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Agro-Socioeconomic Newsletter

Indonesian Center for Agricultural Socio Economic and Policy Studies (ICASEPS)

Editorial

Dear valuable readers,

We are pleased to present this Newsletter again with special content on policy updates related to agricultural extension performance, policy development on rice seed systems, and policy issues on agricultural development blueprints. We consider this information not only interesting but also relevant in formulating the right program related to rice self-sufficiency and food systems.

Next is news about several activities carried out by ICASEPS, including a special oration containing experience-based insight on agricultural development delivered by Prof. Tahlim Sudaryanto to mark his retirement after a long service as a civil servant.

While looking forward to a brighter career, enjoy reading this Newsletter. We will continue to explore different topics in the field of agricultural economics for you in the next edition.

As this year draws to a close, we wish you all the best. Thank you.

The Editor

CONTENT

Policy Update

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PERFORMANCE

Cut R. Adawiyah, Maha M.E. Purnomo, Erma Suryani, Mohammad W. Effendi, Widyadhari F. Setyaningrum, Frilla Ariani

Background

Agricultural extension services play a crucial role in agricultural development, particularly in efforts to enhance food production, productivity, and farmer welfare. Law No. 16/2006 regulates the agricultural extension system and mandates the establishment of extension institutions at the provincial, regency/city, and district levels. However, the performance of agricultural extension services has declined following the enactment of Law No. 23/2014 on Regional Government, which prohibits the establishment of extension institutions at the provincial to district levels.

This institutional change has severed direct and vertical connections between central policymakers and regional implementers. As a result, the central government lacks direct access to oversee agricultural extension activities. Several challenges have arisen after the implementation of Law No. 23/2014, including (1) the dissolution of agricultural extension institutions at various levels; (2) weak institutional capacity among farmer and farmer-economic organizations; (3) limited quantity and competence of agricultural extension workers; (4) suboptimal delivery of extension services; and (5) insufficient infrastructure and funding support for agricultural extension activities.

To strengthen the function of agricultural extension services, Presidential Regulation (Perpres) No. 35/2022 was issued. It addresses several key aspects: (1) strengthening working relationships, (2) enhancing agricultural extension institutions at the district and village levels, (3) recruiting and building the capacity of extension personnel, (4) developing agricultural extension materials, (5) leveraging information and communication technology, and (6) ensuring the availability of infrastructure and facilities.

However, limited socialization and advocacy among agricultural human resources within the Ministry of Agriculture and local governments have hindered the optimal implementation of this regulation. Failure to effectively implement Presidential Regulation (*Perpres*) No. 35/2022 has a negative impact on agricultural productivity, food security,

competitiveness, farmer welfare, and regional agricultural synergy. This study aims to evaluate the extent to which *Perpres* No. 35/2022 has been implemented, identify specific challenges and bottlenecks in its implementation, and propose strategies to improve agricultural extension performance.

Methodology

This study was conducted in West Java and Banten provinces from February to June 2024. The locations were purposively selected based on the following criteria: (1) extensive rice cultivation, (2) establishment of "basic administrative units" (*Satminkal*) or Regional Technical Implementation Units (UPTD) for agricultural extension services as mandated by *Perpres* No. 35/2022, and (3) integration of extension services into specific departments and divisions within regional government organizations.

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through surveys and focus group discussions (FGDs) with stakeholders. Data analysis employed descriptive methods using Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal Theory. Policy Implementation Analysis (PIA) was used to identify issues impeding the effective implementation of *Perpres* No. 35/2022.

Key Findings

Key findings from the study are as follows:

1. The dissemination of information about *Perpres* No. 35/2022 has been minimal, leaving many stakeholders involved in agricultural extension services, especially at the regional level, with insufficient understanding of its provisions. This lack of awareness has hindered the effective implementation of agricultural extension services.
2. A cohesive and synergistic working relationship between agricultural extension organizers at the central, provincial, regency/city, and district levels has yet to be established, limiting coordination and efficiency in delivering extension services.
3. *Satminkal* institutions, as mandated by *Perpres* No. 35/2022, remain largely unformed in many regions. Additionally, the structure of extension service institutions at the district level varies significantly, creating inconsistencies in service delivery.
4. The current number of extension workers does not meet the ratio mandated by Law No. 19/2013 (as stated in Chapter 46), which stipulates at least one extension worker per village. On average, one extension worker oversees 2 to 4 villages, supporting dozens of farmer groups. This excessive workload reduces the opportunity for extension workers to enhance their capacity and provide focused assistance.
5. The extension materials often fail to align with the guidelines set forth in Ministry of Agriculture Regulation No. 3/2018. On average, extension workers deliver only one topic per month, predominantly focused on crop cultivation. No formal institution is responsible for developing and standardizing agricultural extension materials.
6. The availability of infrastructure and facilities to support extension activities is inconsistent. Many extension workers lack essential operational tools, such as transportation. This shortage stems from insufficient budget allocations for agricultural extension activities, exacerbated by the lack of commitment from local leaders to prioritize these programs in regional development plans.
7. Both central and local governments have initiated Efforts to enhance the skills and capabilities of extension workers through training and mentoring. However, these programs have been limited in scope and effectiveness due to budget constraints.

