

Original Article

Strategic Role of Lalo Tenggara Farmers Group in Increasing Rice Production: Challenges and Solutions in the Field in Camba Jawa Village, Bantimurung District, Maros Regency

Nur Whinalda Haris¹, Alif Husain², Muh Syahrul Syam³, Muh Akbar Tandjung⁴

^{1,2,3}Department of Sociology Education, Faculty of Social Sciences, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar, 90222, Indonesia.

ARTICLE INFO

Received : September 2025
Accepted : October 2025
Published : February 2026

Keywords:

challenges and solutions farmer groups;
rice production;
strategic role.

ABSTRACT

The formation of farmer groups is one of the steps taken by the Indonesian government to advance agriculture. Farmer groups are organizations that function as a collective strategy to improve and expand the capacity of farmers as subjects of agricultural development. One of the responsibilities of the Lalo Tenggara Farmer Group is to facilitate the distribution of subsidized fertilizers and coordination related to agriculture. This study aims to determine the right strategic role for the Lalo Tenggara farmer group in efforts to increase rice production. This study uses a descriptive qualitative methodology. Data were obtained through direct observation and literature studies. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman Interactive data analysis model. The results of the study indicate that the Fertilizer Subsidy Program is an effort by the government to increase agricultural production, income, and farmer welfare. The Lalo Tenggara farmer group relies on the program, but a number of challenges must be faced, one of which is the uneven distribution of fertilizer due to the mismatch between the availability and demand for fertilizer among farmers. The impact felt is a decrease in rice production so that farmers cannot optimize their economic flow. Efforts as solutions that can be made are assistance from the government and the strategic role of farmer groups such as utilizing business opportunities and available capital access and strengthening collaboration between farmers and the Lalo Tenggara farmer group.



This is an open access article under the CC-BY 4.0 license

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the main source of income for the people of Indonesia, which is an agricultural country. This is driven by the fact that Indonesia is a tropical country, which means that the climate, Each region has a lot of potential for agricultural development in terms of land and other resources (Hasibuan et al., 2022). Agricultural and rural development are inseparable. The main factor that supports rural life is agriculture. However, the role of the agricultural sector as a whole has not developed to the point where this sector is able to elevate the status of farmers to the expected level of prosperity (Idris et al., 2024). Along with the growth of the rural economy, the agricultural industry faces a number of challenges. To expand the contribution of the agricultural sector to the rural and national economy, a development strategy is needed in the future through various supporting policy agendas (Siahaan et al., 2024). According to its philosophy, farmer groups are formed to address problems faced by farmers that are too large for them to handle alone. Consolidated agriculture is realized through the formation of farmer groups, which will enable them to produce as effectively and optimally as possible. Because the purchase of production facilities and the sale of production results can be carried out simultaneously with the consolidation of agriculture in farmer groups.

This reduces marketing costs per unit of output and procurement per unit of inputs when more inputs are purchased and more products are sold (Syariah et al., 2022). According to Djafar et al., one initiative to empower farmers to improve their welfare, income, and production is the formation of farmer groups

([Djafar et al., 2022](#)). In the United States, California became the state that formed the first farmer groups. According to two farmers in 1922, According to John C. Tyler and Thomas E. Leavy, insurance from cooperatives and insurance companies should also be available for farmers and ranchers in rural areas. Since then, Leavy and Tyler have collaborated to launch insurance companies for farmers, ranchers, and other rural residents. In California, the purpose of farmer groups is basically to act as intermediaries, which allows individual farmers to benefit from government policies ([Elake et al., 2022](#)).

The Lalo Tenggara farmer group located in South Sulawesi is one of the farmer groups formed in Indonesia. From initial observations, it is known that these farmers face a number of challenges when producing rice that impact the local economy. Unequal distribution of fertilizer is one of the problems that hinders maximum rice production. In one harvest season, most farmers in this village cannot generate sufficient income to meet their living needs. Therefore, to increase rice production, research studies are needed to identify the strategic role of farmer groups in increasing rice production. Farmers, who are one of the professions in rural areas, of course, cannot be separated from the agricultural industry. It is recognized that agricultural practices are still largely based on traditional methods. Increasing non-formal education and ongoing extension is an alternative way to strengthen farmers and provide them with a lot of information and understanding in the agricultural industry ([Ahmad et al., 2024](#)).

