




Strategic Development of Local Agricultural Resources Toward SDG 18 Village Targets in West Aceh

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Abstract: West Aceh is an agricultural area that requires strategic efforts to optimize it supported by government policies. The purpose of this study is to strengthen the development of local agricultural resources through the role of the traditional agricultural institution Keujreun Blang, based on Qanun No. 10 of 2008 concerning Acehese customary institutions, in supporting the achievement of SDG 18 as an adaptive and dynamic organization for sustainable development. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. Primary data collection techniques include interviews with 6 informants and secondary data based on national and international journals and BPS data. Data analysis includes organizing data, reading data, coding data, developing themes, categorizing themes, presenting data, describing findings, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study showed that the local government's strategy in agricultural planning based on local wisdom is shaped by the socio-cultural dimensions of agriculture. The legal authority of the Keujreun Blang institution in agricultural governance can be utilized to empower the development of local agricultural resources as a new system to strengthen the implementation of SDG 18 at the village level. The local government is obliged to involve customary institutions in the decision-making process related to dynamic and adaptive agricultural strategic planning. The implications of this research highlight that traditional agricultural institutions managing rice cultivation play a strategic role in improving local food security. This role can provide insights, guidance, and recommendations for the government in strengthening regional development policy systems based on environmental resources for sustainable development.

Keywords : Development Strategy; Local Agricultural Resources; Local Agriculture; SDG 18 Village Targets

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1. INTRODUCTION

West Aceh Regency has not yet demonstrated a clear direction in the governance of rice farming based on local wisdom within the framework of sustainable agricultural development. This condition is reflected in the various problems faced by farmer groups in their management of rice fields, such as the lack of synchronization in planting schedules, unclear mechanisms for the distribution of seeds and fertilizers, and the use of agricultural facilities and infrastructure that often leads to conflicts of interest among farmer groups. Efforts to improve agricultural community development require inclusive policies capable of comprehensively regulating governance organizations. Such inclusive policies should be able to drive rice field management programs aimed at poverty alleviation, taking into account social, economic, and political approaches as key factors in public policy formulation. This issue becomes even more relevant considering that the poverty level in Aceh has shown an increasing trend. Between March and September 2022, the percentage of the poor population

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rose from 14.64 percent to 14.75 percent. In rural areas, poverty increased by 0.19 points from 16.87 percent to 17.06 percent, while in urban areas it increased by 0.04 points from 10.31 percent to 10.34 percent. In absolute numbers, the poor population in rural areas increased by around 8,000 people, reaching 621,520 people in September 2022, while the poor population in urban areas rose by approximately 3,630 people to 196,950 people. West Aceh Regency holds a strategic agro-based position located in the western part of Aceh Province. Its abundant agricultural land for rice farming is located particularly in the subdistricts of Kaway XVI, Woyla, Woyla Barat, Panteu Reu, Arongan, and Samatiga, making it the largest rice field area compared to other regions. However, ironically, the region has not yet been able to comprehensively achieve effective rice field governance. One of the main obstacles lies in the customary institution of Keujreun Blang, which is expected to assist the government but has not yet functioned in line with expectations. Additionally, land disputes among farmer groups frequently occur in this area. Despite these challenges, the government has allocated village development funds every year to support rice farming governance.

Based on rice harvest data in Aceh, three regencies/cities recorded the highest total rice production (GKG) in 2022: North Aceh, Aceh Besar, and Pidie. In contrast, West Aceh Regency experienced a decline in rice production, decreasing from 64.36 GKG in 2021 to 56.36 GKG in 2022. Figure 1 presents rice production in Aceh Province by regency (thousand tons–GKG) for 2021 and 2022.