Policy Recommendations

1. A strategy to accelerate the implementation of *Perpres* No. 35/2022 should be prioritized by developing comprehensive outreach initiatives to disseminate its content through diverse media platforms and coordination forums with local governments.
2. The formation of *Satminkal* institutions at the provincial and regency/city levels, as mandated by *Perpres* No. 35/2022, must be expedited through decrees issued by governors, regents, or mayors. Collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and local governments is essential to facilitate this process. Pilot projects for agricultural extension *Satminkal* institutions can be implemented to serve as benchmarks for other regions.
3. To enhance service effectiveness, efforts must be prioritized to meet the mandated ratio of one extension worker per village. The Agricultural Human Resource Development and Extension Agency (BPPSDMP) can leverage Agricultural Development Polytechnic (*Polbangtan*) graduates to support and strengthen extension activities in various regions.
4. A dedicated monitoring and evaluation team should be established to oversee the effective implementation of *Perpres* No. 35/2022. This team can also identify and address emerging challenges in delivering agricultural extension services, ensuring continuous improvement.
5. Adequate funding for agricultural extension activities must become a top priority for both central and local governments. Strong commitment from local leaders is essential to integrate agricultural extension services into regional development programs, ensuring sufficient budget allocation to support these critical initiatives.

Collaborative efforts should be made with scientific institutions, technology developers, professional organizations, agricultural practitioners, and relevant experts to produce high-quality and comprehensive agricultural extension materials tailored to the needs of farmers and extension workers.

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Policy Development

REORGANIZING THE RICE SEED SYSTEM

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The Ministry of Agriculture has set a 2024 production target of 35 million metric tons of rice, corresponding to 65.40 million metric tons of milled dry paddy, to support food self-sufficiency. This rice production target requires a rice planting area of 11.89 million hectares. We can calculate the availability of rice seeds, particularly inbred rice seeds, which farmers predominantly use, based on the target rice planting area. Assuming 25 kg/ha of inbred rice seeds are recommended, 297,250 metric tons of inbred rice seeds are required for the 2024 rice crop.

However, the average production of certified inbred rice seeds in 2023 was only 146,067 metric tons. This indicates that the availability of certified inbred rice seeds is less than 50 percent of the seed requirement. Several factors contributing to the lack of seed availability are the unfinished implementation of seed production and distribution regulations, suboptimal and uneven distribution of certified seeds, and mismatch with field conditions. Additionally, some farmers perceive the certified seeds, especially the subsidized seeds, as low quality. The concentration of seed producers on Java Island extends delivery times, increases shipping costs, and, to some extent, affects seed quality. This study aims to provide policy recommendations for renewing the rice seed system to ensure the supply of quality seeds and to support increased rice production.

Rice Seed System

Producing certified inbred rice seeds involves some subsystems, i.e., newly improved variety invention, production of breeder seed (BS), foundation seed (FS), stock seed (SS), and extension seed (ES), as well as seed distribution, certification, and quality control. One of the main challenges in producing BS is the institutional transformation of research into the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), i.e., most researchers moved and administratively integrated into BRIN. However, the Ministry of Agriculture still owns all the research infrastructures (laboratories, experimental fields, greenhouses, and germplasm). This is the main reason for the halting of the invention of newly improved varieties (VUB) and BS production. The Indonesian Center for Rice Research (BB Padi) of the Ministry of Agriculture, now called the Center for Rice Instrument Testing Standard (BBPSI Padi), is no longer mandated to invent VUB and produce BS. On the other hand, BRIN, as the single research institute in the country besides the universities, does not conduct VUB and BS production due to a lack of rice germplasm, experimental fields, laboratories, and research budgets.

