than the other fishermen in the village. Living experience for quite a long time outside the village is indeed

distinguishing some people i.e. Mawardi, Kasman or Suri from the others. Even so, a strong personal interest and strong will holds a very important aspect in distinguishing those people particularly Mawardi, the survival of the groupers project, from the others. As mentioned in chapter three, this tribe in general and village in particular is a migrate people. Many of the villagers had experiences from living outside the village. What makes them different with Mawardi is perhaps that most of them had a short term migration mostly for a seasonal job that had been already fixed for them. Their experience and work ethos are perhaps much different from Mawardi's.

In accordance to the failure of the projects, there are several factors explaining why it happens. However, this study found the type of the project, revolving fund within a group scheme, as the major factor. Both cases show that no group lasts until the end of the project. The cooperation among members breaks before one circle of the project i.e. harvest. It is quite interesting because as fishermen, people use to work in group. Fishing, especially using *bagan* (the main vessel in this village) requires working in a group.

One of the requirement criteria for participating in government project is that one has to work in a group. However, the project group is different from the traditional group. From the observation and interviews, I can say that basically the fishermen do not really understand the idea and aim of working in a group. In general, they think that it is stressful to work within a group where the members are fixed. Since the group is required by the government, it is considered as a formal group where a structure consisting of the chairman, the secretary, etc is required. This structure is perceived as a vehicle to make someone more powerful than the other. A group is seen as something hierarchical and not dynamic.

The fishermen in this village are indeed used to work within a group that is a flexible group based on an agreement between the owner of the fishing equipments i.e. *bagan* and the member. Someone can quit the cooperation when he no longer feels comfortable. The scheme regarding the income sharing and job



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description is fixed so that no one will be harmed i.e. the owner of a *bagan* gets 50 percent share and the members get the other 50 percent to be divided evenly among them. The owner is responsible for i.e. the marketing and the maintaining the vessel while the member is responsible in capturing the fish.

Regarding the groupers and seaweed group, the fishermen are not sure about their position, job description, sharing system of the harvest and what makes them different within a group. This doubt makes them feel unsecure. Moreover, based on their experience, no group survives in this village and other neighbouring villages. Therefore the fishermen in particular and the villagers in general say that a group is not workable in this village. Despite of being useful, a group triggers many harms and conflicts in their livelihood.

However, it should be noted that in these cases, the fishermen accept working in a group even though they are not really comfortable and optimistic about it. The fishermen know that in the decentralization period, most government projects are given to a group. In the groupers' project, the fishermen understand that without working in a group they will never manage to continue the project because the government will only finance the project for the first three months. The fishermen will have to finance it until the harvest (9 months). Working in a group is the best decision they can make.

Regarding the revolving type of the projects, in general the fishermen and the community understand the idea very well. They know that the opportunity for the next project depends on the success of the first project. They know that the revolving scheme implies the condition that the project is no longer a (free) aid. However, they are not committed to the conditions bound them in the beginning of the project. After calculating potential harm that could happen to them, the beneficiaries of the revolving fund projects reject the idea of the urgency to evolve the project. Based on their experience, there is no success story of the revolving fund project in their near environment. They also know that there is no serious consequence toward them if the project fails or default.

In spite of the failure, this study found a success story. Regarding the transfer of knowledge and skill, almost all of community in general and fishermen in particular praise the government. According to them, the government particularly the MFO officers have excellently done their job. I assume it correlates with the nature of the MFO office and its officers. The MFO used to be a technical bureau under the agricultural office. Majority of the officers are taught within the science and technology discipline and very competent for a transfer of technology. If there is another chance to develop these projects in the future, it will not be difficult with regard to the technical skill. However, there are many things that should be done with regard to the management of the project.