Research from [Sihombing](#) suggests that the formation of social groups within the farming community is one of the steps used by the Indonesian government to advance agriculture ([Nur & Sihombing, 2022](#)). For example, farmer groups are work organizations that aim to spread innovation among farmers. Farmer groups are groups of farmers, livestock breeders, and planters who gather to strengthen and develop their businesses based on common interests, environmental conditions (socio-economic resources), and familiarity. Farmer groups are informal organizations that have characteristics such as mutual trust, familiarity, and kinship, as well as a division of tasks based on mutual agreements developed by the farmers themselves. As a forum for education and learning, farmer groups facilitate collaboration to achieve economies of scale in terms of quantity, quality, and continuity. Based on the background above, this study aims to determine the appropriate strategic role for the Lalo Tenggara farmer group in efforts to increase rice production.

The Lalo Tenggara Farmers Group plays a strategic role in increasing rice production in Camba Jawa Village, Maros District, Maros Regency. However, several challenges faced in the field can hamper these efforts. Some common challenges include limited access to modern agricultural technology: Many farmers still use traditional methods, which can affect crop yields. Lack of technical assistance: The lack of extension and training to increase farmer capacity often hinders optimal resource utilization. Farmers often have difficulty selling their crops at competitive prices, thus affecting their welfare. Dependence on weather: Rice production levels are highly dependent on weather conditions, especially in areas without adequate irrigation. Internal organization of farmer groups: Challenges in coordination and cooperation among farmer group members can affect the effectiveness of the program being implemented. Based on the identified problems, this study aims to analyze the strategic role of the Lalo Tenggara Farmers Group: Identify how this group contributes to increasing rice production in the village. Explore challenges in the field: Reveal the obstacles faced by the farmer group in implementing agricultural programs.

METHOD

This study is based on a descriptive qualitative methodology, allowing researchers to describe the phenomena under investigation in detail. In gathering information, researchers employed observation, interviews, and a literature review of scientific publications related to approaches to increasing rice production. Observation allowed researchers to directly observe practical activities related to rice production, while interviews provided an opportunity to gain direct perspectives from experts or relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, the literature review provided a solid theoretical foundation to strengthen the

research argument. The data analysis approach used in this study is the Miles and Huberman method, known as interactive data analysis. This method provides a systematic framework for processing and interpreting collected qualitative data. There are three main steps involved in data analysis: data reduction (data selection), data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involves selecting the most relevant and significant data for further exploration. Data presentation is the stage where the reduced data is organized and presented in a way that is easy to interpret. Conclusion drawing is the final milestone in the data analysis process, where research findings are directed to support further arguments and implications.

Research conducted by Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah in provides a concrete example of how implementing a descriptive qualitative methodology with an interactive data analysis approach can yield valuable insights in a study of increasing rice production. In this way, researchers were able to uncover in-depth information and present the results in detail to contribute to a broader understanding of the issue (Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024). By applying this approach, researchers were able to strengthen qualitative research methodology and provide a foundation for further research in efforts to improve rice production and the agricultural sector as a whole. The subjects of this study were farmer groups consisting of 27 people. In data collection, three main techniques were used: In-depth interviews involving members of farmer groups, community leaders, and related parties such as agricultural extension workers. The focus of the interviews was to identify the strategic role of farmer groups, reveal the challenges faced, and document the solutions that have been implemented. Through participant observation, researchers directly observed the activities of farmer groups, including farming methods, the use of agricultural tools and technology, and interactions between members. The purpose of this observation was to document best practices carried out by farmer groups and identify challenges that arise in the field. Documentation studies such as documentation, related data were collected such as rice production data, farmer group activity reports, and local policies that support agriculture. The focus of this study was to explore the role of farmer groups from the perspective of existing official documentation. In data analysis, descriptive analysis techniques were used to describe field conditions, the role of farmer groups, the challenges faced, and the solutions that have been implemented. This descriptive analysis technique is suitable for analyzing data from field observations, interviews, and surveys conducted.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of Subsidized Fertilizer

