

Juridical Analysis of Regional Government Policies in The Protection and Empowerment of Farmers in Bima Regency

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the regional government's policy in Bima Regency regarding the legal protection and empowerment of farmers. Referring to Law Number 19 of 2013 concerning the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers, local governments are mandated to ensure farmers' welfare through legal protection, access to agricultural inputs, and capacity strengthening. This study adopts a mixed methods approach, integrating both normative (doctrinal) and empirical (non-doctrinal) legal research. The normative dimension examines statutory frameworks, while the empirical component captures socio-legal realities through field data. The findings indicate that although a regional regulation exists to support these efforts, its implementation faces numerous challenges such as limited budget, weak dissemination, inadequate infrastructure, and low farmer participation in policy-making and evaluation. The juridical analysis reveals a significant gap between legal norms and social realities, resulting in suboptimal policy execution. This study recommends a more participatory policy reformulation, strengthening of farmer institutions, and the utilization of digital technology to support sustainable agricultural development.

[Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kebijakan pemerintah daerah di Kabupaten Bima terkait perlindungan hukum dan pemberdayaan petani. Merujuk pada Undang-Undang Nomor 19 Tahun 2013 tentang Perlindungan dan Pemberdayaan Petani, pemerintah daerah memiliki kewajiban untuk menjamin kesejahteraan petani melalui perlindungan hukum, akses terhadap sarana produksi pertanian, dan penguatan kapasitas. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan campuran (*mixed methods*), yang menggabungkan penelitian hukum normatif (*doktrinal*) dan empiris (*non-doktrinal*). Pendekatan normatif digunakan untuk mengkaji kerangka regulasi, sedangkan pendekatan empiris bertujuan untuk menangkap realitas sosial-hukum melalui data lapangan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun terdapat peraturan daerah yang mendukung upaya tersebut, pelaksanaannya masih menghadapi berbagai tantangan seperti keterbatasan anggaran, lemahnya sosialisasi, infrastruktur yang belum memadai, serta rendahnya partisipasi petani dalam proses perumusan dan evaluasi kebijakan. Analisis yuridis mengungkapkan adanya kesenjangan signifikan antara norma hukum dan realitas sosial, yang berdampak pada kurang optimalnya pelaksanaan kebijakan. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan reformulasi kebijakan yang lebih partisipatif, penguatan kelembagaan petani, serta pemanfaatan teknologi digital untuk mendukung pembangunan pertanian yang berkelanjutan.]

Keywords: Farmer Protection, Empowerment, Regional Policy, Juridical Analysis, Bima

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INTRODUCTION

Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia mandate that the state is responsible for protecting all Indonesian citizens and promoting the general welfare, educating the nation's life, and realizing social justice for all Indonesians. In the fifth principle of Pancasila and the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, it is clearly stated that social justice for all Indonesians is one of the foundational philosophies of national development. Therefore, every Indonesian citizen has the right to welfare. As a result, every citizen has the right and obligation, according to their ability, to participate in development efforts to improve welfare, particularly in the agricultural sector. In line with the mandate of Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, one of the goals of agricultural development is directed at maximizing the welfare of farmers. So far, farmers have made significant contributions to agricultural development and rural economic growth. As key actors in agricultural development, farmers need protection and empowerment to support the fulfillment of food needs, which are a basic human right, in order to achieve food sovereignty, food independence, and sustainable food security.

However, in its development, the existence of farmers has faced several obstacles and challenges. Some issues in the efforts to protect and empower farmers include: Climate Change: Farmers face challenges due to climate change, which can affect crop yields. Vulnerability to Natural Disasters: Many farmers are at high risk from natural disasters that can damage land and production. Business Risk and Globalization: Globalization and economic fluctuations pose challenges to farmers in competing in the market, including access to global markets. Unfair Business Practices: Protection is needed from harmful practices by third parties. Limited Access to Infrastructure and Production Facilities: Many farmers struggle to access the infrastructure and facilities necessary to improve agricultural yields. Given these problems, a juridical analysis is needed to assess the actual condition of these events from a legal perspective. A juridical analysis can be defined as a study or reflection on a problem based on legal norms and regulations. Its objective is to understand the actual situation, gain accurate legal insight, and analyze legal principles and legal substance. Local Government Policy in the agricultural sector is part of regional development efforts aimed at improving farmer welfare, supporting food security, and encouraging agrarian-based economic growth. According to Ahmad (2018), local government policy refers to decisions made by regional governments to regulate and direct agricultural activities within their areas, taking into account factors such as farmer needs, environmental conditions, and local government capabilities.

