

Animal husbandry is closely related to economic and food issues. But who would have thought, livestock also contributes to sustainable development, including in Papua. This is what makes Grasela Kambu, an eleventh-semester student from the Faculty of Animal Science, University of Papua, interested in exploring it.

The 22-year-old woman is coming from Maybrat Regency, West Papua Province, an area of 5461.69 km<sup>2</sup> and is known by the three major tribes known for a long time, namely Ayamaru, Aifat, and Altinyo--often also referred to as "A3". They make a living from being a State Civil Apparatus (ASN) and activities such as farming, stone mining, sand mining, catching fish in rivers or lakes, and raising pigs.

Apart from being economically reliable, pigs are also of great social, cultural and religious value. Pigs are often used by the Maybrat community in traditional activities as wedding dowries, banquets, payment instruments, and fines; religious activities; or as a symbol of peace during social conflicts. The very high use of pigs is an economic opportunity as well as an alternative to poverty alleviation. Unfortunately, the productivity of pigs in Maybrat Regency is still relatively low. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the population was only 3,566 in 2018. Hence, the people of Maybrat still have to buy pigs from other areas, such as Sorong and South Sorong. This triggered Grasela's curiosity to explore the potential of pigs in improving the welfare of the Maybrat community.

Livestock itself is not a foreign topic for Grasela. Previously, she was an intern at the Batu Malang Animal Husbandry Training Center (BPPP), and had worked at the Livestock Physiology Laboratory, Faculty of Animal Science, University of Papua, in 2019. It is not surprising that Grasela chose it as a research topic in the 2020 Young Papuan Scientist competition. "This information is expected to be useful for the local government to develop strategies for local commodities, such as pig farming, to become a regional priority program to be developed sustainably in improving the community's economy," she explained.

Grasela conducted her research in October 2020 in nine villages, namely Kambuskato, Fecamah, Arus, Yukase/Serma, Kambufatem, Kumurkek, Kokas, Susumok, and Kartapura, by interviewing local communities and observing residents' activities in raising pigs. As a result, Grasela found that the household income of pig farmers can reach IDR 6 million per year, which is higher than the income from farming of IDR 4 million per year and non-agricultural business of IDR 2 million per year. Pig farming also contributes around 50 percent to the community's household income. This success was achieved because the cultivation of pigs was carried out with good management, so as to increase the production of pigs. Thus, Grasela proves her hypothesis that pigs indeed can contribute to the economy of the Maybrat community. Very cool, right?

However, Grasela suggested that further research is still needed to identify the factors that affect the productivity of pigs in Maybrat Regency. As a Young Papuan Scientist, Grasela hopes that she and other Papuan youths can become researchers of biodiversity, especially in the agricultural sector, which can contribute to sustainable development in the Land of Papua.

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