The Fertilizer Subsidy Program is an effort from the government to increase agricultural production, income, and farmer welfare by providing affordable prices for farmers to meet their fertilizer needs (Rahmawati 2023). Regulation of the Minister of Trade Number 15 / M-DAG / Per / 2015 regulates the purchase and distribution of subsidized fertilizers for the agricultural sector / The government through PT. Pupuk Indonesia (Persero) implements fertilizer subsidies by purchasing and distributing fertilizers through distributors and distribution companies located in their respective jurisdictions (Sihombing, 2023). In order to increase flexibility, efficiency, and effectiveness, PT. Pupuk Indonesia 9 (Persero) has the authority to control how producers are distributed among subsidized fertilizer procurement and distribution zones based on their production capacity. Subsidized fertilizers are purchased and distributed by producers to designated distributors in their respective regions. Furthermore, the Distributor distributes fertilizer to farmers and farmer groups through retailers who have been appointed in their working area (Rahmawati et al., 2023) The distribution of subsidized fertilizer is carried out independently using the definitive group needs plan (RDKK) and the highest retail price (HET), in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Agriculture regarding the needs and HET of subsidized fertilizer for the agricultural sector. In 2024, Pasinto et al.

1) Working as a farmer

- 2) Owning land no more than 2 hectares
- 3) Joining a farmer group. According to the Minister of Industry and Trade Regulation No. 356/MPP/Kep/5/2004, the distribution of subsidized fertilizer by the government aims to meet farmers' needs in accordance with government programs. Subsidized fertilizer procurement is the process by which producers supply fertilizer and distribute it from the producer level to consumers. This indicates that the government is actually providing subsidies to fertilizer kiosks and farmers so they can purchase fertilizer at a reasonable price (Rahmawati et al., 2023).

The Role of Farmer Groups in Increasing Rice Production

To increase productivity, the agricultural industry must develop. This can be achieved by empowering farming communities so that farmers can overcome their own challenges. Forming farmer groups in rural areas is one way the government collaborates with farmers. The formation of farmer organizations is a group effort to improve and enrich farmers' capabilities so that they become subjects of agricultural development (Umbu Zogar et al., 2022). According to Regulation 67/Permentan/SM.050/12/2016, farmer groups have three functions: as production units, learning media, and cooperative media. In this situation, farmer groups can be used as an effort to increase productivity and agricultural management indirectly simultaneously (Hermawan et al., 2023).

- 1) Farmer groups as a learning platform. Through the extension process, farmer groups share the latest technology and agricultural information obtained from extension workers. Regular farmer group meetings are usually held every two months. These meetings typically offer extension materials and facilitate discussions as learning opportunities. Through the extension process, extension workers convey the latest technology and agricultural information to farmer groups.
- 2) Farmer groups as a platform for collaboration. Farmers collaborate by sharing agricultural information and providing agricultural inputs. To disseminate agricultural information, farmer groups collaborate with field extension officers and other relevant government organizations. Through farmer groups, the government assists farmers by providing fertilizer and rice seeds.
- 3) Farmer groups as production units. Every agricultural activity of farmer group members must be viewed as a business entity that can be developed to achieve economies of scale in terms of quantity, quality, and continuity. In this regard, government-provided, subsidized rice seeds and other fertilizer assistance are provided by farmer groups in an effort to boost rice production. To assist farmers in the rice planting process, farmer groups also supply agricultural machinery and equipment, such as hand tractors, which can be obtained by submitting a proposal to the Department of Agriculture.