Farmer Protection and Empowerment is part of a sustainable agricultural development strategy aimed at increasing farmers' welfare, protecting them from farming risks, and enhancing their capacity to face global challenges. The main legal basis for this is Law No. 19 of 2013 on the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers. Farmer protection includes government efforts to provide guarantees to farmers against losses from farming failures, including price protection and access to agricultural land (Law No. 19 of 2013).

Meanwhile, empowerment aims to increase farmers' capacity through training, access to technology, and business capital assistance to improve productivity and competitiveness. Nasrullah's study (2023) shows that farmer empowerment is effective if accompanied by market access and strong institutional support. However, in practice, various obstacles such as limited resources and weak inter-agency coordination often become major barriers.

Bima Regency is a region with strong agricultural potential due to its vast land and favorable climate. However, the agricultural sector in Bima Regency still faces many challenges, such as limited infrastructure, low productivity, and lack of market access. Therefore, local governments must formulate appropriate policies to support agriculture and improve farmer welfare in Bima. Examples of such policies include providing agricultural infrastructure such as irrigation, roads, and storage facilities, as well as support for farmers such as seed, fertilizer, and pesticide subsidies. Nevertheless, the implementation of these policies often faces obstacles. Previous studies show a gap between existing regulations and their implementation in the field. Factors such as insufficient funding, poor coordination between agencies, and low farmer participation are the main constraints (Nasrullah, 2023). Therefore, a juridical analysis of local government policies is needed to assess their effectiveness in protecting and empowering farmers. As one of the agrarian regions in West Nusa Tenggara Province, Bima Regency's agricultural sector remains the backbone of its community's economy.

Based on initial field observations, it was found that most of the population in Bima Regency rely on agriculture, especially main commodities such as rice, corn, and horticultural crops. However, this sector still faces various issues that hinder productivity and farmer welfare. Observations show that one of the main challenges faced by farmers in Bima Regency is the lack of legal protection, particularly related to access to production facilities, price certainty for harvests, and protection from crop failure due to climate change or pest attacks. For instance, many farmers complain about major losses due to unstable market prices and dependence on middlemen. This aligns with data from the Central Statistics Agency (2022), which states that the contribution of the agricultural sector to community welfare is still suboptimal due to the lack of structural protection. Additionally, farmer empowerment policies in Bima Regency have not been fully effective. Initial interviews with several farmer groups revealed that training and technical assistance remain limited in both frequency and quality. Farmers reported that agricultural extension workers, who are supposed to be their main support, are often absent due to the limited number of extension workers and the local government's budget constraints. On the other hand, supporting infrastructure, such as irrigation networks and farm access roads, remains a significant issue. Field observations found that several areas in Bima Regency still rely on inefficient traditional irrigation systems, affecting land productivity. This is worsened by damaged farm roads that hinder the distribution of harvests to the market.

A Regional Regulation (Perda) on farmer protection and empowerment has been enacted in Bima Regency to address these problems. However, observations indicate a gap between the formulated policies and their implementation in the field. Many farmers are unaware of the existence of this regulation, and therefore cannot benefit from programs that should be their rights. Lack of socialization and communication between local governments and farmers is a major cause. From initial observations, it is clear that efforts to protect and empower farmers still face significant challenges, both in policy formulation and in field implementation. Therefore, this research aims to comprehensively examine local government policies in protecting and empowering farmers in Bima Regency and to analyze the challenges and opportunities for improving policy implementation. Based on the background above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study on this issue with

the title: "Juridical Analysis of Regional Government Policies in the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers in Bima Regency."