## 6.2 Development and Decentralization

One of the aims of this study is to see the relationship between decentralization and development. There are three questions to be answered in this study: *1) what have been changing in the development practices in the decentralization period, 2) is decentralization system essential in development project, and 3) how effective could it manage resources, empower community and alleviate poverty?*

Through the two cases analyzed in this study, I found that there have been some changes in the development practices. This is most evident at the government level. Decentralization gives the authority to the district's government to be more independent in managing itself. The district's offices are now in charge of initiating development programs and apply for available funding directly to the central government and the potential donors. They have neither any obligation to coordinate with the other district's offices nor obligation to be approved by the provincial's offices. Today, an approval from the Regent and District Secretary is sufficient to propose and implement a development program. A more flexible and less bureaucratic environment to work within a development program is evident.

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In effort to implement the development program, the government both at the central and districts' level promote and apply a new principle entitled as good public governance. With this principle, the officers are required to identify themselves as public servants who give professional, honest and fair services to the public (Law No.43/1999 article 3). Empowering community is one way to implement this principle. Yet, the groupers and seaweed cases show that this principle has not been fully understood and implemented in the development practices in this district. However, it should be noted that some indicators toward the implementation of this principle are indeed taking place. The officers are now more adaptive toward people's needs. They are also more transparent in conducting the development programs.

With a regard to the type of development interventions in the decentralization period, among other things a bottom up approach is more promoted rather than a top down approach. This approach is believed to be more successful than the other in empowering community and improve their livelihood because basically the initiative and ownership of the project belongs to the community. The government's role is indeed very important because as shown by the seaweed case, in a traditional/poor community, people are not able to develop a new way of livelihood without assistance from the government due to their limitation in i.e. capital, skill, technology, market, etc.

In this approach, the intervention appears in the middle of process. The government usually acts as the facilitator to assist community achieving their goals. To do so, the government is required to be capable and adaptive to the situation. Without this capacity, instead of being successful a development intervention will be a failure. The impact will include both material aspect such as money, equipment, etc and immaterial aspect such as courage, credibility, trust, etc.

Actually, the bottom up approach is not a new approach, even before the decentralization period, the government had already conducted development

intervention programs using this approach. The difference is that now all actors in the development programs are more aware of their position, status and rights. People are not merely defined as the recipient of the project but also the owner. People are more willing and confident to express their opinions and feelings.

Since decentralization is still a new practice, there are many problems and obstacles to implement it. In relation to the development programs, this study found that the idea of decentralization which is usually promoted by the central government and donor agencies (on paper) had already vanished at the implementation stage. It happens because there is a different perception between the government at the central level and the government and people at the district level on the idea and definition of decentralization. Most people in these cases, perhaps also in this district, perceive a decentralized development program as being planned, financed, and conducted by the district government. Since the groupers and the seaweed projects are financially and technically supported by the central government, both projects are not seen as part of a decentralization program. Even so, based on my observation, to some extent the values of decentralized development programs under the good public governance principles such as participation, openness and civil society partnership are permeating the implementation of the groupers and seaweed projects.

This study also found that neither district government nor fishermen/community is really familiar with the idea of decentralized development programs. Thus they are not really optimistic that decentralization is essential and useful to develop their district. The main reason is lack of budget and human resources to support its own development. As mentioned earlier, most of the budget to develop this district is still supported by the central government as well the development programs. Most of the programs have been designed and planned at the central level. After 32 years being controlled by the central government, both the district government and the fishermen (community) are not yet used to be independent. The groupers and seaweed cases show that both

actors on many occasions are still emphasizing the power and importance of the central government.

In accordance to question number two, *is decentralization system essential in development project*, I will argue that it is indeed essential. Decentralization brings the urgency to empower people, manage local natural resources, democracy, and flexibility in conducting a development program. These values are positive and supportive to enable a development at the local level. Even though in general the groupers and seaweed projects fail to reach its goal in term of income generation, these projects are quite successful in empowering the officers and the fishermen. The officers are now more aware on their capacity and needs to conduct a development program. The fishermen are now more aware on their status and needs in the development program as well their capacity to conduct it. Both officers and fishermen have established a better relationship. This is perhaps an early stage of more successful decentralized development programs.

