FGD I

Topic: REVITALIZATION PROGRAM OF KOPI ULU

The history of robusta coffee in Paninggahan is an interesting story. Based on information obtained from the local community, the first coffee in Paninggahan was the *Robusta* species. Historically, a 1050 ha coffee enclave in Paninggahan, situated between 700 and 900 MASL on the northern hillsides of Lake Singkarak, was the most important Robusta coffee plantation in West Sumatra province.

In 1826, the Dutch colonial government started a coffee plantation program in the area to meet export needs. The local people demanded that they manage the plantation themselves but would sell all production to the colonial government. At the beginning of the program, all newly married couples in the Paninggahan area were obliged to clear 2 ha of forest to plant Robusta coffee. Today this area is known by local people as *kopi ulu*.



Figure 1. Kopi Ulu, genuine Robusta coffee species as one of germplasm richness in Paninggahan *(Photo credit: Rachman Pasha)*

In 1932, local community leaders appealed to the Dutch government for the coffee plantation to be returned to the community. The request was later granted under decree no. 469/B/1934. The popularity amongst local people of *kopi ulu* began to decline during 1950–1965 since there were a lot of rebel activities in the area that frightened most farmers. Coffee prices also fell during the period and farmers were no longer motivated to manage their land because the old coffee trees produced far less than was needed to cover the high production costs. Eventually, the *kopi ulu* area was abandoned.

At the present time, with world coffee prices at a high, the farmers of Paninggahan village wanted to revitalize the abandoned *kopi ulu* area. Within the*kopi ulu* area there is a coffee enclave within the state forest land that is recognized as belonging to Paninggahan village. The enclave was located where the traditional coffee gardens had been largely overgrown by secondary forest after the area was abandoned in 1958.

The Rewarding Upland Poor for the Environmental Services they provide (RUPES) project was identified as a program that could support the revitalization of the abandoned *kopi ulu* area and assist the Paninggahan village. Supported by the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), RUPES started operating in the Singkarak region in 2004. The beginning stages of the RUPES project involved comprehensive community consultation and discussions with Paninggahan village.

In 2006, a number of local leaders involved in the RUPES project started to revitalize the *kopi ulu* area. The revitalization included a needs assessment, mapping land ownership, identifying coffee production techniques, developing a master plan, and searching for funding support.

In 2007, the RUPES project, in collaboration with the Indonesian Coffee and Cacao Research Center, began the coffee revitalization program through two approaches: increasing the productivity of robusta coffee and; adding value to organic robusta coffee.

Unfortunately, this program stopped prematurely as a result of lack of certainty of land status. Problems arose after the Forest Service of West Sumatra researched land ownership in the area and stated that since 1999 the area had no longer belonged to the community but to the Government.

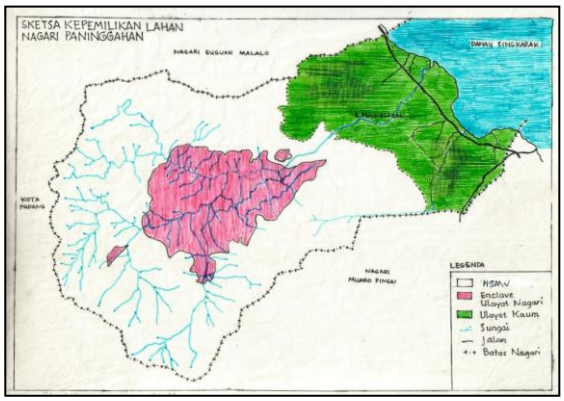


Figure 2. Map of enclave area of Kopi Ulu in Paninggahan area. The area shown in red color *(source: Nagari Paninggahan office)*

The community rejected this conclusion for the reason that the Forest Service did not inform them or consult the landowners in determining boundaries of a land area that they had considered rightfully theirs for decades.

Given its status as a research institute under the aegis of the Ministry of Forestry, the World Agroforestry Centre and also the RUPES project team had to wait until the Government and community reached an agreement on the status of the land before continuing the revitalization program, which meant that the program was dormant for approximately four years.

After going through a long process of negotiation between both parties, In July 2011, the Ministry of Forestry through the Minister of Forestry's decree no.304/Menhut-II/2011 approved changes to the status of some forest areas at several locations in West Sumatra. The coffee enclave in Paninggahan was included in this.

In response, RUPES, together with the Solok District Forest Service and the Government of Nagari Paninggahan, conducted a one-day workshop to explained to the Paninggahan community the status of the *kopi ulu* plantation based on the publication of the new Government policy relating to land management and forest areas. The community demanded clear legal certainty of the status of the land and also sought support from the Government to continue the revitalization program. In addition, the workshop sought agreement on the form of land management of the plantation in the future.

The workshop produced several results, such as almost completely clarifying the status of the *kopi ulu* plantation and confirming that it would be returned to the community of Paninggahan. However, because the decree had not been issued by the local government, the community was asked to be patient and wait until the matter was fully legally resolved.

In addition, the World Agroforestry Centre hoped that the issues raised in the workshop would be followed up by the local government and included in the agenda of Government agencies such as Bappeda. It was anticipated that in the future the program could increase the community's economic welfare as well as support the development of agroforestry plantations.