JURNAL BINA PRAJA
Journal of Home Affairs Governance

ARTICLE

Farmers and Poverty

Farmer Complaints and Problems in Mutunggeding Village

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Abstract: Poverty reduction strategies should refer to who and why poverty occurs to make sustainable development programs effective for the welfare of society. The research aims to describe the problem conditions of the farmer households in Mutunggeding Village, Umalulu District, East Sumba Regency, with an overview of natural assets and human and physical resources. The research method used descriptive qualitative based on secondary and primary data from observations, documentation, and in-depth interviews with 102 randomly selected farmers to answer 41 key questions. The study results found that most farmers were young farmers with paddy fields and gardens, had low education and had supporting skills and good health. However, these land assets have yet to function optimally to meet household economic needs due to a scarcity of subsidized fertilizers, minimal hand tractors, and uneven distribution of irrigation water. This condition will be even more severe if the farmer must bear the burden of customs and culture, so you must go into debt and pawn your paddy fields. On the other hand, the strength of the community's social assets is a strong capital to survive against poverty. Therefore, the Government needs to strengthen the synergy of farmer groups, agricultural BP3K, and BUMDesa in overcoming the fundamental problems experienced by farmers and also needs to strengthen the institutional capacity of BUMDesa as a foundation for improving the people's economy.

Keywords: extreme poverty; farming households; Mutunggeding village; East Sumba.

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Citation: Gunawan, F. X. C., Mesa, A. N. L. M., Syah, R. F., Simandjorang, B. M. T. V., & Fitri, S. E. (2022). Farmers and Poverty: Farmer Complaints and Problems in Mutunggeding Village. *Jurnal Bina Praja, 14*(3), 529–541. https://doi.org/10.21787/jbp.14.2022.529-541

Received: 3 October 2022

Accepted: 21 November 2022

Published: 26 December 2022

1. Introduction

One of the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) program in Indonesia is to eradicate all forms of poverty and hunger anywhere within the territory of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) by increasing food and nutrition security and promoting sustainable agricultural development (Alisjahbana & Murniningtyas, 2018). This confirms that the development of a sustainable agricultural sector is expected to become the main pillar supporting a strong and resilient national economic structure.

However, this superior sector, which is synonymous with small communities in rural areas, has not been able to prosper the lives of farming households, namely 44.82 percent are still classified as poor families, and 25.86 percent are non-poor households (BPS - Statistics Indonesia, 2018). Furthermore, BPS - Statistics Indonesia (2019) also noted that as many as 35,703,074 Indonesian people have a main job in agriculture. Haughton et al. (2009) said that poverty is a picture of a person's inability to have the income to meet minimum consumption needs.

East Sumba Regency, which is part of the East Nusa Tenggara Province, still has a high poverty rate; namely, in 2020, it was recorded at 29.65 percent or 77.30 thousand people still living in poverty with an open unemployment rate of 3.49 percent, and the economic growth rate is minus 0.83 percent and as many as 45.55 thousand people or 17.47% are included in a circle of extreme poverty which mostly occurs in farming communities in rural areas (BPS - Statistics Indonesia, 2021). This is an irony in the life of farmers as the main subject of food production, which should have a better level of welfare.

In reality, a state of deprivation continues to occur at the level of the farming community and raises the question, "How can poverty shackle the economy of a farmer's household?"; "What are the problems faced by farmers that cause the household economy of farmers to be low?" Chambers (2006) says that there are at least five groups of meanings for seeing poverty, namely: 1) Income, which is considered not to really answer the problem of poverty itself and only creates endless debate, 2) Desire for material things which are also considered not to help reduce poverty the problem of poverty, 3) Deprivation of abilities mentioned by Amartya Sen which refers to what can and cannot be done concerning skills and physical abilities as well as self-esteem in society, 4) Another multidimensional view of poverty that is mutually reinforcing and not only measuring poverty in terms of shortages only, and 5) Expressions and perceptions of development which must refer to who needs it and for what purpose confirms that the development strategy undertaken must aim to make changes to a better state than before while taking into account the side of the community's economic growth poor.

Djese (2016) mentions that the development movement that has been carried out in the East Nusa Tenggara region in several government periods only deals with macro aspects and ignores the lower layers. conducted research on the lives of poor farmers in Bulukumba District, which stated that the agricultural sector had not contributed to alleviating farmer poverty. Besides that, Astuti (2018) in a study on the Analysis of Factors Affecting Household Poverty in Semarang Regency, it was stated that the dependency rate, number of household members, education level of the head of the household, and the employment sector of the head of the household were factors that significantly influenced household poverty which became complex and multidimensional problems.