In relation to question number three, *how effective could it manage resources, empower community and alleviate poverty*, this study found that the idea and practice of decentralization has not yet been effective in managing natural resources, empowering community and alleviating poverty. There are still many obstacles to be solved. Among them are the understanding of the decentralization itself, the idea and practice of the new government system including the new principle (good public governance), the code of conduct, the regulation, coordination among government offices, budget, and also the understanding of who are the participating actors in the development program, their culture, their need, etc.

### 6.3 Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the two cases presented in this study, I would conclude that the decentralization indeed influences the implementation of development programs

in the system, principles, and actors' behaviour. Although within my informants' emic perspective, the idea and practices of decentralization are not fully explicitly recognized; this study found that actually the idea and principle of decentralization are being adopted and permeate to a certain degree within the development practices. Regarding the methodology of this study, it should be noted that this conclusion does not represent all the development intervention in modernizing fisheries sector in Indonesia.

Considering that the implementation of the decentralization in Indonesia has not been more than a decade, we should realize that it is still very young. Many challenges and complexities are emerging during the implementation of this new system. This study can give insight to the development actors that a development/modernization program is dynamic and cannot be done instantly. There are many things that are negotiated in the process of intervention. The outcome of the program is very likely to be different from the targeted plan. Based on the two case studies, the development actors should realize that many things need to be done and improved. The management of development intervention, the man power, the network, the law and its implementation, the attitude and behaviour of the development actors are among several essential factors that need attention.

In the development sector, there are some other powerful actors such as multilateral agencies, NGOs, and media. Yet, since this study was conducted at a very micro level where the direct participating actors were only government and fishermen, this study cannot capture the complexity of a development program involving actors mentioned earlier. Perhaps, some other studies within the issue of modernizing fisheries and decentralization could fill in this gap.

Considering that 70 percent of Indonesian territory is ocean where only 30 percent has been explored by 4 million artisanal fishermen, I would recommend that more interdisciplinary studies particularly related to the livelihood of the

fishermen, the almost always neglected actors in Indonesian development programs, are needed.

In relation to the methodology, I would suggest that more thorough and holistic studies are needed. Two cases study will not be enough to understand the complexities of the development in the fisheries sector in Indonesia. I am also aware that some ethnographic aspects regarding the fishermen and the government are not coherently answered in this study particularly because I did not live long enough with my informants to really understand and access the holistic realm of a development program.

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## **Interviews:**

Adril: The District Secretary. Painan: 22 June 2007

Mustaf: The Head of Marine Coastal Resource Management Project. Painan: July-August 2007 and December 2007-January 2008

Nazrizal: The Head of Nagari Empowerment Office. Painan: July 2007

Syamsuarli: The Vice Head of Bank Samudra. Painan: July 2007

Yosmeri: The Head of Marine and Fisheries office. Painan: July 2007

Yosky: Agriculture Division, the District Planning Board. Painan: January 2008

Zein, Alfian: Professor at the Fisheries Department, University of Bung Hatta. Padang: June-July 2007

Fishermen and Villagers. Mandeh Village: July 2007, November 2007-January 2008

Officers in MFO, Bappeda, Tourism. Painan: June-July 2007, November 2007-January 2008

Officers at Sub District office and field officers. Mandeh Village: November 2007-January 2008.



## Appendix 1: List of Research Informants

### The Officers Group:

The Officer Group	Formal Interview	Informal Interview
Institution	Number of informants	Number of informants
MFO	6	4
NEO		2
Bappeda	1	1
Environment Office		1
Tourism Office		1
Industrial Office		1
District government	1	
Sub-district government	1	
Agriculture bank/cooperative	1	
Total	10	10

### The Fishermen Group:

The Fishermen Group	
	Formal and informal Interview
	Number of informants
<b>Main Respondents</b>	
The Groupers group members	4
The Seaweed group	4
The village leader	1
Total	9
<b>Additional Respondents</b>	
The cultural leader (adat)	2
The Youth organization leader	1
Teachers	5
Health worker	1
Others	15
Total	24

## Appendix 2: Interview Guide

### I. First Field Work (June-July 2007)

As mentioned in the chapter two, I conducted field work in two periods. In the first period (June-July 2007), I harnessed my research to see what happen in the outreach fisher community after decentralization with a regard to development intervention. I would like to compare the fishermen who received intervention and who did not. Below are some questions I used in my interviews. It should be noted that while conducting the interviews, some questions have been modified.