Furthermore, the private seed producers are not interested in inventing new varieties and producing BS due to low profitability. Illegal seed distribution through kiosks and marketplaces further complicates this issue. It indicates weak production, certification, and distribution control of the rice seeds. Limited personnel of the Crop Seed Supervisors (PBT) and lack of budget for the Food Crop and Horticulture Seed Certification and Control Agency (BPSBTPH), now become the Regional Technical Implementing Units (UPTD), are the main factors contributing to the inadequate supervision of seed quality.

Rice Seed System Reform

The urgent reform of the rice seed system involves the institutional arrangement for producing BS of VUB. Since the production of BS is under the breeders' supervision, it is essential to review the former function of inventing the new inbred rice varieties for the Ministry of Agriculture, as BRIN has no capability of producing VUB. Given the sufficient resources and facilities at BBPSI Padi, it is necessary to revive this agency to produce BS and collaborate with BRIN to invent new rice varieties. It requires organizational restructuring in the Ministry of Agriculture, mainly the functions of BBPSI Padi. The Chief Seed Agency (BBI) and Main Seed Agency (BBU) under the Agricultural Offices at provincial and regency levels, respectively, are responsible for rice seed production in the region, especially FS and SS. However, both seed centers produce ES for profit or regional original income (PAD).

It is essential to support the existence and operation of seed centers that also play roles in seed production. So far, most FS, SS, and ES are produced by private local seed producers. PT Sang Hyang Sri (SHS), as the state-owned government, mainly produces subsidized rice seed. The support of regional regulations requires adequate budget allocation. It is important to note that seed quality supervision enhancement implemented by the Plant Seed Inspectors (PBT) requires an increased number of these staff. The seed distribution reform needs the involvement of the local producers in the respective region.

Reviving the Self-Reliance Seed Village (SDMB), namely the local seed producers' empowerment, is urgent, especially regarding the seed marketing support, to ensure the timely availability of quality seed. Additionally, re-educating farmers to adopt quality inbred rice seed is urgent as well, followed by enforcing seed production and distribution supervision.

Conclusions

The government's role in providing quality seeds, particularly for rice, remains crucial. However, institutional change of research to BRIN has impacted the rice seed system by disrupting the process of VUB invention and rice seed production—the research and development of VUB and seed production lack infrastructure and budget. In addition, inventing inbred VUB rice varieties resistant to pests, diseases, and climate change adaptation is urgent. It is significant to raise awareness of the Ministry of Agriculture's role in inventing VUB and producing BS. Maintaining seed quality that meets the six right principles, i.e., variety, quality, delivery time, place of service, volume, and price, requires a crucial monitoring function. The role of BPSBTPH as a seed supervision institution is significant. BPSBTPH should strive to become an independent institution free from any external intervention. Standardizing seed quality according to the Indonesian National Standard (SNI) should be a priority for improving seed quality in the future. It is essential to

strengthen the capacity of provincial and regency seed centers and the private local seed producers, as well as BPSBTPH as the regional UPTs that play a crucial role in food-related matters.

Advanced seed centers with a wide market can potentially become Regional Public Service Agencies (BLUD). In contrast, seed centers in other regions will continue to receive funding support for seed production from the center. BPSBTPH, as an independent supervisory institution, will be directly under the governor, inspectorate, or regional secretariat to safeguard its supervisory function from interference by regional government interests.

Regulations for independent seed development are required to implement in situ seed provision through collaboration between breeder farmers and nearby private seed producers. The focus of strengthening breeder farmers in the independent seed program is to enhance their ability to monitor the quality of rice seeds and establish seed marketing partnerships with kiosks, farmer groups, and other seed markets. Further, increase the use of certified seeds at the farmer level by (a) raising awareness about the threat of pests and diseases and yield degradation when the same seeds are used repeatedly and (b) educating farmers about the benefits of using certified seeds.

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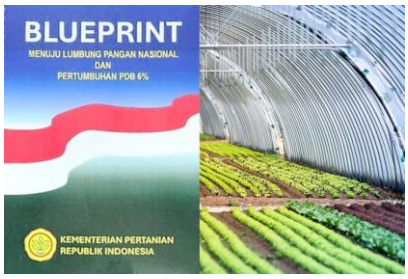
Policy Issues

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BLUEPRINT 2025-2029



In accordance with the Decree of the Minister of Agriculture No. 420 of 2024, the Director of ICASEPS was appointed as the Implementation Team Leader of the preparation of the 2025-2029 Agricultural Development Blueprint. This book is expected to be the main reference for the Ministry of Agriculture/related agencies and Regional Governments in the field of food and agriculture in preparing strategies, policies, and programs for Food and Agricultural Development in 2025-2029.