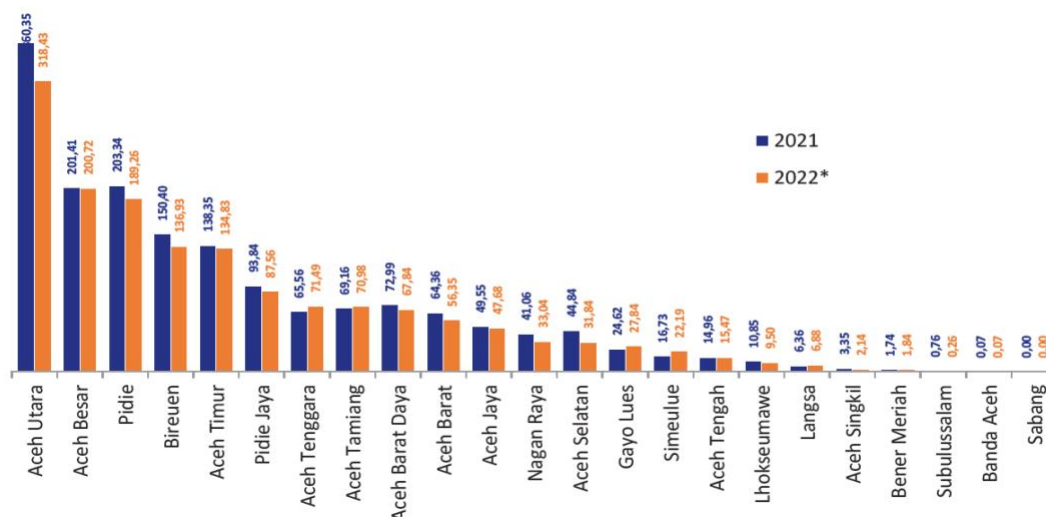


Figure 1. presents rice production in Aceh Province by regency (thousand tons–GKG) for 2021 and 2022

Source: Statistik & Aceh, 2022

West Aceh Regency requires a regional government strategy for rice field governance based on local wisdom and aligned with SDG 18, supported by adaptive and dynamic institutions that inclusively promote the socio-economic development of farming communities. Therefore, this region is highly suitable as a base for rice agriculture grounded in dynamic and adaptive customary institutions, contributing to the sustainable socio-economic development of the agricultural sector. The following presents the local food security index in West Aceh Regency for 2025.

Table 1 : Rice Harvest Area and Productivity in West Aceh Regency, 2024

| Year | Data Classification Type | Target | Realization | Performance Achievement (%) |
|------|--------------------------|--------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 2023 | Food Security Index | 78,90 | 79,95 | 101,33 |
| 2024 | Food Security Index | 79,2 | 100.95 | 100.95 |

Source : BPS, 4 November 2025

Based on the data above, the local food security index demonstrates a very high level of performance achievement. This indicates that the synergy in rice farming governance with government service systems remains conducive. However, the customary rice farming institution Keujreun Blang has yet to obtain formal recognition and socio-economic legitimacy. Consequently, there remain elements within rice farming governance that are not fully harmonious among farmer groups, and distortions in decision-making among stakeholders may hinder the maximization of opportunities for sustainable rice farming management. Miscommunication between customary agricultural institutions and local government as key stakeholders in public policy implementation can exacerbate farmer poverty (Mardhiah, Syahputri, et al., 2024). Community social groups' development resources include customary agricultural institutions, which play a crucial role in achieving sustainable development objectives (Haulussy et al., 2020). The presence of these institutions, in accordance with Qanun No. 10 of 2008, supports the government in village development governance, encompassing both socio-cultural and sustainable economic aspects (S Budi , A.H Hamid, 2019). Nevertheless, achieving these development goals requires human resource strategies to improve public services based on local agricultural resources (Kurniawan, 2016). In terms of organizational governance systems, local resources are represented by the Keujreun Blang institution (Pandjaitan, 2019). This customary institution has performed its duties and functions as an agricultural resource both internally and externally, contributing to sustainable development (Naylis & Abdi, 2024). However, despite these contributions, the Keujreun Blang institution still faces challenges and dilemmas due to the lack of specific government policy recognition regarding its vital role in national development (Mulyadi Nurdin, 2019).

Several previous studies have discussed that the role of customary institutions in rice farming governance is very important and must be optimized properly. However, the above idea has not comprehensively discussed the approach of local wisdom-based government governance strategies in creating local agricultural development. Therefore, the results of this idea are very important to help the government in West Aceh in increasing development priorities in an adaptive and dynamic manner in the aspect of sustainable rice farming development as a new study gap in increasing local agricultural development in adaptive and dynamic village development in accordance with SDG 18. This study aims to be able to plan comprehensive rice farming based on local customary institutions in achieving sustainable development goals (Daud & Novrimansyah, 2022)

Therefore, strategic organizational resource planning is essential, enabling collaboration between government and community to enhance socio-economic development based on local wisdom in West Aceh (Mardhiah, Muhammad, et al., 2024). The research questions are formulated to address empirical targets grounded in theoretical considerations, namely: what is the regional government's strategy in developing local agricultural resources for sustainable development?