Therefore, poverty alleviation efforts must be carried out comprehensively, covering various aspects of people's lives. Mubyarto is of the view that the Pancasila economic concept can be a more appropriate approach to solving poverty problems in Indonesia based on considerations of historical and sociological dimensions which are in line with the ideology and philosophy of Pancasila, namely viewing humans not only as individuals who are homo economicus but also homo socius and homo moralist (Santoso, 2009).

This research was conducted on the household life of poor farmers in Mutunggeding Village, Umalulu District, East Sumba Regency, which has the highest poverty rate among other villages. On the other hand, there is potential for natural resources in the form of agricultural land and abundant irrigation water. Therefore, the fundamental research problem is how the problems causing the low economy of farmer households in Mutunggeding Village, Umalulu District, with a review of aspects: 1) natural assets, namely paddy fields and gardens, 2) human resource assets, namely education and health and 3) physical assets, namely agricultural equipment and livestock.

The research gap that is the novelty of this study is in aspects and dimensions of research related to other multidimensional views of poverty which are mutually reinforcing and not only measuring poverty from a shortage perspective but referring to who needs it and for what purpose so that the development strategy will be carried out can make changes to a better condition than before while still paying attention to the economic growth side of the poor.

Aart Kraay (2004, as cited in Haughton et al., 2009) argues that in the medium term, most of the variation in changes in poverty is due to the existence of policies and institutions that promote broad-based growth, which has become poor pro-growth centers, or it can be explained that the policies and institutions implemented by the Government have so far been considered not to support poverty alleviation efforts. Where research data in several countries explain that there is still little guidance on policies and institutions that have promoted other pro-poor sources of growth that can design appropriate pro-poor policies.

2. Methods

The research was carried out from August 2021 to December 2021 using a qualitative approach which is subjective and historical based on the reality that occurred in the lives of 510 farmer households living in four hamlets in Mutunggeding Village, Umalulu District, East Sumba Regency. The research implementation process was assisted by six surveyors from the Regional Research and Development Agency (Balitbangda) of East Sumba Regency to collect data and information on farmer households using a questionnaire guide containing 41 key questions.

Secondary data types come from BPS, DTKS (Integrated Social Welfare Data), and village data. In contrast, the primary data comes from observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews conducted on 102 heads of farmer households in four hamlets, namely 91 male and 11 female farmers. Determining the number of informants was carried out by proportional sampling of 19 percent to 30 percent per hamlet and then randomly selected (random sampling). The criteria for the selected informants were farmers who owned land assets, either owned by themselves or owned by other farmers who had been mortgaged. Apart from that, the researcher also conducted the snowball technique on five key informants who knew the situation and situation of Mutunggeding Village in more depth.

The data were then tabulated and analyzed descriptively using a qualitative-constructive-reflective approach, in which objectivity was built through an appreciation of the subjective understanding of the poor farmer's household life observed in the field, namely by settling in and mingling with the farming community. Rural economic analysis cannot use individual units but household units, where production, consumption, and investment activities in rural communities are determined by the family together (Mubyarto, 1997).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Poverty Approach

Haughton et al. (2009) explaining poverty is "pronounced deprivation in well-being," which raises questions about what poverty means and from what point it should be measured. First, poverty can be seen as "welfare," a demand to meet basic needs with

the resources they have. This is the most conventional view that views poverty mostly from a monetary perspective and is the starting point for most poverty analyses. The second approach is to see whether people can obtain certain types of consumer goods, such as food, housing, health, and education.

The third approach is the opinion of Sen (1987) regarding welfare, namely the ability of a person to play a role in society, poverty arises when people have no income or inadequate education, poor health, a sense of insecurity, low self-confidence, feelings of powerlessness, or the absence of rights such as free speech. This rationale describes the multidimensional phenomenon of poverty that does not accept simple solutions, such as higher average incomes that need to be accompanied by measures to empower the poor to protect them from the risks of inequality and vulnerability, namely the risk of falling into poverty in the future, even if the person is not necessarily poor now. This is often associated with "shocks" effects such as droughts, falling farm prices, or financial crises. Vulnerability is a key dimension of well-being because it influences individual behavior in terms of investment, production patterns, and coping strategies, and terms of their perception of their situation.

Research in Cambodia suggests that escaping poverty will depend on their income from work, with the highest poverty rates being found among people living in households headed by farmers (46 percent in 1993–94 in Cambodia). In contrast, households headed by someone who worked in the government were least likely to become poor, namely by 20 percent (1993-1994). This suggests that policies aimed at reducing poverty through increasing income-generating capacity should be directed at the agricultural sector.

The relationship between poverty and education is very important because of the key role that education plays in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty. Better-educated people have higher incomes and are thus less likely to be poor. Cambodians living in households with an uneducated head of household are more likely to be poor, with a poverty rate of 47 percent in 1993–94.