#### A. Questions for the fishermen

##### 1. Traditional fishermen who own the boat but do not do fishing (with intervention)

- Why don't you fishing your self?
- How is the management of fishing? Share between owner and worker? Share among workers? Time constrain? Time share? Marketing? Why did you choose this kind of management?
- How did you get your boat?
- What kind of fish you have? Where do you sell it (which market)? Why?
- Is there any change in this kind of management/practice? Why?
- What is the impact of the change (management, amount of share, marketing, etc) to your life?
- How do you cope with this condition? What/who support you?
- What motivate you to participate in government program or adopt new idea/technology?
- How did you participate within the program/ adopt new idea/technology (being chosen or volunteer)? Who approach you?
- How do you understand this intervention (government program or new idea/technology)?
- How do you experience intervention?
- What kind of advantage or disadvantage that you feel you have?
- Why don't you participate in fish farming?

##### 2. Traditional fishermen who work on other's boat (with intervention)

- Why don't you have your boat?
- Have you ever owned one before?
- How is the management of fishing? Share between owner and worker? Share among workers? Time constrain? Time share? Marketing? Why you choose this kind of management?
- Is there any change in this kind of management/practice? Why?

- What is the impact of the change (practice, time allocation, amount of share, choice of fish to be captured, marketing, etc) to your life?
- How do you cope with this condition? What/who support you?
- What motivate you to participate in government program or adopt new idea/technology?
- How did you participate within the program/ adopt new idea/technology (being chosen or volunteer)? Who approach you?
- How do you understand this intervention (government program or new idea/technology)?
- How do you experience intervention?
- What kind of advantage or disadvantage that you feel you have?

### **3. Traditional fishermen who own the boat and practice fishing (with intervention)?**

- Why do you choose to practice fishing?
- How do you manage your fishing activity? Capturing, marketing?
- How do you experience practicing fishing since 6 years ago?
- How do cope with the changing condition? What/who support you?
- What motivate you to participate in government program or adopt new idea/technology?
- How did you participate within the program/ adopt new idea/technology (being chosen or volunteer)? Who approach you?
- How do you understand this intervention (government program or new idea/technology)?
- How do you experience intervention?
- What kind of advantage or disadvantage that you feel you have?

### **4. Non traditional fishermen who own fishing farming or seaweed farming**

- Who introduce you with this kind of practice?
- What motivate you to try this new practice?
- Who help you implementing this practice? What kind of aid did you receive?
- How is the process? Permission, nutrition for fish? Placing the keramba? Who supervise from government? How you use the sea (kapling2)?
- How do you experience managing this practice? If you have workers, how do you manage the time and share between them and you and among them.
- How do you cope with the problem you face? How did you see people's perception when you started it?
- How this choice affects your livelihood?

### **5. Non traditional fishermen who work on fishing farming or seaweed farming?**

- Why do you choose to work on fishing farming or seaweed farming?
- What motivate you? Who support you?
- How do you manage your time, skill, income from this practice? How is the share/payment from the owner?
- How do you experience this practice? How do you cope with the problem?
- How this choice affects your livelihood?