Based on the objectives outlined above, the enhancement of agricultural resources can be attained through an organizational strategy approach as proposed by Delbridge et al.

(2024). Theoretically, this approach encompasses sustainable organizing practices across various sectors and levels of society, including social institutions, value systems, as well as political power practices and incentives that both enable and constrain the organization of sustainable development and inclusive participation, thereby fostering the development of community capabilities (Delbridge et al., 2024).

The contribution to local government is to provide an empirical basis for designing rice farming development strategies based on local wisdom that are adaptive, dynamic, and support sustainable regional development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The agenda for sustainable development planning is directed through an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process involving multiple stakeholders (Omer & Noguchi, 2020). Although the implementation of SDGs is universal and applied by all countries, it has become a momentum for continuing development due to the limited understanding of development planning programs, which often results in the failure of countries to effectively achieve their development goals (Sariguna et al., 2020). In Indonesia, the dynamics of development are characterized by decentralization from the national to the local government level through a top-down versus bottom-up approach in realizing SDGs at the village level (Reddy, 2016). These efforts have been outlined within the SDGs Desa targets, which represent an integrated initiative to actualize villages without poverty and hunger, villages with equitable economic growth, health-oriented villages, environmentally conscious villages, education-oriented villages, women-friendly villages, interconnected villages, and culturally responsive villages to accelerate the achievement of sustainable development goals. Specifically, Goal 1 (village without poverty) and Goal 2 (village without hunger) are aligned and balanced through paddy agricultural production to attain food security among farming communities (Nawir et al., 2022). The purpose of SDGs-based agricultural development is to generate transformative changes in government policy while bridging community awareness (Whitcraft et al., 2019). Similarly, Kanter et al., (2016) argue that agricultural development can be achieved through participatory back-casting approaches that support productive transformational outcomes to reduce poverty among rural communities.

Poverty alleviation in the achievement of village-level SDGs can be actualized through the values of local wisdom. Local wisdom has the potential to enhance the blue economy through the dynamic and adaptive conservation of natural production outputs to achieve SDG targets at the village level Jayakusuma et al., (2023). Therefore, government facilitation is required to support the economic potential embedded in cultural local wisdom, enabling sustainable community-based economic development (Husain et al., 2022).

The establishment of traditional agricultural institutions represents a locally grounded organizational structure that must be preserved to maintain social norms within farming communities, particularly in supporting socio-economic development among farmers who often remain below the poverty line (Mardhiah, Syahputri, et al., 2024). The organizational role of these customary institutions is highly significant for regional development, as it contributes to achieving national development goals that have been integrated into the SDGs Desa framework and implemented sustainably under Law No. 6/2014 concerning Villages, which aligns with the broader national development agenda (Gultom & Harianto, 2021). The indicators for SDGs Desa development constitute a central focus of the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Village, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration for 2020–2024, as stipulated in Decree No. 17/2020 (Nawir et al., 2022). The role of customary agricultural institutions can be mobilized through adaptive and dynamic traditional

approaches (Ogunyiola et al., 2022). One of the priority programs reflected in village fund utilization is the promotion of villages based on local customs that support sustainable agriculture, which corresponds to SDG Goal 18, namely the development of villages grounded in local wisdom through dynamic local institutions and adaptive cultural practices (A. Halim Iskandar, 2021).

The development of agricultural governance aligned with sustainable development principles must integrate local cultural values in accordance with village development targets (Lorenzo-Sáez et al., 2021). Agricultural land development strategies that employ zoning principles, comprising core, buffer, and service zones are implemented through participatory approaches that apply environmentally conscious principles, including ecosystem restoration and rehabilitation, natural resource conservation, pollution prevention, and enhancement of both natural and human-engineered ecosystem productivity. Paddy field governance programs in China have rapidly advanced by incorporating environmental considerations in agriculture supported by technological innovation while maintaining traditional practices (Zhang et al., 2022). Similarly Ikhsan et al., (2018) emphasize that customary institutions enhance activities that are directly required by farming communities. However, effective synergy with government is still needed to achieve sustainable development objectives (Amri et al., 2025).