The blueprint for agricultural development is essential, considering the strategic value of the agricultural sector in the future as a provider of food, industrial raw materials, a source of foreign exchange revenue, and a provider of employment. The agricultural sector has proven its resilience as an economic cushion during the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the future, the position of the agricultural sector will be more crucial, especially in supporting the new government's priority programs, namely free nutritious meals and milk programs, energy security, food self-sufficiency (food barns), increasing exports, and supporting national economic growth to achieve the national economic growth target of 6 percent per year.

The results of the analysis show that the agricultural sector must be able to grow at least 4.81 percent per year to support national economic growth of 6 percent per year, i.e., the growth of the food crop sub-sector of around 3.41 percent per year; horticulture 4.99 percent; estate crops 5.69 percent; and livestock 5.68 percent. Efforts to achieve these targets face challenges related to land conversion, an increase in the number of small and aging farmers, a relatively low level of technology adoption, and uneven distribution (between regions and sub-sectors).

The strategy to achieve agricultural development goals is carried out by paying more attention (focus) to commodities with a significant contribution to GDP (leveraged commodities) in each sub-sector. The priorities for increasing commodity production (2025–2029) are as follows:

1. Rice crop production must grow at least 4.35%/year through an increase in harvested area by 4.15% and productivity at 2.77%/year. Meanwhile, corn production is to grow by 15.97%/year, with harvested area to grow by 13.84% and corn productivity by 0.2%/year. Meanwhile, the target of the harvested area and productivity of cassava should grow by 4.22%/year and 1.26%/year, respectively, so cassava production will reach around 28.33–40.35 million metric tons.
2. The harvested area and productivity of chilies are targeted to grow by 16.69%/year and 2.40%/year, respectively. Shallot production is targeted to grow by 3.65%/year. Meanwhile, potato production growth is 5.25%/year, supported by a planting area of 3.54%/year, and productivity increases by 1.65%/year. Orange production is targeted to increase by 3.35 to 4.10 million metric tons, supported by an increase in planting area of 2.99%/year and productivity of 44.81 metric tons/ha. Banana production is targeted to increase by 9.25%/year with an increase in harvested area of 7.63%/year and an increase in productivity of 75.85-80.52 metric tons/ha.
3. Increasing the production of palm oil by 22.58%/year. With this increase, the fulfillment of the B-50 program should not imply a negative impact on exports and other domestic needs. Meanwhile, the rubber production target is expected to increase by 4.23 to 4.88 million metric tons in 2025-2029 through an increase in productivity of 1.1 to 1.2 metric tons/ha. The increasing production target for sugarcane is 3.11%/year. With this production target, self-sufficiency in sugar consumption can be achieved. Coconut production is targeted to increase by 3.01%/year, from a harvested area of 2.1 to 2.23 million hectares and a productivity of 1.35 to 1.68 metric tons/ha.
4. Increase the production of livestock commodities regarding the poultry meat production target that grows at 2.35%/year. Meanwhile, egg production is targeted to grow by 2.13%/year to reach 5.41 to 5.90 million metric tons, and the population of laying hens grows by 2.08%/year. To meet the GDP target of 6%, milk production is targeted to increase by 43.39 %/per year to meet the needs of the milk-drinking program; imports are still needed. If the target is milk self-sufficiency, milk production and dairy cow population must grow by 67.22%/year and 0.7%/year, respectively. On the other hand, beef production and beef cattle population can increase by 8.59%/year and 4.49%/year, respectively.

The general recommended strategies are expanding commodity production areas, increasing productivity, reducing the risk of crop failure, reducing yield loss, and improving production quality. The development of nutritious food grown in home gardens is expected to increase food security on a household scale by diversifying healthy food sources.

The downstreaming of agricultural commodities in Indonesia is currently in the development stage. The agricultural sector can support the growth of other economic sectors both in the upstream (input providers) and the downstream sectors (users of agricultural products). The added value in all economic sectors driven by the agricultural sector can increase by 33 times compared to that of the agricultural industry itself.