METHOD

This study aims to analyze the regional government's policy in Bima Regency regarding the legal protection and empowerment of farmers. Referring to Law Number 19 of 2013 concerning the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers, local governments are mandated to ensure farmers' welfare through legal protection, access to agricultural inputs, and capacity strengthening. This study adopts a mixed methods approach, integrating both normative (doctrinal) and empirical (non-doctrinal) legal research. The normative dimension examines statutory frameworks, while the empirical component captures socio-legal realities through field data. The findings indicate that although a regional regulation exists to support these efforts, its implementation faces numerous challenges such as limited budget, weak dissemination, inadequate infrastructure, and low farmer participation in policy-making and evaluation. The juridical analysis reveals a significant gap between legal norms and social realities, resulting in suboptimal policy execution. This study recommends a more participatory policy reformulation, strengthening of farmer institutions, and the utilization of digital technology to support sustainable agricultural development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Existence of Regional Government Policies on the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers

Regional government policies are strategic instruments for regulating and promoting the development of a sustainable and equitable agricultural sector. In Bima Regency, the establishment of such policies is based on the real needs of farming communities, who make up the majority of the population, as well as on the structural and natural challenges faced by the agricultural sector itself. Philosophically, the foundation of these regional policies cannot be separated from the constitutional mandate as stated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and the fifth principle of Pancasila, namely *Social Justice for All Indonesian People*, which demands the state's presence to ensure the welfare of all its citizens, including farmers.

In the normative context, the Government of Bima Regency has formulated and enacted a Regional Regulation (*Peraturan Daerah* or *Perda*) on the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers as a concrete form of commitment to strengthening the agricultural sector. This regulation is a derivative of Law Number 19 of 2013 on the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers. It governs various crucial aspects of protection and empowerment, including farmers' access to land, agricultural production facilities, market information, agricultural extension services, and protection against risks and market fluctuations.

However, based on field observations and initial interviews with farmer groups in several districts within Bima Regency, it can be concluded that the existence of this regulation has not been fully internalized by the farming community. Many farmers are not fully aware of the contents and benefits of the policy. For example, when asked about their rights to receive fertilizer subsidies, training, or market access through local government programs, the majority of respondents indicated a lack of knowledge. This indicates that although the regulation has been substantively established, it has not yet been effectively understood by its intended beneficiaries, and thus has not had a tangible impact on improving farmers' capacities and protection.

One of the main causes of this situation is the weak dissemination mechanism of the policy. The local government has not carried out systematic and continuous information campaigns regarding the protection and empowerment policy. Dissemination activities are typically conducted sporadically—such as before the planting season or when certain aid projects are underway. In fact, for the regulation to truly serve as an operational legal umbrella, it requires a communication strategy that reaches the village level, involving agricultural extension workers, village officials, and farmer group forums.

Furthermore, from an institutional perspective, the existence of the *Perda* is not yet fully supported by strong implementation structures in the field. The Agriculture Office, as the technical agency, does not yet have a dedicated task force or operational unit focused on implementing the provisions of the regulation. As a result, programs that should derive from the *Perda*—such as the distribution of superior seeds, technical training, and farming insurance programs—are not well-coordinated and often overlap with programs from the central or provincial governments. Berikut adalah terjemahan bahasa Inggris untuk bagian lanjutan tentang eksistensi Perda Kabupaten Bima dalam perlindungan dan pemberdayaan petani:

From a substantive perspective, the Regional Regulation (*Perda*) of Bima Regency already contains fairly comprehensive elements of legal protection and empowerment. These include:

1. Price protection and crop failure risk mitigation: aimed at protecting farmers from significant losses due to price fluctuations, pest attacks, or natural disasters.
2. Empowerment through training and extension services: focused on enhancing farmers' technical and managerial capacities.
3. Access to financing and markets: to strengthen farmers' bargaining position within the agricultural value chain.

However, as Nasrullah (2023) states, the existence of a policy without a concrete implementation mechanism will merely serve as a legal formality. This also applies to Bima Regency, where the contents of the *Perda* have not been followed by the formulation of technical implementation regulations, such as Regent Regulations (*Peraturan Bupati*) or technical guidelines (*petunjuk teknis*). As a result, stakeholders at the grassroots level lack clear references for implementing the mandates of the *Perda*. Observations of policy implementation dynamics suggest that the existence of a policy should not only be assessed in terms of its legal presence, but also in terms of its implementability. In other words, the *Perda* must be followed up with: a) Adequate budget allocation; b) The establishment of implementing institutions; c) Regular monitoring and evaluation; d) Active involvement of the farming community in planning and implementation processes.