Although SDGs Desa have been implemented across villages in Indonesia, numerous challenges persist, particularly regarding village-level population data collection, data updating procedures, and the dissemination of village information. These challenges arise mainly due to limited knowledge and understanding among village government officials concerning SDGs Desa implementation, as well as insufficient technical support and facilitation from the Village Community Empowerment Office (Aryani & Kusumaningrum, 2023). Moreover, policy integration at the village level remains weak, as SDGs-related development policies are not yet aligned with community needs and village-specific potentials (Assajid et al., 2024). This situation is further exacerbated by village leadership that lacks a visionary focus on local natural resources and community-based development through social groups (Utama & Arieffiani, 2025).

Several previous studies have emphasized that the role of customary institutions in rice farming governance is crucial and must be optimally utilized. However, these studies have not comprehensively examined a government governance strategy approach based on local wisdom to promote local agricultural development. Therefore, the findings of this study are highly important as they can assist the West Aceh government in prioritizing development efforts in an adaptive and dynamic manner, particularly in sustainable rice farming development, representing a novel research gap in local agricultural development within village development. This underscores the need for a strategic approach that integrates both government governance and local community participation to achieve sustainable development objectives (Daud & Novrimansyah, 2022).

The theory of organizational strategy refers to a comprehensive master plan in which an organization systematically addresses its operational needs to achieve all objectives established based on its predefined vision and mission (Pasolong, 2023). According to Pasolong (2023), potential actions undertaken by an organization to achieve pre-established goals involve formulating its mission, objectives, values, and new strategic initiatives, along with necessary delimitations regarding what is done and for whom. Program strategy also plays a critical role in achieving organizational objectives, with particular attention to the strategic implications of specific programs. This consideration is essential, as it assesses the potential impact of introducing or implementing a program on the organization's target outcomes over time. Furthermore, resource-supporting strategies focus on maximizing the

utilization of essential available resources, such as human capital, financial assets, and technology, to enhance organizational performance quality. Lastly, institutional strategy refers to the development of capabilities to implement strategic initiatives aimed at achieving sustainable technological innovation (Pasolong, 2023).

This strategic approach pertains to decision-making processes (Pasolong, 2023). Organizational strategy in decision-making is a potential action taken by the organization to achieve previously determined goals. The same thing is also stated by J. Salusu, (2006) that decision-making includes various types of strategies in public organizations, consisting of organizational strategy, program strategy, resource support strategy, and institutional strategy. According to Peter deLeon and Peter deLeon and Linda deLeon, (2002), it involves the planning benchmarks of an organization to achieve objectives based on the assessment of previously attained goals. Consequently, the achievement of the vision and mission in development is essential to enhance future development targets (Delbridge et al., 2024). Therefore, the theoretical approach in this research problem is highly important for advancing local agricultural development targets in West Aceh that are supported by regional vision and local resources as the foundation for prioritizing village development, with the adaptive and dynamic role of the customary institution Keujreun Blang in West Aceh.

The following presents a structured and integrated theoretical framework aligned with the achievement of the research indicators, in which the organizational strategy approach is employed to realize local government resource strategies in accordance with regional development planning visions, aimed at creating adaptive and dynamic local agriculture, as illustrated in Figure 2.