3.2. Characteristics of Poor Farmer Households in Mutunggeding Village

Table 1. Characteristics of Poor Farmer Households in Mutunggeding Village in 2021

NO.	DESCRIPTION	KK	DUSUN							
			NGARU WAI		KABARU		HAMAPENJI		MATAWAI KANDARA	
			KK	%	KK	%	KK	%	KK	%
1	Number of Family Heads	510	85	16.67	94	18.43	226	44.31	105	20.59
2	Gender									
	a. Male	413	69	81.18	79	84.04	176	77.88	89	84.76
	b. Female	97	16	18.82	15	15.96	50	22.12	16	15.24
3	Average Age of Family Head									
	a. 15 years – 40 years	143	24	28.24	27	28.72	61	26.99	31	29.52
	b. 41 years – 58 years	216	44	51.76	32	34.04	105	46.46	35	33.33
	c. Over 58 years	151	17	20.00	35	37.23	60	26.55	39	37.14
4	Marital Status									
	a. Married	457	67	78.82	80	85.11	226	100	84	80.00
	b. Widow/Widower	44	12	14.12	13	13.83	0	0	19	18.10
	c. Single	9	6	7.06	1	1.064	0	0	2	1.90
5	Land Ownership Status									
	a. Self owned	492	68	80	94	100	225	99.56	105	100
	b. Belongs to someone else	18	17	20	0	0	1	0.44	0	0

Source: *Data on Poor Farmer Households in Mutunggeding Village, 2021*

Socioeconomically, it states that as many as 413 (80.98%) heads of poor farming families are men. The remaining 97 people (19.02%) are women, and most of them are in the productive working age group, namely the age group of 15 years to 58 years, as many as 359 people (70.39%), while elderly farmers with age group of more than 58 years there were 151 people (29.61%). On the other hand, most farmers still have other income, such as crafting Sumbanese woven cloth to support the farmer's household economy. In addition, the gender aspect illustrates the equal role of male and female farmers, where they work together to manage agricultural land and weave cloth.

The socio-cultural aspect illustrates that most of the heads of farming households in Mutunggeding village are ethnic Sumba residents who come from the Matalu, Kamanda Luarang, Ana Mawa, Watupelit, and Luku Walu tribes and usually live in one big house. Nevertheless, farmers still respect their ancestral customs and culture, such as traditional wedding and death processions. In addition, life with a nuance of kinship and cooperation is still very strong in the lives of farmers, as seen in the "Pawandang" practice, which invites farming community members to work in paddy fields.

The description of the characteristics of the life of a farmer's household that still adheres to customs and culture needs to get proper treatment in the poverty alleviation program, where Mubyarto is of the view that the Pancasila Economic concept can be a more appropriate approach in solving these problems based on consideration of appropriate historical and sociological dimensions. With the ideology and philosophy of Pancasila, namely viewing humans not only as individuals who are homo economicus but also homo socius and homo moralis (Santoso, 2009).

The harmony of sociocultural and community life has strengthened in facing difficult and deprived conditions. They (farmers) say that fulfilling customary demands, such as marriage and death customs, is an obligation that must be fulfilled even if they have to owe or mortgage their rice land. This illustrates the attachment and solidarity between kabihu members, who are very strong in supporting each other in living an increasingly difficult life.

However, on the other hand, there is a serious threat to the sustainability of the next generation of farmers, where the crush of high economic needs will force farmers to sell their land assets. In addition, the threat of oligarchy and populism practices will also thrive in these difficult and deficient conditions. Prof. Vedi Haditz, in a public lecture on the University of Indonesia campus (10/10/2022), said populism and oligarchy are increasingly integrated and thrive in social inequality, where certain groups of people control capital and natural resources.

Firdaus (2018) once researched the working strategy of elite power in the management of BUMDes Argosari, Pulosari Village, Pemalang Regency, which said that one of the negative impacts of decentralization was the phenomenon of elite capture or piracy by elites in vital sectors of the village economy which hampered the economic independence of local communities. The emphasis is on the logic of the World Bank's Community Driven Development (CDD) in the Urban Poverty Project (Platteau & Frederic, 2003) can run well in the village development program, namely placing the community not only as an object but also the subject of the development itself.

Manuel et al. (2019) stated that as many as 430 million people will live in extreme poverty by 2030, even though economic growth could reduce poverty by a third. However, there will be 30 million more people who are poor than in last year's assessment, a globally significant failure to achieve sustainable development goals. Therefore, anticipatory efforts need to be carried out as early as possible to prevent spikes in extreme poverty by investing in human development, such as education, health, nutrition, and social protection.