Challenges Faced by the Lalo Tenggara Farmers Group

Fertilizer plays a crucial role in increasing rice yields. One group of people who consider fertilizer to be the most important factor in increasing rice yields are rice farmers. Fertilizers that receive government subsidies, with prices adjusted to the cost of fertilizer purchased by farmers, are called subsidized fertilizers (Pakpahan et al., 2023). Researchers' observations indicate that the Lalo Tenggara farmer group relies heavily on government-subsidized fertilizers to boost agricultural yields. Fertilizer subsidies are a crucial production method for increasing rice yields and quality. Therefore, rice farmers benefit greatly from the availability of subsidized fertilizers.

In addition, farmers stated that the source of subsidized fertilizer comes from direct purchases at official subsidized fertilizer kiosks in the village and from the procurement and distribution of subsidized fertilizer directly from the agricultural service. The Lalo Tenggara Farmers Group is responsible for the village's

subsidized fertilizer distribution system. This farmer group was formed with the aim of facilitating fertilizer distribution and agricultural-related coordination, among other things. Based on observations and interviews, farmer groups can receive fertilizer through payment (transfer) of money before the fertilizer is delivered. However, the Lalo Tenggae farmer group still receives subsidized fertilizer in very small and uneven amounts. This is indicated by the fact that demand from farmers is not comparable to the availability of fertilizer. The amount of allocated fertilizer supply does not match the needs of farmers according to complaints from the farmer group. Fertilizer needs have not been met despite efforts by the farmer group management to supply it. Porter and transportation costs are usually incurred by the farmer group when distributing this fertilizer. All of this is determined by the amount of fertilizer and the distance traveled by the vehicle.

Based on the description above, it is clear that the Lalo Tenggae farmer group faces several challenges in rice production. Farmers complain that the distribution of subsidized fertilizer in their village is uneven. This uneven distribution of fertilizer has a significant impact on farmers. The most striking effect is on the farmer's economy and the often unsuccessful rice cultivation. Farmers complain that their harvest yields have decreased, their incomes have decreased, making it difficult to repay their debts. They also have to reinvest in agriculture, and they have difficulty meeting basic needs. Crop failures can even threaten the stability of the country's food security. Furthermore, farmers are forced to purchase fertilizer at higher market prices due to the uneven distribution of subsidized fertilizer.

The Strategic Role of the Lalo Tenggae Farmers Group as a Solution Effort to Increase Rice Production

As agricultural entrepreneurs, farmers face various challenges and issues, such as those related to production facilities and the agricultural industry. Therefore, government improvements are needed through the use of support assistance, policies, and agricultural extension to facilitate cooperation between farmer groups. In terms of extension, the government provided agricultural human resource development and training to the Lalo Tenggae farmer group in 2020, implemented by the Gowa Agricultural Development Polytechnic's UPPM. Twenty-five farmers from the Lalo Tenggae farmer group participated in the extension (*Polbangan Gowa: Pandemi, Pengabdian Masyarakat Tidak Berhenti - Makassar Terkini*, n.d.).

In addition to the need for government assistance, the role of farmers and the Lalo Tenggae farmer group is also needed, who must work together. Various agricultural problems can be easily resolved through discussions with farmer groups, because relying solely on farmers to achieve farming success is very difficult. According to a study by [Hasibuan et al., \(2022\)](#), cooperation between farmers and farmer groups is needed to help implement farmer independence because it is more beneficial for farmer welfare. Research by [Adiaksa et al.](#), further shows the importance of farmer groups in agriculture and the lives of farming communities, considering that all tasks and challenges related to agriculture are handled by farmer groups and farmers simultaneously ([Adiaksa et al., 2023](#)). Farmers can work together to overcome problems including technical production, product marketing, and the completion of farmer group production facilities. According to [Bermuli et al.](#), farmer groups can play the following strategic roles in addressing current issues ([Bermuli et al., 2024](#)).