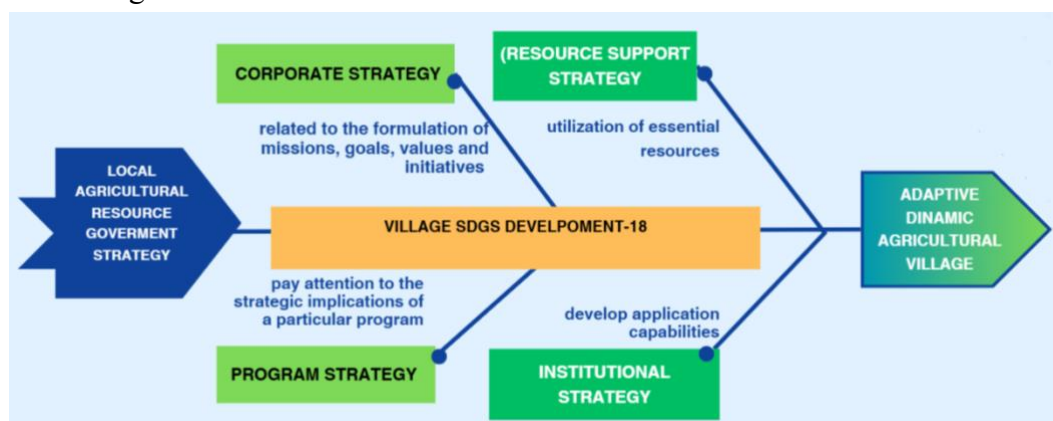


Figure 2. Theoretical framework of the organizational strategy approach

Source: Processed Research Data, 2025

Based on the theoretical approach discussed above, this study highlights the urgency of achieving the proposed research objectives by emphasizing that rice agricultural governance grounded in appropriate socio cultural institutional approaches can significantly influence the improvement of regional food security indices (Tanti et al., 2022). This is primarily because social and cultural institutions embody local wisdom values that function as environmental resources within agricultural systems, thereby contributing to the enhancement of the social and economic development of farming communities (Sitompul, 2024). Therefore, the legal recognition of rice agricultural institutions in supporting socio cultural development constitutes an important consideration for local governments and should be formally established through regulations embedded within the governance of sustainable rice farming systems (Pandjaitan, 2019).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research design using a case study approach. This approach is one of the qualitative methods that seeks to develop an in depth understanding of phenomena and events occurring within real life community settings (Lobe et al., 2020). This research was conducted over a six-month period in West Aceh Regency, an administrative region characterized by local agricultural wisdom in rice cultivation and significant regional potential for strengthening local food security.

Data collection techniques were carried out through two approaches, namely primary data and secondary data, both of which support the information required to achieve the objectives of this study (Hox & Boeijs, 2004). Primary data refer to research subjects or informants selected based on their roles as actors involved in decision making related to rice field governance in West Aceh.

The selection of research subjects employed a purposive sampling approach, which refers to a deliberate selection method based on specific considerations (Leah, 2024). Secondary data were also utilized to support the research objectives, including data from the Central Bureau of Statistics, national journals, and international journals. The research informants consisted of the Head of the Department of Agriculture, Food Crops and Horticulture of West Aceh Regency, the *Keujreun Blang* customary institution, farmer groups, agricultural extension agencies in West Aceh, and the head of the regency extension office. Their involvement was based on their roles in managing rice agricultural resources in West Aceh. In addition, farmers were selected through purposive sampling based on their knowledge and expertise in rice farming governance in the region. This purposive sampling technique ensured the inclusion of informants who could provide information relevant to the objectives of the study (Isaac, 2023). The following table 2.1 presents the list of research informants.

Tabel 2 : Research Informants

| No | Informant | Institution | Number |
|----|---|---|--------|
| 1 | Head of the Department of Agriculture | Department of Agriculture, Food Crops and Horticulture, West Aceh Regency | 1 |
| 2 | Head of the Farmer Group of Meureubo Subdistrict, Mesjid Tuha Village | Mesjid Tuha Village | 1 |
| 3 | Chairperson of the West Aceh Customary Council | West Aceh Customary Council | 1 |
| 4 | Head of the Agricultural Extension Division | Agricultural Extension Agency of West Aceh | 1 |
| 5 | Coordinator of Agricultural Extension Officers in West Aceh | Agricultural Extension Agency | 1 |
| 6 | Chairperson of the <i>Keujreun Blang</i> Customary Institution | Meureubo Subdistrict | 1 |

Source: Research in West Aceh, September 2025

The thematic data analysis method used in this study follows the model proposed by Creswell (2009) which includes organizing data, reading data, coding data, developing themes, categorizing themes, presenting data, describing findings, and drawing conclusions. Data analysis was carried out manually by coding data by the research team, then testing the validity and reliability of the data by adjusting the research instrument with theory-based indicators so that research achievements are more measurable, this was also done by

triangulating the data obtained as well as informants from the government, traditional institutions, and farmers, extending the research and discussing with colleagues.

4. RESULTS

Strategi pemerintah daerah dalam pengembangan sumberdaya pertanian lokal untuk pembangunan yang berkelanjutan terdiri dari empat 4 tema yaitu :

Formal Government Strategy and Its Limitations

The development strategy for rice agriculture in West Aceh reflects the region's substantial agricultural potential. Therefore, to enhance and advance the agricultural sector, the local government must improve agricultural technology, strengthen farmer training, and expand access to markets in accordance with farmers' expectations. However, farmers still face challenges related to budget limitations and unequal development. Government resource strategies for planning rice agriculture are carried out through both direct and indirect approaches. Direct government activities are routine programs implemented according to structured governmental plans through simultaneous planning methods. This is reflected in the following interview statement:

“Simultaneous planning for rice cultivation programs serves as a benchmark for achieving higher productivity in rice farming.” (Head of the West Aceh Agriculture Office, interview, August 2025).