Perpres Number 96 of 2015 and Permendagri Number 53 of 2020 mandate four strategies to accelerate poverty reduction: 1. Reducing the expenditure burden of the poor; 2. Increasing the ability and income of the poor; 3. Develop and ensure the sustainability of Micro and Small Enterprises; 4. Synergize policies and programs for

poverty reduction. Besides that. Permendagri Number 53 of 2020 mandates Governors to be responsible for Poverty Reduction in provincial areas and Regents/mayors to be responsible for poverty alleviation in districts/cities by establishing Regency/City TKPKs with a regent/mayor decree.

3.3. Assets Owned by Poor Farmer Households in Mutunggeding Village

3.3.1. Natural Assets

Table 2. Ownership and Land Area Owned by Farmers

NO.	LAND AREA	KK	HAMLET							
			KABARU		NGARU WAI		HAMAPENJI		MATAWAI KANDARA	
			KK	%	KK	%	KK	%	KK	%
	Total Sources	102	20	19.61	29	28.43	29	28.43	24	23.53
I	Non-Asset Farmers	25	10	50.00	5	17.24	2	6.90	8	33.33
II	Farmers with Assets	77	10	50.00	24	82.76	27	93.10	16	66.67
	1. RICE LAND	60	10	100	21	100	16	100	13	100
	a. Less than 25 acres	19	4	40.00	10	47.62	1	6.25	4	30.77
	b. 25 acres – 40 acres	19	3	30.00	7	33.33	6	37.50	3	23.08
	c. More than 40 acres	22	3	30.00	4	19.05	9	56.25	6	46.15
	2. GARDEN LAND	53	6	100	18	100	19	100	10	100
	a. Less than 25 acres	22	5	83.33	13	72.22	2	10.53	2	20
	b. 25 acres – 40 acres	11	1	16.67	2	11.11	2	10.53	6	60
	c. More than 40 acres	20		-	3	16.67	15	78.95	2	20
	3. RICE LAND AND GARDEN	36	6	60.00	15	62.50	8	29.63	7	43.75
	4. Economic Sufficiency									
	a. Sufficient	34	6	60.00	15	62.50	6	22.22	7	43.75
	b. Insufficient	43	4	40.00	9	37.50	21	77.78	9	56.25

Source: *Farmers and Poverty research primary data, 2021*

75.49 percent of farmers own rice land and garden assets, while 24.51 percent are farmers who do not own land assets and choose alternative seasonal jobs, such as laborers, builders, and drivers. Poor farming households in Hamapenji hamlet have the percentage of farmers with the most ownership of land assets compared to other hamlets, namely 93.10 percent, which includes a paddy field area of more than 25 acres by 93.75 percent and garden land by 89.48 percent.

However, on the other hand, the ownership of large land assets is not followed by a high level of economic adequacy of the harvest. Namely, 77.78 percent of farmers say that the harvest cannot meet the family's economic needs. The same thing happened to farmers in the Matawai Kandara hamlet, with 69.23 percent ownership of paddy fields of more than 25 acres and 80 percent of garden land, also unable to meet the economic needs of farmer households, namely 56.25 percent of farmer household heads said the harvest could not meet the economic needs of the family.

The deprived situation experienced by most farming households illustrates a very low level of welfare where the basic needs of farming households cannot be fulfilled from the harvest. Haughton et al. (2009) said that one approach to measuring poverty is to look at "welfare" as a demand to meet basic needs in general, namely whether people can fulfill their needs with the resources they have by comparing individual income or consumption with some threshold specified below that is considered bad.

On the one hand, most farmers stated that they had worked on all the land they owned with their management system or pawandang, working in groups between community members based on cooperation and kinship. But on the other hand, 10 percent of farmers in Kabaru hamlet and 23.81 percent of farmers in Ngaru Wai hamlet

have implemented a profit-sharing system, and there are even 6.25 percent of farmers in Hamapenji hamlet who mortgage their rice land.

The management system of paddy fields with profit sharing by some farmers is mostly due to the lack of working capital and the absence of labor, such as husbands who have died and their children become migrant workers so that no one else works and so that the land is not idle, they apply a production sharing system. This reality illustrates the situation of powerlessness and vulnerability of farmers to face poverty so that expressions and perceptions of development must refer to poor farmers who need it and for what purpose it aims to make changes to a better condition than before while still paying attention to the economic growth side of the poor (Chambers, 2006).