**6. Traditional fishermen who own the boat but do not do fishing (without intervention)**

- Why do you choose just to share boat and not to fishing?
- How is the management of fishing? Share between owner and worker? Share among workers? Time constrain? Time share? Marketing? Why did you choose this kind of management?
- Is there any change in this kind of management/practice? Why?
- What is the impact of the change (management, amount of share, marketing, etc) to your life?
- How do you cope with this condition? What/who support you?
- Did you know there were some programs from government? What hinder you to participate (unluckily being not chosen, or decide not to participate, or else)?
- Did you know some new idea/technology in practicing fishing? What hider you to adopt those?
- What kind of advantage or disadvantage that you feel you have by not participating in the program?

**7. Traditional fishermen who work on others' boat (without intervention)**

- Why do you work on other's boat?
- How is the management of fishing? Share between owner and worker? Share among workers? Time constrain? Time share? Marketing? Why you choose this kind of management?
- Is there any change in this kind of management/practice? Why?
- What is the impact of the change (practice, time allocation, amount of share, choice of fish to be captured, marketing, etc) to your life?
- How do you cope with this condition? What/who support you?
- Did you know there were some programs from government? What hinder you to participate (unluckily being not chosen, or decide not to participate, or else)?
- Did you know some new idea/technology in practicing fishing? What hider you to adopt those?
- What kind of advantage or disadvantage that you feel you have by not participating in the program?

**8. Traditional fishermen who own boat and practice fishing activity (without intervention)**

- Why do you choose to practice fishing?
- How do you manage your fishing activity? Capturing, marketing?
- How do you experience practicing fishing since 6 years ago?
- How do cope with the changing condition? What/who support you?
- Did you know there were some programs from government? What hinder you to participate (unluckily being not chosen, or decide not to participate, or else)?
- Did you know some new idea/technology in practicing fishing? What hider you to adopt those?
- What kind of advantage or disadvantage that you feel you have by not participating in the program?

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## **B. Questions for the government officers (MFO)**

### **I. General questions:**

- How is the potential of fisheries/marine in this district?
- What do you think about the fishermen and fishermen's community?
- What kind of problems they have?
- What government does to help them? Technically and non-technically?
- How?
- What are the obstacles?
- What is the outcome?

### **II. Regarding management program**

- What kind of programs available for the fishermen in Mandeh?
- How to finance the program?
- How to conduct the program? What is the code of conduct?
- How is the coordination within office and among offices?
- What are the obstacles, how to solve and outcomes?

### **III. Regarding Decentralization**

- What is decentralization?
- How does decentralization influence the work of MFO?
- How does decentralization influence the development program?
- What are the positive and negative impacts of decentralization with regard to increase people's livelihood?
- Has the district been able to develop and finance the development programs? why?
- With regard to issue of poverty where some people see it as the way to propose some money to the central government, what do you think?

I also conducted several interviews with the non-MFO officers. Basically the questions are related to how decentralization influence the development practice, how they perceive decentralization, what have been changing and how is the outcome.

## **II. Second Field Work (November 2007- January 2008)**

In the second term of field work (November 2007-January 2008), I decided to focus on two development projects, the groupers and the seaweed project. I emphasized my interview from my observation and previous interviews. I used un-structured questions.

**Below are the main themes of my questions for the fishermen:**

- How do you perceive the groupers/seaweed program?
- What are the problems and how to cope with the problems?
- What is the difference between groupers/seaweed projects with previous development project?
- How do you see the relation between decentralization and development project?

**For the officers group, below are some questions I asked to my informants.****I. Regarding the MCRM Program:**

- How to conduct the MCRM Program?
- How to introduce the project, how the fishermen perceive it, what are the problems, and how to solve it?
- Is there any cultural constraint when introduce the program, what and why?
- Why the program should be given to a group? Is there a (baseline) study on the urgency of group for the fishermen? Is there any training/guidance for the fishermen on how to work in a group? How is the development of the group? What kind of group's conflict that constraint the program? How does government mediate it?
- How to supervise the program after the group break down? Who supervise the program?
- What is the future plan regarding the group and project?
- How is the coordination within the office and between this office and other offices?
- MFO vs BI vs BPD vs other offices?