Furthermore, the implementation of simultaneous rice planting is organized by the government through farmer groups across West Aceh. However, in practice, local community habits remain strongly influenced by collective traditional wisdom that has long been embedded in society. In this context, the Keujreun Blang customary institution plays a central role in managing the tasks and functions of rice agriculture governance. This reflects the implementation of the simultaneous rice planting policy, which has been implemented by the government in West Aceh. However, this situation indicates weaknesses in organizing activities by local government resources in accordance with the target achievements. This aligns with the strategic theory of achieving goals with a clear vision and targets. However, this approach is not merely an empty space, but requires continuous, direct interaction with the long-standing local socio-cultural system, particularly through the Keujreun Blang traditional institution.

This role is illustrated in the interview excerpt below:

“The Keujreun Blang customary institution functions as the organizer of planting schedules, although it still operates under our coordination from the government.” (Coordinator of Rice Agricultural Extension Officers, West Aceh Regency, August 2025).

The Actual Role of Keujreun Blang in Rice Governance

The impact of rice agricultural planning based on local rice agricultural resources in West Aceh requires optimizing the role of the Keujreun Blang customary institution, which indirectly functions within farming communities. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that social, cultural, and economic values remain harmonized in line with the goals of socio economic development. The alignment of roles and functions demonstrates that the presence of customary institutions as a resource can support the government in improving rice productivity. Furthermore, government efforts must involve collaboration with the Keujreun Blang institution in implementing structured programs within the annual development plan, guided by the main indicators and targets of sustainable development planning.

The implementation of rice agricultural development planning in West Aceh reflects

several elements of local wisdom. These elements are embedded within the roles and functions established in the Aceh customary institution regulation, Qanun Number 10 of 2008. The duties and functions of the Keujreun Blang institution, as outlined in Article 25, include: Coordinating the beginning of the rice farming season, Managing the distribution of water to rice fields and farmlands, Assisting the government in rice agriculture activities, Conducting customary ceremonies related to rice cultivation and Issuing warnings and sanctions to farmers, Resolving disputes among farmers.

The implementation of these duties reflects values of local wisdom, one of which is collective deliberation in coordinating the start of the rice planting season. This process includes planning the planting schedule, determining seed varieties, managing pest control, and coordinating post harvest activities, such as communal thanksgiving rituals related to rice farming governance. This is illustrated in the following interview statement:

“Deliberation before planting and after planting must be agreed upon collectively based on the traditional calendar, which is regulated by the Keujreun Blang customary institution.” Coordinator of Rice Agricultural Extension Officers, West Aceh Regency, August 2025).

The duties and functions of the Keujreun Blang customary institution in distributing water to rice fields have been formally outlined in the technical guidelines stipulated in Governor Regulation Number 45 of 2015 concerning the management of water distribution for farmers. Although the mechanism has been regulated in detail, its implementation has not yet been well organized by the local government. This situation in West Aceh indicates that the system has not been properly structured within the framework of public service delivery. Consequently, overlapping roles and responsibilities continue to occur in the governance of rice farming at the village level in West Aceh. Nevertheless, if the role of this customary institution is optimized, it can significantly assist the government in managing rice agriculture. Within the governance structure, the Keujreun Blang institution functions as the organizer of customary agricultural activities related to rice cultivation.

Furthermore, the Keujreun Blang institution serves as a structural resource in coordinating various agricultural activities, including customary rituals and communal ceremonies, from the planning of the planting season to the harvest festival. These traditional ceremonies foster a culture of mutual cooperation within farming communities. This cultural practice demonstrates the importance of the Keujreun Blang institution among local farmers. This significance is reflected in the following interview excerpts:

“This Keujreun Blang customary institution is consistently needed by the community as a guide for agricultural activities in the field.” (Interview with the West Aceh Customary Council, August 2025).

“A well functioning customary institution can foster a sense of solidarity and togetherness in rice cultivation.” (Farmer from Mesjid Tuha Village, Meureubo, West Aceh, August 2025)

In addition, the institution is responsible for issuing warnings and sanctions based on collective agreements established during customary ceremonies. These rules aim to motivate farmers and protect rice crops from damage caused by livestock within the community. Such conditions are openly agreed upon by the customary institution and local farmers. The implementation of these functions involves a system of warnings, shared norms, and predetermined sanctions. The institution also plays a key role in resolving disputes, and it is widely recognized by farmers as a mediator for conflicts among farmer groups. Mediation activities frequently carried out by the institution are described in the following interview:

“Conflicts related to water distribution, field boundaries, disagreements over

fertilizer use, and strategies for pest control require the presence of the Keujreun Blang customary institution.”(Interview with a farmer from Mesjid Tuha Village, Meureubo, West Aceh, September 2025)

In this context, it is the responsibility of the Keujreun Blang customary institution to impose sanctions in a gradual, educational, and collective manner. This dynamic is not simply about punishment, but rather about collective agreements reached in an open forum. These sanctions are intended to maintain social balance while ensuring compliance with collective agricultural regulations.