Table 3. The Area of Land Being Worked on in the Village of Mutunggeding in 2021

NO.	LAND AREA	KK	HAMLET							
			KABARU		NGARU WAI		HAMAPENJI		MATAWAI KANDARA	
			KK	%	KK	%	KK	%	KK	%
	Total Sources	102	20	19.61	29	28.43	29	28.43	24	23.53
1	The rice land are done	60	10	100	21	100	16	100	13	100
	a. All done	58	9	90.00	21	100	15	93.75	13	100
	b. Not all	2	1	10.00			1	6.25		
2	Rice Land System	60	10	100	21	100	16	100	13	100
	a. Own	53	9	90.00	16	76.19	15	93.75	13	100
	b. Profit sharing	6	1	10.00	5	23.81				
	c. Pawned	1					1	6.25		
3	The garden is done	53	6	100	18	100	19	100	10	100
	a. All done	47	5	83.33	15	83.33	18	94.74	9	90
	b. Partly done	4	1	16.67	2	11.11			1	10
	c. Not done	2			1	5.56	1	5.26		
4	Rice Harvest Results		9	100	16	100	15	100	13	100
	a. ≤ 500 kg		6	66.67	5	31.25	3	20	4	30.77
	b. 500 kg – 1000 kg		3	33.33	5	31.25	5	33.33	2	15.38
	c. ≥ 1000 kg				6	37.5	7	46.67	7	53.85

Source: *Farmers and Poverty research primary data, 2021*

In the garden land management system, most farmers have planted corn, as did 94.74 percent of farmers in Hamapenji hamlet and as many as 90 percent in Matawai Kandara hamlet. However, corn planting time is only done during the rainy season, which is once a year, with uncertain results because it is prone to natural disasters and pest attacks. This implicitly illustrates that there is a lot of idle land during the dry season, which, if managed properly, can improve the economy of farming families. Wohangara (2006), in a journal article, mentions that:

> *"Maize is still the main staple product. Rice is also an important crop since it is considered a superior foodstuff. Rice is used on ceremonial occasions and for ritual offerings. Other crops include green and root vegetables, various sorts of fruits and gourd, sorghum and millet, tobacco, and of course, betel and areca, which are universally chewed and extremely important in social relationships."*

The corn commodity has been the staple food of the Sumba people for a long time and is not a rice commodity. Rice is a special food only served on ceremonial occasions and traditional rituals. In addition, the dry and infertile soil structure and the relatively short rainfall each year contributed to the difficult situation and conditions faced by farming households in Mutunggeding Village, especially the low level of crop productivity.

What is the average level of rice yields with self-cultivated paddy fields? It can be seen that the rice yields above 1000 kg (1 ton) were mostly produced by the majority

of farmers in the Matawai Kandara hamlet, namely 53.85 percent, followed by farmers in Hamapenji hamlet as much as 46.67 percent of farmers, and in Ngaru Wai hamlet by 37 .50 percent while in Kabaru hamlet there are no farmers who produce more than 1000 kg (1 ton). These results indicate that almost all farmers in Mutunggeding village have not been able to achieve the expected minimum yield target, except for paddy field farmers in Ngaru Wai hamlet who have land less than 25 acres can achieve an average of 889 kg of rice in one harvest from the minimum target of 600 kg. The informant PM/M/34 years old, a farmer in the Ngaru Wai hamlet, said the following:

> *"I can harvest 18 sacks of rice, and when it becomes 15 sacks of rice for my own 25 acres of land and a maximum of 10 sacks of grain for someone else's land 18 acres, and in a year, my rice land can be planted with rice twice."*

The above explains that the standard estimation of paddy field yields (rice) production set by the Agriculture and Food Service of East Sumba Regency, which is between 6–8 tonnes per 1 (one) hectare, is still far from expectations due to the weak existence of agricultural BP3K in supporting the increase in agricultural production, such as the scarcity of subsidized fertilizers and minimal assistance from field agricultural extension workers (PPL). In addition, the existence of farmer groups, especially village P3A (water user farmer associations), still does not play a good role which causes obstacles in managing the distribution of irrigation water and the use of hand tractors in paddy field management.

An analysis of farmer income from the rice harvest based on the condition of the selling price of rice in 2021 during the pandemic Rp7,000/kg is as follows:

Selling price at the farm level	:	Rp7,000/kg or Rp350,000/sack (50 kg)
Land production 25 acres	:	15 sack (50 kg) x Rp350,000 = Rp5,250,000
Land production 18 acres	:	7 sack (50 kg) x Rp350,000 = Rp2,450,000
Total gross income	:	Rp7,700,000 in one harvest
Total average production cost	:	Rp4,000,000 in one crop
Total net income	:	Rp3,700,000 in one harvest (3 months)
Monthly income	:	Rp1,233,333 (one million two hundred thirty-three thousand three hundred thirty-three rupiah)

It can be seen that the selling price instrument at the farm level greatly affects the amount of income earned. The higher the selling price, the higher the income level, and vice versa. If it is down (uncontrolled), farmers will lose even more, especially if they experience crop failure, which can occur at any time.