Moreover, the existence of local policies must respond to the real needs of farmers. Several farmer groups have stated that what they need most are policies that directly address their concerns, such as access to irrigation water, stable fertilizer prices, and guaranteed crop prices. In other words, the effectiveness of a policy is not solely determined by its formal legality, but also by how well it addresses the concrete problems faced by farmers on the ground. In this regard, a participatory approach is essential in the formulation and evaluation of policies. Local governments can no longer formulate top-down policies without involving the key actors in the agricultural sector—namely, the farmers themselves. Farmer engagement can be achieved through farmer group deliberations (*musyawarah kelompok tani*), public consultations, or systematic farmer needs assessments. These activities will not only enhance the legitimacy of the policy but also strengthen farmers' sense of ownership over the regulations that govern them.

Normatively, the existence of the *Perda* on the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers in Bima Regency is a progressive step within the framework of regional policy reform. However, such a policy remains symbolic if it is not supported by collective awareness, institutional capacity, and a concrete implementation strategy. From the perspective of developmental law, law should function as an instrument for transforming the social and economic conditions of the people, including farmers. Therefore, the presence of local policies in the form of *Perda* should not be limited to legal formalities, but must manifest in real programs that deliver tangible benefits to farmers as the primary subjects of agrarian development.

Challenges in the Implementation of Policies for the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers

Although the Government of Bima Regency has formulated policies in the form of a Regional Regulation (*Perda*) aimed at the protection and empowerment of farmers, in practice, numerous obstacles are still encountered in the field. These challenges highlight the gap between the idealism of policy formulation and the reality of its implementation at the grassroots level. Poor policy implementation poses a risk of weakening farmers' positions in the regional economic system and diminishing the state's role in ensuring farmers' welfare, as mandated by Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and Law No. 19 of 2013.

1. Limited Regional Budget

One of the main challenges in implementing policies for the protection and empowerment of farmers in Bima Regency is the limited budget allocated to the agricultural sector. According to the Bima Regency Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (*RPJMD*), development priorities are still largely focused on general infrastructure and tourism sectors, which has resulted in a disproportionate allocation of funds for agriculture. This budget limitation directly impacts the availability of support programs, such as agricultural input assistance, farmer training, the provision of extension workers, and the development of agricultural infrastructure.

As noted by Nasrullah (2023), without adequate fiscal support, policies merely become formal documents lacking the driving force to bring about social and economic transformation for farmers. In fact, Law No. 19 of 2013 stipulates that both the central and regional governments are obligated to allocate sufficient budgets to implement policies aimed at the protection and empowerment of farmers.

2. Weak Agricultural Infrastructure

In addition to financing aspects, another major challenge is the still very limited agricultural support infrastructure. Farmers in several areas of Bima Regency, such as Belo and Wawo Districts, still rely on traditional irrigation systems that cannot supply water consistently throughout the planting season. This often leads to crop failure or reduced plant productivity. Furthermore, severely damaged farm roads make it difficult to distribute harvests to markets, especially during the rainy season. Sumarno (2019) states that adequate agricultural infrastructure—such as irrigation systems, farm access roads, and storage warehouses—directly contributes to production efficiency and the competitiveness of agricultural products. The absence of such infrastructure not only increases farmers' operational costs but also weakens their bargaining position within the distribution chain.

3. Limited Human Resources and Agricultural Extension Workers

Agricultural extension workers play a vital role in the successful implementation of farmer empowerment policies. However, in Bima Regency, the number of active and competent extension workers is still very limited. Interviews with several farmer groups

revealed that they were only visited by an extension worker once or twice during a planting season, and some groups had not received a visit at all over the past year. This situation deprives farmers of access to the latest technological information, more efficient cultivation techniques, and agricultural risk management strategies. Ideally, extension workers should not only deliver technical information but also act as facilitators bridging the gap between farmers and the government, especially in accessing assistance programs. The shortage of extension workers is directly related to the limited availability of civil servant (ASN) positions in the agricultural sector and the inadequate allocation of operational funds for extension activities at the district level.

4. Price Fluctuations and Dependency on Middlemen

The fluctuation of agricultural commodity prices remains a persistent and unresolved challenge. Farmers in Bima Regency, particularly those cultivating corn and rice, often incur losses due to falling prices during peak harvest periods. They are forced to sell their produce at very low prices to middlemen, as they lack adequate marketing alternatives or proper storage facilities. In many cases, farmers engage in *ijon* (forward selling), where produce is sold before harvesting, due to urgent financial needs for production or household expenses. This situation reflects the weak bargaining power of farmers and the absence of local government intervention to stabilize prices or provide a minimum price guarantee scheme. In fact, Article 25 of Law No. 19 of 2013 explicitly states that one form of farmer protection is through the government's determination of a base price for agricultural products.