Inclusive Participation and Exclusion Gaps

The system and organizational structure established through public policy assign clear duties and functions that must be implemented in a transparent and accountable manner. This system reflects a continuous process in sustainable rice agricultural governance. It also affirms the legal foundation of the Keujreun Blang customary institution as stipulated in Aceh Qanun Number 10 of 2008 on customary institutions. However, the implementation of rights and obligations mandated by the qanun has not yet been supported by a structured incentive system. This condition affects the performance of the Keujreun Blang institution in West Aceh, as reflected in the following interview excerpt:

“The policies governing the Keujreun Blang customary institution have existed for a long time, but to maintain its duties and functions, a consistent incentive system is necessary. In some areas the system works, while in others it does not. This is because the presence of customary institutions in West Aceh has traditionally relied on high loyalty and extensive experience in rice agricultural governance.” (Head of the Farmer Group, Mesjid Tuha Village, August 2025).

Inclusive agricultural development requires the involvement of all community groups in improving village level agricultural progress. In practice, farmers participate in planting planning organized by the Keujreun Blang customary institution. However, some of the social and cultural values typically embedded in these activities have begun to shift because the activities are no longer conducted regularly. This leads to decreased farmer participation in simultaneous planting plans. When the schedule is not implemented collectively, it creates obstacles for extension officers in coordinating pest control, fertilizer distribution, and water requirements.

Inclusive development efforts also involve young farmers in planning and decision making related to rice agricultural governance. West Aceh has established youth groups such as Brigadir Pangan and Taruna Tani. These groups require more responsive management to ensure that agricultural development planning aligns with farmers’ expectations. Meanwhile, elderly farmers and farmers with disabilities have not been categorized into specific groups. They are recorded only as general agricultural resources, without detailed classification. This condition illustrates that the socio economic profiling of farmers has not been properly documented, resulting in disagreements and inconsistencies in the distribution of government social assistance. In addition, marginalized women farmers are not involved in decision making related to agricultural planning. This is reflected in the following interview statements:

“Elderly farmers and farmers with disabilities do not belong to specific groups. Women farmers should be prioritized in agricultural development planning, and meeting schedules should allow women to participate.”(Head of the Farmer Group, Mesjid Tuha Village, West Aceh, August 2025).

Based on these interview findings, the role of local resources in rice agriculture is determined by the participation of all community groups. The Keujreun Blang customary

institution is not the only actor that must be included. Young farmers, elderly farmers, farmers with disabilities, and marginalized women farmers also play essential roles. Their absence from decision making processes creates challenges in achieving adaptive and dynamic rice field governance aligned with the targets of SDG 18.

Institutional Mismatch with SDG 18 Targets

Dynamic and adaptive institutions are one of the targets in achieving SDG 18. This achievement can be aligned with the development of rice farming in accordance with Qanun Number 10 of 2008 concerning the Keujerun Blang customary institution. This customary institution shows that the existence of the institution has existed since ancient times, but its existence has not been well organized. The mismatch in achievement targets is due to not being optimally organized with the target of local agricultural development based on customary institutions as local resources that can improve socio-economic development. This is seen that Keujerun Blang has not received incentives while carrying out its duties and functions so far, resulting in a lack of awareness in the mechanism for carrying out its duties and functions. This is as stated in the following interview results:

“ We carry out our duties voluntarily, and it is our custom to carry out our roles according to tradition, there should be no coercion from any party in carrying out our duties and responsibilities, and it is hoped that the local government regarding our legality as a traditional institution really needs to be clarified in accordance with the provisions” (Farmer from Mesjid Tuha Village, Meureubo, West Aceh, August 2025).

The interview results above explain that the duties and customary institutions of Keujerun Blang must be well balanced because this role continues to operate continuously, but it requires a firm stance and government policy to promote sustainable development. The goal of this development, as the basis for customary institutions in the village, is to be dynamic and adaptive in carrying out comprehensive duties and roles.