- 1) Building a conducive atmosphere for farmer groups and farmers, such as fostering mutual trust among them.
- 2) Encouraging farmer group members and farmers to be creative and take initiative to utilize accessible information, business opportunities, and capital.
- 3) Helping identify problems and working together to develop and resolve them.

- 4) Developing a better understanding of market possibilities, business opportunities, and potential for agricultural expansion.
- 5) Developing capacity to evaluate farming business potential to create farming businesses that can meet market demand.
- 6) Encouraging and supporting farmers' willingness and ability to borrow and save to support business capital development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that subsidized fertilizer is a government aid program that allows farmers to obtain fertilizer easily and affordably. In an effort to help farmers in Indonesia succeed, this assistance makes it easier for them to reduce agricultural costs. One farmer group that relies on government fertilizer subsidies is the Lalo Tanggae farmer group. However, in reality, the Lalo Tanggae farmer group faces several challenges, one of which is the unequal distribution of fertilizer. This occurs due to a mismatch between fertilizer availability and demand among farmers. The impact is reduced rice production, preventing farmers from optimizing their income streams, which impacts the welfare of the Lalo Tanggae farmer group and surrounding farmers. Possible solutions include government assistance through policies, support, and advice to farmer groups to address existing problems. Furthermore, a strategic role for farmer groups is needed, namely by exploiting business opportunities and accessing available capital. Collaboration between farmers and the Lalo Tanggae farmer group is also needed by fostering a conducive environment and encouraging farmer initiative and creativity. Then, work together in solving problems, increasing knowledge about market opportunities and potential, and engaging in lending and savings activities to support the growth of farming capital.

REFERENCE

- Adiaksa, S., Ilham, Muh., & Hasniah. (2023). Peran Kelompok Tani terhadap Peningkatan Produktivitas Petani Padi di Desa Tembe Kecamatan Rarowatu Utara. *Jurnal Online Program Studi Pendidikan Ekonomi*, 8(2), 317–328. <https://doi.org/10.36709/JOPSPE.V8I2.136>
- Ahmad, I. K., Kartu, F., Terhadap, T., Kebutuhan, P., Bersubsidi, P., Di, P., Cianjur, K., Undang, P., Paminto, S. R., Khalil Ahmad, I., Rohman, Z. S., Hidayat, A., Hidayat, T. W., & Yudiansyah, F. (2024). Fungsionalisasi Kartu Tani terhadap Pemenuhan Kebutuhan Pupuk Bersubsidi kepada Petani di Kabupaten Cianjur Perspektif Undang-Undang Nomor 19 Tahun 2013 tentang Perlindungan dan Pemberdayaan Petani. *Hukum Inovatif: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 1(3), 221–231. <https://doi.org/10.62383/HUMIF.V1I3.328>
- Bermuli, A. N. D., Natsir, N., & Susanti, A. (2024). Efektivitas Organisasi Kelompok Tani di Desa Silanya Kecamatan Lage Kabupaten Poso. *Jurnal Multidisipliner Ilmu Akademik*, 1(3), 326–339. <https://doi.org/10.61722/JMIA.V1I3.1449>
- Djafar, R., Rahman, M., & Duludu, U. A. T. A. (2022). Pemberdayaan Kelompok Tani Dalam Meningkatkan Produktifitas Usaha Pertanian. *Student Journal of Community Education*, 87–95. <https://doi.org/10.37411/SJCE.V1I2.1603>
- Elake, G. L., Susilowati, R., & R, F. (2022). Aktivisme Petani Transnasional: Perjuangan La Via Campesina dan Serika Petani Indonesia untuk Kedaulatan Pangan. *Media Bina Ilmiah*, 17(5), 925–938. <https://doi.org/10.33578/MBI.V17I5.219>