> *"SK/L/64-year-old farmer of Dusun Ngaru Wai said, "The problem is when we harvest, who buys it? For example, it's just rice that we harvest. People are still playing with the price, right? People already know it's a big harvest. If you want it, we'll buy it. If not, that's okay, and we want to pay money for cigarettes, and we pay for labor, so we sell it cheap. That's the problem."*

3.3.2. Human Resources Assets

Chambers' view (2006) of how we should interpret poverty, as mentioned by Amartya Sen about deprivation of abilities which refers to what can and cannot be done related to skills and physical abilities, as well as self-esteem in a society that causes a person to be poor can be used as a benchmark in assessing the human resource assets owned by the heads of poor farming families in Mutunggeding village, especially the level of education and health.

This is in line with Manuel et al. (2019) who said that to end extreme global poverty by 2030, the Government and donors are obliged to lead human development priorities in the poorest countries, where the overall trend of assistance so far has been going in the wrong direction and not responding to poverty problems.

Table 4. Condition of Human Resource Assets in Mutunggeding Village in 2021

NO.	HUMAN RESOURCES ASSETS	KK	HAMLET							
			KABARU		NGARU WAI		HAMAPENJI		MATAWAI KANDARA	
			KK	%	KK	%	KK	%	KK	%
	Total Sources	102	20	19.61	29	28.43	29	28.43	24	23.53
I	Non-Asset Farmers	25	10	50.00	5	17.24	2	6.90	8	33.33
II	Farmers with Assets	77	10	50.00	24	82.76	27	93.10	16	66.67
	A. Family Education	77	10	100	24	100	27	100	16	100
	1. No school/elementary school	56	5	50	18	75	22	81.48	11	68.75
	2. Junior High School / High School	19	4	40	6	25	5	18.52	4	25
	3. Bachelor	2	1	10					1	6.25
	B. Other Jobs	74	8	80	24	100	27	100	15	93.75
	C. Health condition	77	10	100	24	100	27	100	16	100
	1. Healthy	76	10	100	24	100	27	100	15	93.75
	2. Unhealthy	1							1	6.25
	D. Family members	77	10	100	24	100	27	100	16	100
	1. ≤ 4 people	33	5	50	7	29.17	12	44.44	9	56.25
	2. > 4 people	44	5	50	17	70.83	15	55.56	7	43.75
	E. Economic Sufficiency	77	10	100	24	100	27	100	16	100
	1. Sufficient	34	6	60	15	62.5	6	22.22	7	43.75
	2. Insufficient	43	4	40	9	37.5	21	77.78	9	56.25

Source: *Farmers and Poverty research primary data, 2021*

From the educational aspect, it can be seen that most of the heads of poor farming families have a low average level of education, and only a small proportion can complete undergraduate education (S1), namely 10 percent in Kabaru hamlet and 6.25 percent in Matawai Kandara hamlet. On the other hand, this low percentage of education level can be offset by the high percentage of skills possessed by the heads of farming families and other family members, that is, more than 80 percent of the heads of farming families say that they have other skills that help support the family's economy, such as weaving, artisans, carpenters, and so forth.

Figure 1. Cloth Weavers in Ngaru Wai Hamlet and Reed Craftsmen in Hamapenji Hamlet

Source: *Farmers and Poverty research primary data, 2021*

In terms of health, almost all heads of poor farming households have good (healthy) health conditions, except in Matawai Kandara hamlet, where 6.25 percent of farmer household heads experience unfavorable health conditions (sick/disabled). However, the interesting thing that was found was that these unfavorable health conditions did not hinder or reduce their enthusiasm to continue working as farmers, as experienced by the resource person YH/M/42 years old, a farmer who had a permanent disability in one of his legs who said that:

"I have my paddy field of 10 acres and a garden behind my house, which I always actively work on when it rains to provide for my family. The crops so far have been able to provide for the family's food needs, and apart from being a farmer, I also weave woven Sumba pahikung cloth and have goats and chickens to support the family economy. Until now, I can still work in the fields and gardens."

The case experienced by the YH/L/42-year-old resource person above can be a reflection of what Amartya Sen said that deprivation of ability which refers to what can and cannot be done concerning skills and physical abilities, as well as self-esteem in a society that causes a person to be poor can be justified (Chambers, 2006). However, the interesting thing is the fighting spirit that is owned has become the main asset for survival. Only with relatively small 10-acre rice land assets and physical limitations (permanent disability) can they continue to work as a farmer and meet the family's economic needs.

Chambers (2006) said that poverty must be seen in what dimensions poverty is, who asks, how it is understood, and who has to answer where the view of poverty must already be directed to another multidimensional analysis of poverty which is mutually reinforcing and not only measuring poverty in terms of deprivation just. This is also a critical reflective material to prevent the impact of the global economic crisis in 2023, which is expected to cause a very large wave of economic stagflation, such as the potential for a return of migrants which will have an impact on increasing the number of unemployed.

