

UGM Center for Economic Democracy Studies Launches Village Market School Program

Wednesday, 17 February 2021 WIB, By: Salma




UGM Center for Economic Democracy Studies (PSEK) launched a flagship program called Village Market School (Sekolah Pasar Desa) through an online National Seminar discussing “Strategies for Strengthening Village’s Economic Resilience in the New Normal Era” on Tuesday (16/2).

“The village market is facing many challenges during the pandemic. Such underlies PSEK initiatives to develop the market as an important symbol of economic democracy and people’s economy in Indonesia,” said Dr. Hempri Suyatna, member of the UGM PSEK Expert Team.

The market, he explained, was a strategic place that knotted the people’s economy. The agricultural and service sectors also depended on the existence of village markets.

Ministerial Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration No. 14 of 2020 states that the village market has three functions for village communities. Firstly, it functions as a driving force for the village economy, including trade, industry, or services.



Secondly, it acts as a public space and a traditional market for buying and selling activities and the villagers to meet in forging social relationships. Thirdly, it becomes the source of Village Own-source Revenue.

Hempri revealed that during the pandemic, the market faced several challenges, ranging from being a susceptible place to the Covid-19 transmission to its vulnerability to globalization and liberalization, which threatened its existence as the spirit of the people's economy.

"Village markets amid the siege of liberalization, globalization, and pandemic should not be left to fend for themselves. We must strive for state and university support towards the market's existence," he added.

The Village Market School classifies the potential and problems faced by the village market in three aspects. They are intellectual (or human resources), institutional, and material (or infrastructure, technology, business, etc.).

The Village Market School itself is a program that aims to develop the market capacity in these three aspects. The main activities in this program are research, mentoring, and training.

On the same occasion, UGM Vice-Rector for Research and Community Service drg. Ika Dewi Ana, M.Kes., Ph.D. welcomed the national seminar and the Village Market School program by PSEK.

She said these activities showed that strengthening villages' economic resilience in the new normal era must involve cooperation between universities, central and local governments, MSMEs, industries, and the community.

"Hopefully, this will be a moment for us to work together and give each other input on what we can improve to advance Indonesia," she said.

The National Seminar was a means of sharing experiences between academics, economic development practitioners in the central, regional, and village governments, business players, and the people concerned about the rural communities' economic development.

The seminar discussed the development program's effectiveness in strengthening the resilience of economic sectors in rural areas. Among the key speakers were Director-General of Economic

Development and Investment of Villages, Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigrations, Ir. Harlina Sulistyorini, M.Si, and Regent of Kulon Progo, Drs. H. Sutedjo.

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