Policies that need to be implemented are highly comprehensive and include strengthening the seed system, improving the irrigation infrastructure, modernizing agriculture by mechanization, promoting downstream agricultural product developments, centralizing agricultural extension services, adopting an independent learning approach in agricultural education, and establishing a unified command structure. In the future, the Ministry of Agriculture aims to unite upstream and downstream food affairs under a single coordinated authority.

The Agricultural Development Blueprint 2025–2029 document has been used as a reference for the preparation of performance targets for the higher-level institutions within the Ministry of Agriculture. It is used by the Minister of Agriculture in various meeting forums, both with the President/Vice President and Ministries/other relevant institutions.

UNDERSTANDING GENDER ROLES IN FRUIT FLY MANAGEMENT IN INDONESIA

Introduction

Mango cultivation is crucial in Indonesia's agricultural economy, with the country producing approximately 3.3 million metric tons of mangoes in 2022. Among its provinces, West Java stands out as a key production hub, particularly for the highly valued Gedong Gincu mango. Renowned for its vibrant color and aroma, this premium variety is predominantly grown in Indramayu, Cirebon, and Majalengka regencies. These regencies are critical not only to national mango production but also to the livelihoods of smallholder farmers who depend on mango farming as a primary source of income.

Despite its importance, mango farming faces several challenges, including the pervasive threat of fruit flies, which compromise fruit quality and yield. To address this, the IndoAWM project employs Area-Wide Integrated Pest Management (AW-IPM) strategies to minimize pesticide reliance, enhance environmental sustainability, and improve production outcomes.

Recognizing the influence of gender dynamics on agricultural success, the project incorporates a study on the roles of men and women in mango farming and fruit fly management. This study explores gender-specific contributions, decision-making, and resource access, offering insights into how inclusive strategies can strengthen pest management practices.

Mango Farming and the Role of Fruit Fly Management

Mango farming, particularly in West Java's Gedong Gincu-producing regencies, is deeply tied to local communities' social and economic life. However, fruit flies remain one of the most destructive pests, causing significant post-harvest losses and limiting market access, especially for export-quality produce.

The AW-IPM approach promoted by the IndoAWM project emphasizes sustainable pest control techniques that reduce chemical pesticide usage while improving fruit quality and yield. However, the effectiveness of these strategies depends on understanding the distinct roles and contributions of men and women in farming households. Women often play an essential yet underappreciated role in areas such as financial management and post-harvest processes, while men dominate fieldwork and technical decision-making. To ensure the success of AW-IPM practices, it is essential to address these gender dynamics, which influence everything from labor distribution to access to training and resources.

Key Findings from the Gender Study

The gender study conducted in Indramayu, Cirebon, and Majalengka regencies reveals critical insights into the division of labor, decision-making, and access to resources within mango-farming households:

1. **Division of labor**. Men predominantly manage field activities such as planting, pruning, harvesting, and pest control, including pesticide application and fruit fly monitoring. Meanwhile, women take on extensive household responsibilities, spending 8–9 hours daily on childcare, cooking, and cleaning. In addition, they manage post-harvest tasks such as sorting and grading mangoes, contributing significantly to the value chain.
2. **Decision-making**. Men control most technical farming decisions, including pest management strategies and pesticide usage. Women, while excluded from many technical decisions, are central to household financial management. They oversee savings, daily expenditures, and the financing of farming inputs.
3. **Access to training and resources**. Men are the primary participants in agricultural training and extension services, as these programs are often designed for male farmers. In contrast, women rely on informal sources like family members, especially husbands and neighbors, for agricultural knowledge, limiting their exposure to innovations and advanced practices.
4. **Time allocation and knowledge gaps**. Women's substantial time commitment to household chores reduces their capacity to participate in farming and training activities. Limited access to training further contributes to a gender knowledge gap, with women less informed about technical aspects of mango farming and pest control.

Implications for Gender-Responsive AW-IPM Programs

The findings underscore the need for gender-responsive approaches to maximize the impact and sustainability of AW-IPM programs.

1. **Inclusive training programs**. Agricultural training should actively engage women by addressing barriers such as time constraints and childcare responsibilities. Flexible schedules

and women-focused sessions can enhance their participation.

2. **Empowering women in decision-making**. Women's critical role in household financial management presents an opportunity to involve them more actively in farm-related decisions. Programs should include components that encourage joint decision-making between men and women.
3. **Enhancing access to resources**. Expanding women's access to agricultural resources, including credit, extension services, and technology, is essential. Leveraging social media and digital platforms can provide an accessible and effective way to share information tailored to women's needs.
4. **Promoting community engagement**. Mixed-gender farmer groups and leadership roles for women within these groups can foster a collaborative environment where both men and women contribute to pest management practices.
5. **Policy advocacy**. Policymakers should integrate gender-responsive strategies into agricultural development plans. This includes promoting women's participation in decision-making at both the household and community levels and ensuring equal access to training and resources.