The strategy that the Government can carry out is to first strengthen the institutional capacity of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDesa) and Farmer Groups (Poktan) to produce positive synergy in the strength of the people's economy. Second, reducing the idle time by optimizing the function of vacant land with patterns and systems of agricultural intensification and diversification, and third, increasing the role of empowering MSMEs in increasing the income of farming families.

Darwita and Redana (2018), in their research report, said that BUMDesa Tejakula, Tejakula District, Buleleng Regency, can play a role in efforts to increase the village economy based on the needs and potential of the village, which functions as a stabilizer, innovator, modernizer, pioneer, and executor as well as tackling unemployment.

3.3.3. Physical Assets

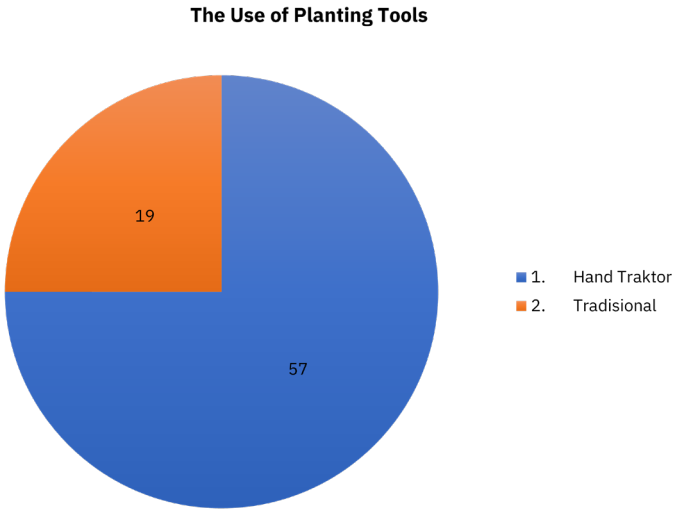
Table 5. Ownership of Physical Assets in Mutunggeding Village in 2021

NO.	PHYSICAL ASSETS	KK	HAMLET							
			KABARU		NGARU WAI		HAMAPENJI		MATAWAI KANDARA	
			KK	%	KK	%	KK	%	KK	%
	Total Sources	102	20	19.61	29	28.43	29	28.43	24	23.53
I	Farmers with no assets	25	10	50.00	5	17.24	2	6.90	8	33.33
II	Farmers with Assets	77	10	50.00	24	82.76	27	93.10	16	66.67
	A. Irrigation System	76	9	100	24	100	27	100	16	100
	1. Irrigation	57	8	88.89	21	87.5	16	59.26	12	75
	2. Well	1							1	6.25
	3. Rainfed	18	1	11.11	3	12.5	11	40.74	3	18.75
	B. Planting Equipment	76	9	100	24	100	27	100	16	100
	1. Hand Tractor	57	8	88.89	21	87.5	16	59.26	12	75
	2. Traditional	19	1	11.11	3	12.5	11	40.74	4	25
	C. Livestock Ownership									
	1. Large livestock	15	3	30.00	5	20.83	2	7.41	5	31.25
	2. Small livestock	54	9	90.00	13	54.17	16	59.26	16	100

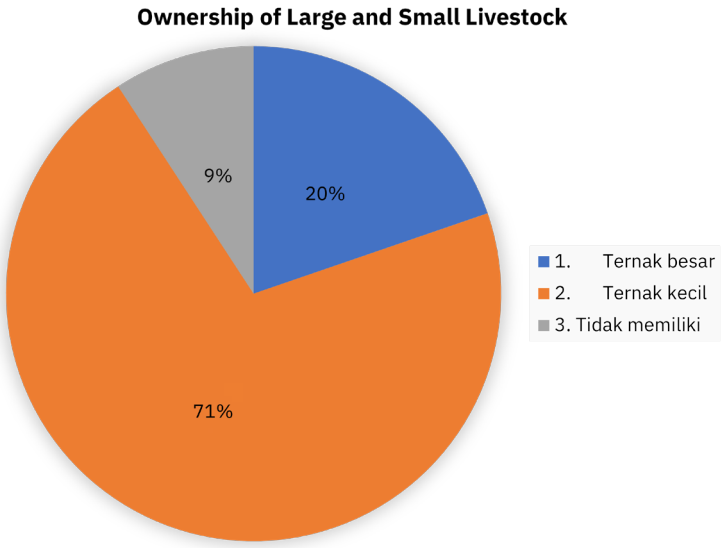
Source: *Farmers and Poverty research primary data, 2021*

The existence of planting tools, such as the number of hand tractor units available in 12 farmer groups (poktan), is still lacking in supporting the processing of agricultural land. Most of the farmers, namely 75 percent or 77 farming family heads, said that they still had to wait their turn which often resulted in delays in processing paddy fields, which resulted in delays in planting time, low yields, and difficulty eradicating pests and plant diseases.