5. Lack of Inter-Institutional Coordination

The implementation of farmer protection and empowerment policies is not solely the responsibility of the Agricultural Office but also involves other agencies such as the Public Works Office (for irrigation), the Social Affairs Office (for social assistance), and the Regional Development Planning Agency (*Bappeda*). Unfortunately, in practice, coordination among these institutions remains weak. Many programs are overlapping or operate independently without synergy, resulting in suboptimal effectiveness. For instance, seed and fertilizer assistance programs, which should be based on the needs data of farmer groups, often miss the target due to poor coordination between data compilers and distribution officers. As a result, the assistance becomes inefficient, and farmers' trust in the local government continues to decline.

6. Low Farmer Participation in Policy Formulation

Policies that are formulated without involving target groups tend to be unresponsive to real needs on the ground. Observations indicate that most farmers in Bima Regency are not involved in policy planning or evaluation forums. They remain passive objects of policy, rather than active subjects in determining policy direction and content. The principle of participation in governance should be a foundation in public policy formulation, especially in the agricultural sector, which heavily relies on local wisdom and the specific characteristics of each region. According to governance theory, responsive and effective public policies are those developed through dialogue between the government, community, and private sector (Dwiyanto, 2014).

From the above elaboration, it can be concluded that the implementation of policies for the protection and empowerment of farmers in Bima Regency faces various structural and technical challenges, ranging from budget constraints to weak farmer participation. The gap between written policies and practical implementation highlights the urgent need for a reformulation of implementation strategies that are more integrated, participatory, and locally grounded. If these challenges are not addressed promptly, the

primary goals of such policies—to improve farmers’ welfare and independence—will be difficult to achieve optimally.

Juridical Analysis of Regional Policies

The juridical analysis in this study is conducted to evaluate the extent to which Bima Regency’s regional government policies on the protection and empowerment of farmers comply with national legal provisions, particularly Law No. 19 of 2013 concerning the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers. A juridical approach is essential because law functions not only as a social control tool but also as an instrument of social engineering. Normatively, Article 3 of Law No. 19 of 2013 stipulates that the objectives of farmer protection and empowerment include: a) Achieving farmers’ independence, resilience, and sovereignty; b) Improving farmers’ welfare; c) Protecting farmers from price risks, crop failure, and climate change; d) Strengthening farmers’ bargaining position.

However, in Bima Regency, the implementation of these mandates has not been fully effective. The research findings reveal that several aspects of protection guaranteed by law have not materialized into concrete local programs. For example:

1. **Agricultural Insurance**

Article 37 of Law No. 19 of 2013 mandates the government to provide farm business insurance schemes to mitigate losses caused by crop failure. In Bima Regency, there is no widely accessible agricultural insurance program; farmers continue to bear all risks without protection from the local government.

2. **Price Certainty and Market Guarantees**

Law No. 19 of 2013 requires government intervention to establish base prices for agricultural produce to shield farmers from market volatility. Yet, in reality, there is no minimum price guarantee system, leaving farmers overwhelmingly dependent on middlemen and unfair open markets. This violates the economic justice and legal protection principles enshrined in Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution.

3. **Land Access and Legal Ownership**

Article 14 of Law No. 19 of 2013 obliges the government to facilitate farmers’ access to and control of agricultural land. Still, many farmers in Bima Regency cultivate land without formal titles or legal status. This lack of legal recognition hinders access to agricultural credit and protection in land conflicts.

4. **Harmonization of Regional Regulation with National Law**

Although the Bima Regency Perda aims to accommodate the mandates of Law No. 19 of 2013, inconsistencies remain between the regional regulation’s norms and the administrative actions of technical agencies. This reflects weak vertical regulatory harmonization and inadequate oversight.

In progressive legal theory (Satjipto Rahardjo), law must transcend the text and offer tangible solutions to societal issues. Regional legal frameworks must be adaptive and transformative, addressing farmers’ real needs and reinforcing social justice.

Impact of Policy Implementation Gaps on Farmers

The gap between policy formulation and implementation has significant social and economic impacts on farmers in Bima Regency. Weak enforcement of legal protection undermines farmers’ positions in competitive and often unjust market systems. Key impacts include:

1. Reduced Income and Productivity

Many farmers report that their harvests do not cover production costs due to low sale prices and high input expenses. Without government intervention during price drops, farmers suffer financial losses that jeopardize their farming sustainability.