Conclusions

Mango farming in West Java's Gedong Gincu-producing regencies is a vital economic activity, deeply influenced by the roles and responsibilities of men and women. While men dominate technical and field-related tasks, women's contributions to financial management, post-harvest processes, and household duties are equally crucial.

The IndoAWM project's gender study highlights the need to address disparities in access to resources, training, and decision-making power. By empowering women and fostering inclusive strategies, AW-IPM programs can achieve greater adoption, sustainability, and impact. Such efforts will not only enhance pest management but also contribute to the broader goals of agricultural development, food security, and gender equity in Indonesia.

ICASEPS Publications

Analisis Kebijakan Pertanian Vol. 22 No. 2, December 2024

1. *Pencapaian Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan Kesetaraan Gender di Sektor Pertanian Indonesia* (Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals on Gender Equity in the Indonesia's Agricultural Sector) (Rizghina Ikhwan, Ahmad Makky Arrozi, Agung Saras Sri Raharjo)
2. *Volatilitas Harga Daging dan Telur Ayam Ras di Indonesia* (Price Volatility of Chicken Meat and Eggs in Indonesia) (Atikah F Mubarok, Agus Setiadi, Komalawati, Suci Wulandari, Eddy Yusuf)
3. *Dinamika Perilaku dan Pemberdayaan Kelompok Usaha Bersama (KUB) Peternak Susu: Kasus di Magelang, Jawa Tengah* (Behavioral Dynamics and Empowerment of Dairy Farmer Groups: A Case in Magelang, Central Java) (Rosa Zulfikhar, Wardi, Muzizat Akbarrizki, Budi Purwo Widiarso)
4. *Faktor-Faktor yang Berpengaruh terhadap Keputusan Penerapan Strategi Adaptasi Perubahan Iklim oleh Petani Kentang di Jawa Timur* (Factors Affecting Potato Farmers' Decisions on Climate Change Adaptation Strategies in East Java) (Desta Prasanthi Anggraini, Fahriyah, Rosihan Asmara)
5. *Manfaat Pendirian Koperasi untuk Mengelola Usaha Penyewaan Jasa Alat dan Mesin Pertanian (UPJA): Studi Kasus di Kabupaten Karanganyar, Jawa Tengah* (Benefits of Establishing a Cooperative to Manage Business of Agricultural Tools and Machinery Rental Services: Case Study in Karanganyar Regency, Central Java) (Sri Hanggana)
6. *Strategi Pengurangan Kehilangan Pascapanen Produk Hortikultura* (Strategies for Reducing Postharvest Losses of Horticulture Products) (Ira Mulyawanti, Esty Asriyana Suryana)
7. *Penyempurnaan Indikator Keterjangkauan pada Sistem Peringatan Dini Kerawanan Pangan dan Gizi* (Improvement of Affordability Indicators in the Food and Nutritional Vulnerability Early Warning System) (Nita Yulianis, Farit M. Afendi, Achmad Suryana, Drajat Martianto, Miftahul Jannah, Sri Harjanti N., Ambar Rukmi D.K., Annisa M. Imaniyar, Arif Kurniawan)

ICASEPS News

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF POLICY QUALITY INDEX MEASUREMENT

Indonesia has been promoting the improvement of public policy quality by participating in the annual review of public policy formulation, implementation, and impact evaluation. This review is led by the State Administration Agency (*Lembaga Administrasi Negara*/LAN). In addressing the preparation of the 2024 review that will be held next year, ICASEPS held a Workshop on Improving the Ministry of Agriculture Policy Governance on October 22-23, 2024, at the Ismunadji Auditorium, ICASEPS. This workshop is a continuation of the Workshop on the Preparation of Agricultural Policy Manuscripts held on June 21, 2024, focusing on the dimensions of policy planning and implementation.