The resource person ST/L/55 years old, a farmer and ASN, said, "Handtractor planting tools are still lacking, so farmers don't simultaneously plant rice. Some have just planted some that have already harvested, so it's impossible to move far away."



In livestock ownership, most of the poor farming households in the four hamlets in Mutunggeding village still have very few large livestock (cows, horses, and buffalo), as in Kabaru hamlet, there is only 33.33 percent of farmer households that have large livestock, in Ngaru Wai hamlet, 20.83 percent, Matawai Kandara hamlet, 31.25 percent, and even Hamapenji hamlet, only 7.41 percent of farming households have large livestock. But on the other hand, most of them (farmers) still raise small livestock (chickens, ducks, and goats) to help support the family economy.



In the life of the Sumba ethnic community, the existence of large livestock does have not only economic value but also has high customary and cultural values in the process of managing customs, for example, acting as a dowry or "belis" in the proposing process. Likewise, the traditional procession of death will need horses, buffaloes, and pigs as traditional symbols that must be prepared properly by the tribes (kabihu) with family ties.

In addition, some poor farmers in Mutunggeding village have not felt the benefits of irrigation, and for example, in Kabaru hamlet, there are still 11.11 percent of farmers who still hope for rain, while in Ngaru Wai hamlet, as much as 12.5 percent, Hamapenji hamlet 40.74 percent and Hamapenji hamlet 40.74 percent and Hamapenji hamlet Matawai Kandara as much as 18.75 percent which causes them (farmers) to only be able to work the land once a year waiting for the rainy season to come.

> *HME/M/44 years old/Hamapenji hamlet farmer recounted, "Usually before the corona, I often went to Bali to work as a laborer while waiting for the rainy season to come, in October, I came home, in the eleventh month I started watering, and in the twelfth month, I started planting. The rice is already, and when the rains are good, after the harvest, I immediately dry the fields and plant corn. I often experience economic shortages when the rainfall is not good, and I can only plant once a year."*

Figure 2. Pau Irrigation and Irrigation Systems for Paddy Fields in Mutunggeding Village

Source: *Farmers and Poverty research primary data, 2021*

4. Conclusion

The review of rice field and garden assets illustrates that most farmers have not been able to optimally utilize the land to improve the farmer household economy. The problems faced are a) scarcity of subsidized fertilizers and superior seeds, b) pests and plant diseases, c) lack of hand tractors, d) lack of assistance for agricultural PPL, and e) uneven distribution of irrigation water. On the other hand, the low selling price of rice at the farm level, especially during the harvest season, greatly affects the low economic status of farmer households. Therefore, optimizing the utilization of the function of paddy fields and garden assets is the best way to improve the household economy of farmers.

The review of human resource assets illustrates that, generally, the education level of heads of farming families is still very low. However, most farmers still have other supporting skills, such as weaving Sumba Ikat and other crafts that help increase the income of the farmer's household economy. Another encouraging thing is that most of the farmers are young farmers and have healthy health conditions, which form the basis for superior human resource development programs.

In terms of physical assets, most farmers have used hand-tractor machines in the agricultural land processing system, and only a small number have not used hand-tractor machines. The problem faced is the limited hand tractor machines in farmer

groups so that planting time often cannot be carried out simultaneously and delaying rice planting time. The practice of "pawandang" or group work system, is a strategy carried out by farmers to overcome the lack of tractors and land management costs. Meanwhile, livestock ownership assets illustrate that only a small proportion of farmer households still raise large livestock to support the family economy.

On the other hand, there are adequate irrigation facilities. However, it has not functioned properly, so it has affected the economic condition of poor farmer households, especially the lives of most of the farmers in Hamapenji hamlet and a small number of other hamlet paddy fields, which always experience drought in the dry season because they do not get irrigation supplies. This study recommends several things that the Government can do to address the problems of farmers and poverty in Mutunggeding Village, Umalulu District, East Sumba Regency, namely:

a. Implement Supply Chain Management (supply chain management) to strengthen the synergy of farmer groups, agricultural BP3K, and BUMDes in overcoming the fundamental problems experienced by farmers.
b. Conduct scientific studies related to the management system of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes), which so far have not been able to make a positive contribution to the welfare of farmer households.
c. Conduct scientific studies related to the role of custom and culture in the economic development of creative and sustainable farmer households.
d. Conduct further studies to complement the deficiencies in this research.

Acknowledgment

Acknowledgments are extended to:

1. Regional Government of East Sumba Regency.
2. Mr. Drs. Dominggus Bandi, M. Si as Head of Balitbangda of East Sumba Regency and Main Research Advisor.
3. Mrs. Dr. Rambu L. K. R. Nugrohowardhani, S.E., M.A as the Main Research Advisor.
4. Surveyor Team and all parties who have assisted and participated in research activities.

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