2. Economic Dependence on Middlemen

Due to the absence of fair distribution systems and robust cooperatives, farmers heavily rely on middlemen, receiving extremely low sale prices and lacking bargaining power. This dependency results in structural exploitation that cannot be resolved without state intervention.

3. Lack of Technological Innovation

Without sufficient extension services and technical training, farmers struggle to access and adopt modern agricultural technologies that are crucial for improving productivity and efficiency. This causes agriculture in Bima Regency to lag and remain subsistence-oriented.

4. Loss of Trust in Local Government

The disparity between policy promises and implementation fosters apathy and disappointment among farmers, who perceive the policies as political rhetoric or mere formalities. Over time, this erodes government legitimacy at the grassroots level.

These impacts underscore the urgent need for local governments to transcend legal formalities and ensure policy sustainability through inclusive, participatory, and responsive approaches to farmer needs.

Opportunities and Policy Recommendations

Despite the implementation challenges, the study identifies several opportunities and areas for improvement that Bima Regency's local government can leverage:

1. Policy Revitalization through Participatory Evaluation

The local government should undertake a comprehensive evaluation of regional regulations and their derivative programs. This evaluation should actively involve farmers as key stakeholders. Discussions involving government, farmers, academics, and NGOs will result in more contextually relevant policies grounded in real needs.

2. Digitalization of Information and Distribution Access

Harnessing information technology can bridge the gap between farmers and government. Android-based applications featuring market prices, weather forecasts, planting schedules, and technical guidance would empower farmers. The local government could also establish agricultural e-commerce platforms to connect farmers directly with consumers.

3. Strengthening Farmer Institutions and Cooperatives

A strategic step is the establishment of robust, legally incorporated farmer cooperatives. Cooperatives can serve as channels for distributing production inputs, marketing harvests, and providing community-based financing. The local government should offer incentives and managerial training to cooperative administrators for effective performance.

4. Inter-Institutional and Central Government Synergy

Better integration is needed among programs from the central, provincial, and district governments. Bima Regency should actively collaborate with the Ministry of Agriculture and donor agencies to access budget support, training, and extension services. Synergized programming will improve policy efficiency and effectiveness.

5. Optimizing Village Funds for Agriculture

Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages allows village budget allocation for local economic development, including agriculture. Bima Regency can encourage villages to use these funds to support local-potential-based agricultural development.

The policy implementation challenges in Bima Regency are systemic and interlinked across legal, social, and institutional aspects. However, substantial opportunities for policy improvement exist—provided that local leaders possess strong political will and embrace a participatory approach. Farmer protection and empowerment policies must serve as foundations for an inclusive and sustainable regional development model—not just administrative documents.

Analysis of the Existence of Regional Policies and Their Role in Supporting Farmers

The existence of Regional Regulation (Perda) in Bima Regency concerning the protection and empowerment of farmers represents a concrete manifestation of efforts toward legal decentralization and development based on local wisdom. However, from an implementation perspective, the existence of this policy has not shown significant results in improving farmers' welfare. In administrative law, a regional regulation is deemed effective if it yields positive impacts and addresses the concrete problems faced by the community (Muchtar, 2016).

As shown by the research findings, although the Perda has been drafted in accordance with the mandate of Law No. 19 of 2013, farmers as the primary subjects do not fully understand the substance and benefits of the policy. This indicates a normative disconnection—a disconnect between legal norms and legal awareness within society. When regulations are not well communicated or supervised during implementation, their existence loses meaning as an instrument of empowerment.

Implementation Challenges: Structural and Functional Dimensions

The findings in point B reveal that policy implementation faces multidimensional challenges, both from structural aspects (resources, institutions, infrastructure) and functional aspects (coordination, participation, and assistance). In the framework of public policy theory, the effectiveness of a policy is determined by its policy design, policy environment, and policy actors (Dunn, 2003). Unfortunately, in the case of Bima Regency, these three aspects have not been harmoniously integrated. The limited budget allocated to the agricultural sector reflects a lack of political will by the regional government to prioritize agriculture. This is ironic considering agriculture is the largest employment sector in the region. This imbalance reflects what Stiglitz (2012) refers to as policy bias—policy preferences that do not favor vulnerable groups such as farmers. The shortage of agricultural extension workers and the lack of technical training worsen the situation. Without strengthening human resources and providing continuous assistance, farmers will remain trapped in a cycle of poverty and powerlessness. This confirms that empowerment is not merely about transferring production tools but must also touch on knowledge, skills, and farmer institutions.