Dr Sudi Mardianto, the Director of ICASEPS, highlighted the decline in the Policy Quality Index (IKK) in 2021 and 2023, which indicated a difference in the policy formulation process that led to the declining trend in quality within the Ministry of Agriculture. Furthermore, he also emphasized the importance of preparing a comprehensive policy paper to identify the urgency and need for rules or regulations to be issued. Often, existing regulations do not fully explore the source of the problem, which may lead to ineffective implementation. Therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture needs to strengthen the preparation of policy papers as part of the literature review and

guarantee that the resulting regulations will have a positive impact during the implementation stage.
As the collaborator of the event, the Head of the Legal Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture, on various occasions, reminded that every policy drafting process should pay attention to the time given, strengthen the substance, and ensure effective evaluation steps. The results obtained from this workshop are expected to be a guideline for the Ministry of Agriculture. This workshop demonstrated the strong commitment of the Ministry of Agriculture to improving the quality of public policy by preparing an intense analytical process that is heavily related to the existing needs and contributes significantly to improving the agricultural development process in Indonesia.

STAKEHOLDERS MEETING ON ACCELERATION OF THE SMALLHOLDER OIL PALM REJUVENATION PROGRAM

ICASEPS, Ministry of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Oil Palm Plantation Fund Management Agency (Badan Pengelola Dana Perkebunan Kelapa Sawit/BPDPKS), has conducted a study on “Acceleration of the Smallholder Oil Palm Rejuvenation Program (Peremajaan Sawit Rakyat/PSR) to Increase Cost Efficiency and Competitiveness of Smallholder Oil Palm” from 2022 to 2024. The study locations covered 12 provinces and involved various stakeholders, such as policymakers, several related institutions in the implementation of the PSR Program both at the central and regional levels, the private sectors, related associations, cooperatives, farmer groups, and farmers.

One of the study outputs is the formulation of policy recommendations that will be submitted to relevant stakeholders as input in making policies related to smallholder oil palm rejuvenation. To enrich the information on the study results and gather input for the formulation of policy recommendations, ICASEPS held a stakeholders meeting event on November 12, 2024. The stakeholders' meeting was held in a hybrid manner.

The Secretary General of the Ministry of Agriculture officially opened the meeting and delivered a keynote speech. ICASEPS invited nine other experts and speakers from several government and private institutions to have their insights on the implementation of the PSR Program. Participants of this meeting came from related institutions/agencies, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, BPDPKS, Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK), Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning/National Land Agency (ATR/BPN), related agencies that participated in implementing PSR Program in the regions, the Indonesian Palm Oil Entrepreneurs Association (GAPKI), the Indonesian Palm Oil Farmers Association (Apkasindo), Academicians, Practitioners, and Policy Analysts within the Ministry of Agriculture.

The study results were presented by the ICASEPS team in this meeting, followed by presentations of materials from other stakeholders, i.e., the Directorate General of Plantations, Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of KLHK, the Ministry of ATR/BPN; BPDPKS, GAPKI, Aspekpir, Apkasindo, and Academics. Several aspects discussed at the stakeholders' meeting include (a) targets and realization of PSR Program implementation; (b) challenges in implementing the PSR Program; (c) efforts that must be made to accelerate the implementation of the PSR Program; (d) technical strategies for accelerating PSR; (e) suggestions for accelerating the implementation of the PSR Program; (f) verification proposals in the PSR Program partnership pathway; (g) verification proposals for submitting facilities and infrastructure; and (h) case study of PSR implementation in Aceh Province.

The results of the stakeholders' meeting will be used to refine the study. In addition, input from the meeting discussion will be beneficial in sharpening the recommendations for applied policies that have been set up as the main output of the study.

SPECIAL ORATION OF PROF. DR. TAHLIM SUDARYANTO

On Tuesday, November 26, 2024, ICASEPS held a ceremony to mark the retirement of several employees as civil servants at the Ministry of Agriculture and BRIN. The event honored several retirees, including Prof. Dr. Tahlim Sudaryanto, who is well-recognized both as a scientist and a bureaucrat.

In his opening remark, the Director of ICASEPS, Dr. Sudi Mardianto, expressed his appreciation for the contributions and dedication of the retirees. Special recognition was given to Prof. (R) Dr. Tahlim Sudaryanto, who officially retired as a civil servant at the Ministry of Agriculture and National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), a career spanning from 1979 to November 2024. Among his other strategic assignments at the Ministry of Agriculture, Prof. Tahlim also served as the Director of the Center for Agricultural Socio-Economic and Policy Studies (ICASEPS) for two terms, from 1998 to 2002 and 2005 to 2010. In this event, Prof. Tahlim delivered a memorable oration titled "Examining the Directions and Priorities of Agricultural Development." His presentation focused on the national agricultural development priorities and challenges in transforming Indonesia's agricultural sector. The following is the excerpts of his speech:

Agricultural Development Priorities

- The 2024–2029 agricultural development agenda focuses on achieving food self-sufficiency, particularly in rice production.
- This program aligns with the "Asta Cita" vision advocated by the President and Vice President to achieve self-reliance in food, energy, and water.