- Hermawan, M. A., Kurniawan, A. Y., & Nisa, A. F. (2023). Peranan Kelompok Tani dalam Meningkatkan Usahatani di Desa Telaga Langsung Kecamatan Telaga Langsung Kabupaten Hulu Sungai Selatan. *Frontier Agribisnis*, 7(4), 52. <https://doi.org/10.20527/FRONTBIZ.V7I4.11558>
- Idris, M., Sakina dewi Cakra, A., Gusti Tamsil, A., Alisyumsy, A., Musfiani, Y., Iksan Syawal, M., Armansyah, A., Ashari Arfah, R., KUNCI Strategi Peningkatan, K., Masyarakat, P., & Padi Sawah, P. (2024). Strategi Peningkatan Produktivitas Padi di Desa Padacenga: Langkah Menuju Kesejahteraan Masyarakat. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat: Pemberdayaan, Inovasi Dan Perubahan*, 4(6). <https://doi.org/10.59818/JPM.V4I6.846>
- Nur, R. , & Sihombing, T. (2022). Efektivitas Implementasi Kebijakan Penyaluran Pupuk Bersubsidi Bagi Petani Di Desa Bangun Purba Kecamatan Lembah Sorik Merapi Kabupaten Mandailing Natal. *Professional: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Administrasi Publik*, 9(2), 457–466.
- Pakpahan, H. T., Hutapea, K. P., & Simbolon, P. R. (2023). Peranan Kelompok Tani dalam Pembagian Pupuk Bersubsidi di Desa Pasar Melintang, Deli Serdang. *AGRICOLA*, 13(2), 101–109. <https://doi.org/10.35724/AG.V13I2.5489>
- Polbangtan Gowa: Pandemi, Pengabdian Masyarakat Tidak Berhenti - Makassar Terkini*. (n.d.). Retrieved March 6, 2026, from <https://makassar.terkini.id/polbangtan-gowa-pandemi-pengabdian-masyarakat-tidak-berhenti/>
- Qomaruddin, & Sa'diyah, H. (2024). Kajian Teoritis tentang Teknik Analisis Data dalam Penelitian Kualitatif: Perspektif Spradley, Miles dan Huberman. *Journal of Management, Accounting, and Administration*, 1(2), 77–84. <https://doi.org/10.52620/JOMAA.V1I2.93>
- Siahaan, F. A., Surbakti, F., Panjaitan, J., Hasyim, H., & D, M. A. A. K. (2024). Pengaruh Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Kewirausahaan terhadap Kemampuan Berinovasi: Sebuah Studi Literatur tentang Strategi Pengembangan Wirausaha di Berbagai Sektor Ekonomi. *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran*, 7(4), 15945–15949. <https://doi.org/10.31004/JRPP.V7I4.36989>
- Sihombing, Y. (2023). Inovasi Kelembagaan Pertanian dalam Mewujudkan Ketahanan Pangan. *Proceedings Series on Physical & Formal Sciences*, 5, 83–90. <https://doi.org/10.30595/PSPFS.V5I.707>
- Syarbiah, S., Pebrianto, P., Putra, M., & Pirdayanti, P. (2022). Peran Kelompok Tani dalam Meningkatkan Pendapatan Usahatani Padi Sawah di Desa Momea Kabupaten Konawe. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Manajemen Dan Ekonomi*, 1(2), 234–240. <https://doi.org/10.59024/SEMNAS.V1I2.471>
- Umbu Zogar, A., Umbu, E., Retang, K., & Djoh, D. A. (2022). Peran Kelompok Tani terhadap Produktivitas Usaha Tani Padi Sawah di Desa Palakahembi Kecamatan Pandawa. *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa AGROINFO GALUH*, 9(2), 548–562. <https://doi.org/10.25157/JIMAG.V9I2.7280>
- M., Hasibuan, A., Nasution, S. P., Yani, F. A., Hasibuan, H. A., Firzah, N. (2022). Strategi Peningkatan Usaha Tani Padi Sawah Untuk Meningkatkan Perekonomian Masyarakat Desa. *ABDIKAN: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Bidang Sains Dan Teknologi*, 1(4), 477–490. <https://doi.org/10.55123/ABDIKAN.V1I4.1095>