

ACTOR PHENOMENA: CASE STUDY OF ILLEGAL GOLD MINING IN THE SUSO WATERSHED (DAS SUSO), LUWU REGENCY

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Abstract

This writing investigates the involvement of local actors or powerful people in Indonesia regarding the exploitation of illegal gold mines in the Suso watershed, Luwu district. The involvement of actors in responding to government policies in closing the illegal mines. The results of this research on the involvement of actors show that these actors are seen as local strongmen due to illegal mining activities in the Suso watershed. What is the actor's role that appears and can control the mining activity. The ways in which actors intervene in government policies in closing illegal mining activities. These actors succeeded in building strengths by exploiting the weaknesses of the Country in this case, namely building networks with parties involved in formal and non-formal institutions. The actor's success in building variant power, and succeeding in controlling illegal miners who carry out activities in the gold mine in the Suso watershed, Luwu Regency. Actors manage to control policies. Manipulations carried out by actors to seek profit from illegal mining activities.

Keywords: Actor; gold mine; illegal

A. INTRODUCTION

The rise phenomenon of mining has made the emergence of actors (local strongmen) in Indonesia enter a new era with the existence of a decentralized system that involves many local actors, institutions and cultures that are starting to reappear and play a role in local politics. Local actors are organized, and have local symbols that are brought to the political stage [1]. The mining business development has implications for various aspects, including clean water pollution and the use of polluted agricultural land. This casuistic phenomenon occurs in Luwu Regency, where illegal gold mining in the Suso watershed uses heavy equipment and docket machines. Illegal gold mining is the most phenomenal problem in Luwu Regency, because Suso watershed is a source of life for people in five sub-districts in Luwu Regency. Although the local government sees this phenomenon not as something that must be acted upon. Departing from these conditions, there is a need for law enforcement efforts because it is considered to have major negative implications for various aspects, both social, economic, cultural and for the natural environment. This was also confirmed by the director of Walhi Sulsel, who stated that illegal gold mining in the Suso River is a mining crime practice [2]. Research related to the involvement of illegal gold mining actors

is expected to be used as a reference for researchers who are interested in research on illegal gold mining, thus the more people who do research, the more concern about the upheaval of impacts produced by illegal mining at the local level. In addition, it is expected to contribute to policy makers at the local level in an effort to strengthen mining supervision, so that there is no more illegal mining.

B. METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, using a purposive sampling technique to select informants, meaning that the subjects to be used as informants have been predetermined based on criteria and considerations that are relevant to research needs[3]:

Table 1. Informant Criteria

No	Informant Category	Reasons for Informant Criteria
1	WALHI Sulse	Environmentally concerned organization
2	Luwu Regency Environmental Service	The agency overseeing the mining permit section
3	Member of the Legislative Council of Luwu	Wakil rakyat muara sebuah kebijakan
4	Mining Affected Communities	Parties who feel the impact of illegal mining in the Suso watershed, Luwu regency

C. THEORETICAL REVIEWS

1. General Concept of Actor

In principle, policy actors are those who are always and must be involved in every process of public policy analysis, both functioning as formulators and pressure groups who are always active and proactive in conducting interactions and interrelationships in the context of public policy analysis[4]. At a more macro level, James Anderson's concept revealed that policy actors include internal bureaucratic actors and external actors who always have a concern for policy. They can consist of individual or group actors who participate in every conversation and debate about public policy. Thus, it can be understood that the meaning of actors in relation to public policy is always related to actors and determinants of a policy that interact and interrelate at every stage of the public policy process. It is they who basically determine the pattern and distribution of policies to be carried out by the bureaucracy which in the process of interaction and interrelation tends to be conflictive compared to the harmonious nature of the process itself[5].

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agenda can be distinguished in three forms, namely: 1) Patterns of cooperation (bargaining); 2) Persuasive patterns (persuasion); and 3) Directing pattern (commanding). Anderson emphasized that the bargaining process can occur in three forms, namely: a) Negotiation; b) Take and give; and c) Compromise.

In fact, the bargaining explanation is rooted in the term that if there are two or more actors or groups of actors, each of whom has a certain authority and position but can make adjustments (sharing) that is expected to be built into the discussion system. Thus, negotiations become the first step to form opinions and direct actors to carry out negotiation steps. After the negotiation process between actors takes place in different positions among actors, the principle of giving and receiving then colors the policy-making process which is discussed in the forum of the actors involved. In the end, this process will lead to a compromising process where each actor makes adjustments to the concepts or ideas of other actors so that policies can be decided.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The rise of illegal mining (boxes) in Indonesia has caused deep concern, not only in terms of ecological damage due to the massive degradation of the carrying capacity of the environment, but also has had an impact on the moral degradation of state administrators [6]. Behind the illegal gold mines existence in the Suso River, there are powerful people (actors) who have power over mining activities, such as community leaders, regional heads, DPRD members, NGOs, journalists and thugs [7]. The emergence of actors as local strongmen has a role in escorting capital owners to dominate the exploitation of gold mines in the Suso watershed, the presence of actors can have a huge influence on the mining process. This proves how the role of actor involvement is inseparable from its relationship with investors [8]. In the illegal gold mines operating in the Suso watershed (DAS), Luwu district, the owners of the five illegal gold mines are different. From the results of interviews with the author, in general there are several actors involved in the chain of illegal gold mining in the Suso Watershed, Luwu Regency:

1. Actor Owner of Illegal Gold Mining Capital in the Suso watershed

- a. At the first mine, the owner with the initials PH was more familiarly called opu, from an informant source that opu was a businessman from Luwu district and indicated the family of the regional head. Being close to the authorities has made his illegal gold mine in operation for a long time. On the investor side, the main factor causing them to do mining is, of course, the economic factor.
- b. The owners of the second mines had the initials BM, BM came from outside Luwu with a businessman background. The informant said that BM was the family of a national politician with a blue party. Illegal gold mining activities that have been carried out have clearly received reinforcement from the authorities. Just like other miners, the motive is economic profit, the profit

earned is quite large. That is the reason why capital owners flock to become illegal miners.