Transformation of Agricultural Production Structure

- Collaborative research between ICASEPS and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) highlighted significant changes in the agricultural production structure.
- The study revealed a shift from staple food dominance to high-value commodities such as horticulture, plantation crops, and livestock.

- This transformation was accompanied by increased employment opportunities in non-agricultural sectors in rural areas.

Indicators and Impacts of Transformation

Prof. Tahlim presented data showing positive trends in rural transformation over the past three decades:

- RT1 (economic transformation indicator) rose from 40.6% (1990/1999) to 50.2% (2010/2019).
- RT2 (social transformation indicator) increased from 48% to 66% during the same period.
- Employment in agriculture declined significantly, from 51.9% to 33.9%.

He emphasized the positive impacts of these changes, including increased rural household income, reduced poverty, and improved food security.

Challenges in Agricultural Research and Development

Despite remarkable progress, Prof. Tahlim outlined persistent challenges in agricultural research and development (R&D), now integrated under BRIN:

- Limited control over scattered research units across various regions.
- Separation of research and dissemination functions, leading to slow responsiveness to user needs.
- There is a need for centers of excellence to be equipped with adequate human resources, infrastructure, and budgets.

He noted that advanced agricultural R&D systems in countries like China and India still separate research and dissemination functions for better effectiveness.

Prof. Tahlim concluded his presentation with the hope that his 45 years of experience and reflection will inspire further development in the agricultural sector. He highlighted the importance of synergy between policy, research support, and innovation to address the challenges of national agricultural development.

Prof. Tahlim Sudaryanto was accompanied by Mr. Ikarianto Haryadi, Mr. Rachmat Hestu Wiseno, and Mr. Nurodin, who received appreciation as retired civil servants. May they all be given health and success in entering a new chapter of their life journey.

BOOK LAUNCHING: "EKONOMI DAN KEBIJAKAN PERBERASAN DI NEGARA PRODUSEN BERAS"

ICASEPS successfully organized the launching of a book titled "*Ekonomi dan Kebijakan Perberasan di Negara Produsen Beras*" on December 23, 2024. This event was attended by stakeholders related to rice commodity, such as the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), the National Food Agency (Bapanas), the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), IPB University, and the writers of the book from Indonesian Embassies. In his welcome speech, Dr. Sudi Mardianto, Director of ICASEPS, emphasized the importance of this book as a strategic reference for related institutions in the formulation of rice policy development.

The rice policy book is one of the outputs of an international conference, 2nd ICANaRD, conducted on October 17-18, 2023, in addition to 49 articles that have been published in international proceedings indexed by Scopus. This book consists of 7 (seven) articles prepared by the Ambassador of Indonesia to Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, China, Japan, Bangladesh, and Egypt. It includes an article from Indonesia with writing synchronization by the writer team of ICASEPS. This book is considered a lesson learned from different rice-producing countries to enrich information when formulating a sustainable national rice policy.

In discussing this book, Dr. Achmad Suryana, Professor of Ibnu Khaldun University, delivered his presentation entitled "*Proses* Creative Thinking *Terbitnya Buku Ekonomi dan Kebijakan Perberasan di Negara Produsen Beras*." He explained the background of writing this book using materials presented by the eight countries. He further explained that the policies implemented by rice-producing countries, ranging from rice production policies to policies in the field of rice import and export, are complete learning from the aspects of production, consumption, distribution, trade, and management of food stocks, especially rice.

Furthermore, a review delivered by Prof. Dr. Hasil Sembiring, Research Professor at the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) and Expert Staff to the Minister of Agriculture, emphasized that the publication of this book is timely with the current issue of food self-sufficiency as the focus of the Indonesian government. This book provides stakeholders with insight into the economic position of Indonesia's rice and the economic situation of rice in other countries. The question of why Indonesia still needs to import rice, while Thailand and Vietnam have already been categorized as exporters, can be answered by this book. This is mainly caused by the fact that the per capita rice fields of these two neighboring countries are larger than those of Indonesia. This book is also expected to complement global information from the book that will be launched by IRRI.

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