Juridical Review: Between Legal Norms and Social Reality

From a juridical aspect, the research reveals a mismatch between the content of regulations and the realities in the field. Protection schemes such as agricultural insurance, price stabilization, and guaranteed access to land promised in Law No. 19 of 2013 have not been fully translated into local policies. This shows a weakness in the legal transposition

mechanism from national policies to the regional level. In progressive legal theory (Satjipto Rahardjo), the law must not be neutral—it must serve as a tool to realize substantive justice for marginalized groups, including farmers. Therefore, regional regulations should not merely copy national norms without adapting to local needs. This highlights the importance of a legal contextualization approach—formulating legal policies that consider local social, economic, and cultural contexts. When the law fails to touch on social realities and is not implemented with adequate oversight mechanisms, it loses its legitimacy. In Bima Regency, farmers' limited understanding of their rights and the absence of legal consultation forums for agricultural law illustrate the gap in access to legal justice.

The Impact of Policy Gaps: Increasing Socio-Economic Vulnerability of Farmers

The inconsistency between regulations and implementation found in this study has a systemic impact on farmers' livelihoods. First, decreased income and high farming risks make it difficult for farmers to escape poverty traps. Second, dependence on middlemen indicates the government's failure to create a healthy agricultural economic ecosystem. Third, the lack of innovation and technology results in stagnation and low productivity in the agricultural sector. In the long term, this could reduce interest among younger generations to pursue farming, which poses a threat to farmer regeneration. Fourth, the loss of trust in the government becomes a significant political loss. This is dangerous as it decreases public participation in the development process.

In the governance approach, society must be positioned as an active partner in development. Policies that fail to build trust will lose social participation and ultimately risk being abandoned by the public. Therefore, local governments must conduct a thorough introspection of their policy effectiveness and carry out structural reforms in implementation.

Opportunities for Improvement: A New Direction for Regional Agricultural Policy

Despite the considerable challenges, this study also identifies that there is still wide open opportunity for improvement. Revitalizing policies, either through updating regional regulations or formulating implementing regulations, is an important initial step. However, policy substance must be directed toward what farmers truly need: stable prices, market access, affordable production inputs, and continuous training.

The use of digital technology offers a strategic alternative amid limited physical infrastructure. Digitalization of agricultural information, online market applications, and GIS-based land mapping can serve as innovative solutions. Additionally, strengthening institutions such as farmer cooperatives must become a central pillar in empowerment. Cooperatives can function as tools for distribution, education, and advocacy to help farmers face global economic challenges.

A collaborative and synergistic approach across institutions must also be prioritized. Local governments should build strategic partnerships with universities, NGOs, the private sector, and farmer organizations. This aligns with the concept of multi-stakeholder governance, which emphasizes the involvement of all parties in developing the agricultural sector.

Finally, the use of Village Funds for agriculture is a major opportunity that remains underutilized. The regional government should encourage village administrations to create agricultural programs based on local potential, with a focus on sustainability and empowerment. In this regard, village officials' capacity must also be improved so that they can design development plans that are data-driven and aligned with farmers' needs.

CONCLUSION

The policy of protecting and empowering farmers in Bima Regency, although supported by a clear legal framework, has not yet been fully effective in its implementation. The main challenges include limited budget allocation, weak institutional support, minimal farmer participation, and a significant gap between legal norms and social realities on the ground. Nevertheless, there remains substantial potential for improvement through more participatory policy reform, the digitalization of governance processes, and stronger institutional synergy. A social justice-oriented and progressive legal approach must serve as the foundation for designing more inclusive and transformative agricultural policies. This study has several limitations, including its geographic focus on a single regency and a limited number of informants, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the integration of normative and empirical data requires further refinement to produce a more comprehensive synthesis. Future research should consider expanding the scope to multiple regions to enable comparative analysis of similar policy implementations. It is also recommended that subsequent studies adopt an interdisciplinary approach, incorporating perspectives from political economy, digital technology, and ecology to enrich the analysis of sustainable agricultural development within the context of law and public policy.

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