**II. Regarding the evaluation of development program (I try to confirm information I get from previous interviews)**

- Have you ever been disappointed with the development program? With who and why?
- Do you ever think to give up the development program?
- Some fishermen assume that they have a big contribution in the failure of the program and they assume that if there is another program but then being postponed, it is because the government has given up or angry at them, what do you think?
- Some people say that they know (and some in doubt) about the revolving fund type project whether it is an aid or credit. They come to conclusion that it is an aid because they have never seen others pay back the credit and they have never seen the consequence of not paying. How do you see this?

**III. General questions about the program management**

- How is the process of development planning in this office?
- Finance?
- Human resources? In the office and in the field (program)?
- Code of conduct, policy, regulation?

- 
- Coordination within office, between office and the other district's offices, between office and the central government?
  - Relation of decentralization with the routine in the office?
  - Future plan? How?

#### **IV. General questions about development intervention programs**

- Who plan the programs? Does it depend on MFO's plan or the availability of budget's support from the central government?
- So far, how is the empowerment program toward the fishermen? In general, which program is more available, top down approach or bottom up approach?
- How do you see the difference between these approaches?
- How do you see the readiness of your beneficiaries? Are they fishermen ready for a new thing? Why?
- For the intervention program (credit, aid, etc), who actually decide on who are eligible to get the intervention? How far is district's government authority on this? How far is the authority of the villagers/recipients of program?

#### **V. General questions about relation between the livelihood of fishermen and environment**

- Regarding the environment, does the practice of capturing *teri* boiling it in the sea harm the environment and ecosystem? What kind of harm?
- Could *keramba* stand as the replacement of fish habitat (rumpon)?
- Why the amount of fish is decreasing? Do you have any data on it? Is it because poison, bom, etc? What has the government done? Obstacles? Outcomes?
- There are some aspirations from the fishermen/community for the government to be stricter/strong on the harmful practices. How is the procedure?
- Relation between the quality and quantity of sea biota with development intervention programs (tourism, industry)?
- Relation between the quality and quantity of sea biota with the illegal logging done by the community?

## Appendix 3: Map of Mandeh Village



Source: <http://mandehtourism.com/>



## Appendix 4: The Groupers Project in Pictures



picture 1: Keramba

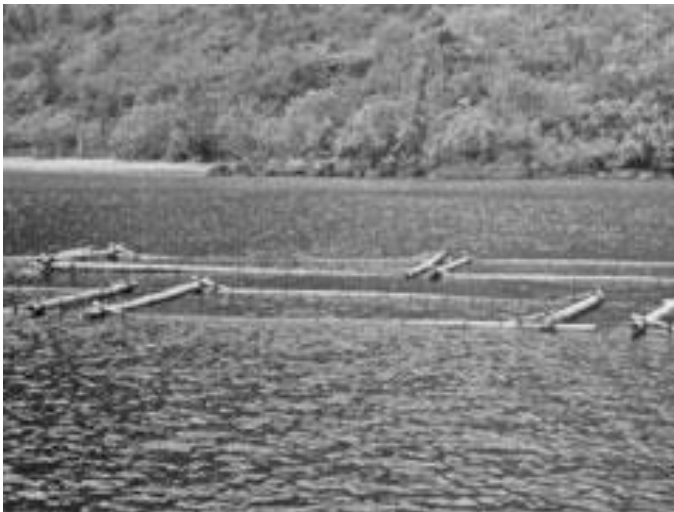


Picture 2: The Groupers (kerapu)

## Appendix 5: The Seaweed Project on Picture



Picture 1: Harvesting Seaweed (picture is taken from the official site of Pesisir Selatan, [www.pesisiselatan.go.id](http://www.pesisiselatan.go.id). The project had stopped when I conducted my research)



Picture 2: The seaweed rack (picture is taken from the official site of Pesisir Selatan, [www.pesisiselatan.go.id](http://www.pesisiselatan.go.id). The project had stopped when I conducted my research)