- c. The owner of the third mine has the initials RB. In contrast to the two miners previously described, RB has a mining permit c, but in fact he is carrying out a different mining activity, namely a gold mine, and even then the mining permit c was revealed by the Luwu environmental service to have died a long time ago (never been renewed). RB comes from Luwu with an entrepreneur background.
- d. The owners of the fourth mine were indicated by a law enforcement officer with a two-star rank, the informant said that the owners of the capital came from outside Luwu Regency, the existence of a labeling agency made the existence of his illegal mining strong.
- e. The fifth mine is in the name of a village-owned enterprise, where the owner is the Kadundung village head, Luwu district. This mine is also included in the illegal category because it does not have a permit, mining using excavators and using mercury materials clearly damages the environment. However, if mining is illegal, it will harm the community and the country.

These five investors dominate the exploitation of gold mines. They are the owners of excavator machines and equipment; their role is to finance all mining activities. They have mining workers for each mine, up to 20 people, some even come from outside the Luwu Regency area. Workers' wages are paid from mining products, which will be divided among workers around 50% after operational costs. and land rent costs have been incurred. The miner's profit is quite large, which can reach Rp. 25 million per month. Their existence is strong because they have relationships with actors who have a very large influence on the mining process.

2. Actor's Response to Formal Institutions

Efforts to control illegal mining in Luwu have been carried out many times, but gold miners continue to be stubborn. The gold mining activities are carried out day after day, month after month, year after year, environmental damage and horizontal and vertical conflicts are never ignored. The District Head, the Head of the Police, the military district commander, the regional parliament (DPRD), the Attorney General's Office and other officials in the area appear to be powerless in dealing with this condition. So that preventive efforts are carried out by the community such as expelling and emptying miners from illegal gold mining locations by holding demonstrations at the local government. Despite this preventive effort, the Luwu DPRD also formed a special team to prevent illegal mining.

Initially the community formed an alliance called AMASS (Rage of the Suso River Community) and held a demonstration on 21 December 2022 in front of the Luwu DPRD office. Through this action, the AMASS alliance received information

from a member of the Luwu DPRD which confirmed that there was an illegal gold mine operating. After the demonstration by the community, various methods were used by the Luwu DPRD in the process of closing the illegal gold mine in the Suso watershed, Luwu district, but what happened was that mining activities were still going on as usual. It is clear that the actor has quite a strong influence. Informal institutions have been successfully empowered by actors in the Suso Luwu watershed.

Various policies, including regional regulations carried out by regional governments as formal institutions in the regions, can still be influenced by actors in various ways. The mine closure process received a response from the actor by utilizing the network that was carried out to carry out resistance, both physically and by building a patron-client system that was carried out with elements of informal institutions. The involvement of actors in taking over the functions and legitimacy of formal institutions makes them strong and powerful in mining activities. Illegal mining in the Suso watershed has now been closed but a number of tools used by miners have not been acted upon, even though there have been many impacts produced by miners, but illegal gold miners have not received legal action. It proves that actors are present and coordinate personal interests around them as a power base to fight against policies. The actor's strategy is to capture the interests of those in authority who have power.

Recently, there has been a lot of news in the mass media about the destruction of nature by illegal gold miners in Luwu Regency. The latest is the contamination of the Suso River by illegal gold miners due to the presence of mercury used by miners to produce gold. Not only that, a number of productive paddy fields were also polluted by mercury miners' waste, moreover the Suso River flowing through four sub-districts in Luwu district, namely Bajo sub-district, West Bajo sub-district, Belopa and Suli all depend on the water flowing from the river as well as irrigation of paddy fields. Even though currently the illegal gold mining activity in the Suso watershed has been stopped due to the response of residents to the local government and law enforcement officials. However, in the process of their activities so far it has proven that the local government and law enforcement have been negligent in supervising and taking action against illegal gold mining actors who in fact have violated the law, they seem to close their eyes to the gold mining business in extracting natural wealth illegally.

It is proven that the resistance of actors in responding to government policies is by utilizing networks. Statutory provisions are only seen as rules that have no legal force that can control the process of closing a gold mine in the Suso Luwu watershed. The difficulty for the regional government in closing the gold mine in the Suso Luwu watershed is because there are too many interests in the mining activity, plus the power of actors who dominate in the process of closing the gold mine. The resistance of investors by utilizing the power of actors that have been built to fight against the regional government's policies by accommodating the interests of those in power.

E. CONCLUSION

With the existence of illegal mining activities that occurred in the Suso Watershed, Luwu Regency, it is clear what the role of the actors that emerged and were able to control these mining activities. The ways in which actors intervene in government policy. Actors have succeeded in building strengths by exploiting the weaknesses of the State in this case building networks with parties involved in formal and non-formal institutions for the benefit of the group. Thus, the actor succeeded in instilling influence over the miners who carried out activities in the gold mine. Manipulations carried out by actors to seek profits from illegal mining activities, exploiting the power of patron-clients to building networks with various levels of society make actors stronger, making it difficult for formal institutions to carry out the process of closing these illegal mines. Thus, the actors presence in illegal mining activities has a strong impact and they are in a winning position in taking over illegal mining activities in the Suso watershed, Luwu regency.

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