5. DISCUSSION

Local government strategies for developing local resources play a crucial role in creating a productive, inclusive, and sustainable agricultural system. Integration of economic, social, and environmental aspects is key to achieving sustainable development goals in the agricultural sector.

The organizational strategy of the agricultural sector in West Aceh for achieving its development planning vision can be examined through the theoretical perspective of public organizational strategy as proposed by (Pasolong, 2023). This strategic approach reflects actions taken by local government institutions that have the potential to increase rice agricultural productivity. The findings of this study show that several challenges and obstacles persist in pursuing this goal, including budget constraints and uneven development priorities. Therefore, the local government is required to formulate strategic measures to ensure the achievement of its sustainable agricultural planning vision. One strategic approach is adopting innovative financing mechanisms by establishing partnerships with non profit organizations and the private sector to secure financial support for the implementation of priority development programs. This aligns with the argument of Rahman et al., (2022), who highlight that multisector collaboration in advancing rice agricultural development based on local wisdom can contribute to achieving sustainable regional food security.

Furthermore, the improvement of planned programs can be optimized through the dissemination of information related to agricultural technology. The aim of this effort is to

ensure that priority programs help farmers understand the benefits of increased rice productivity so that these outcomes align with the targets of sustainable socio economic development. This condition requires serious attention because it directly influences the extent to which specific programs can achieve their intended targets within future local government administration. As stated in theoretical discussions on organizational strategy, aligning priority development programs with village level SDG targets is essential (Sofianto, 2019). Government resource strategies for rice agricultural planning that incorporate local wisdom must involve all community groups in agricultural governance in West Aceh. The findings of this study indicate that the Keujreun Blang customary institution serves as the primary organizer from the initial planting plan to the harvest stage. The application of local wisdom by this institution plays an important role in ensuring that the socio economic dynamics of farmers are effectively regulated. This perspective aligns with the statement of MacDonald et al., (2019), who argue that partnerships involving local wisdom in agricultural stewardship enhance the role of partner institutions and strengthen the implementation of partner based strategies. The main partner in this governance framework is the Keujreun Blang institution, which functions as a key government resource in shaping the socio economic foundations of sustainable rice agriculture. This role contributes to dynamic and adaptive improvements in rice agricultural development. These efforts aim to integrate customary agricultural policies with government targets for achieving SDG 18 at the village level (Mardhiah, Syahputri, et al., 2024). Such alignment supports participatory collaboration between the government and customary institutions to maintain sustainable local food security.

The organizational strategy of the agricultural sector in West Aceh is not only directed toward achieving the vision of development planning (Pasolong, 2023). It also allows for analysis of organizational and administrative structures within the government system to support resource optimization. This includes maximizing essential resources in carrying out institutional duties and functions. As a result, these essential potentials can enhance the participatory role of the customary rice agricultural institution in West Aceh. The government's resource based approach to participatory governance requires strengthening the actualization of the Keujreun Blang institution in fulfilling its duties and functions as mandated by Qanun Number 10 of 2008 on customary institutions in Aceh. Participatory implementation is needed to align national and regional development policies in order to optimize priority development programs (Satibi et al., 2023). The implementation targets for rice agricultural governance, whether direct or indirect, must align with structured governmental programs aimed at strengthening food security (Nathan, 2025). The findings of this study indicate that West Aceh has adopted simultaneous planting as one of its priority development programs. However, the organization of this policy remains constrained by time management mechanisms that have not been effectively regulated. This challenge is linked to the limited participatory engagement of the Keujreun Blang institution in comprehensive sustainable rice agricultural governance.

The impact of rice agricultural planning based on local wisdom has made it easier for the government to manage rice agriculture. This aligns with the customary institution regulation, which affirms that the Keujreun Blang institution has duties and functions that support the government in rice agriculture. These roles significantly contribute to increasing rice productivity, as noted by (S Budi, A.H Hamid, 2019). Moreover, the influence of local wisdom manifests indirectly through established customs and behavioral patterns within farming communities in West Aceh. These routines contain socio cultural values that maintain solidarity and cooperation among farmer groups, ensuring the continuity of rice cultivation. Therefore, it is necessary to establish harmonization between the government and the Keujreun

Blang institution in a dynamic and adaptive manner. A collaborative strategy for agricultural development based on Acehnese local wisdom is presented in Figure 4.

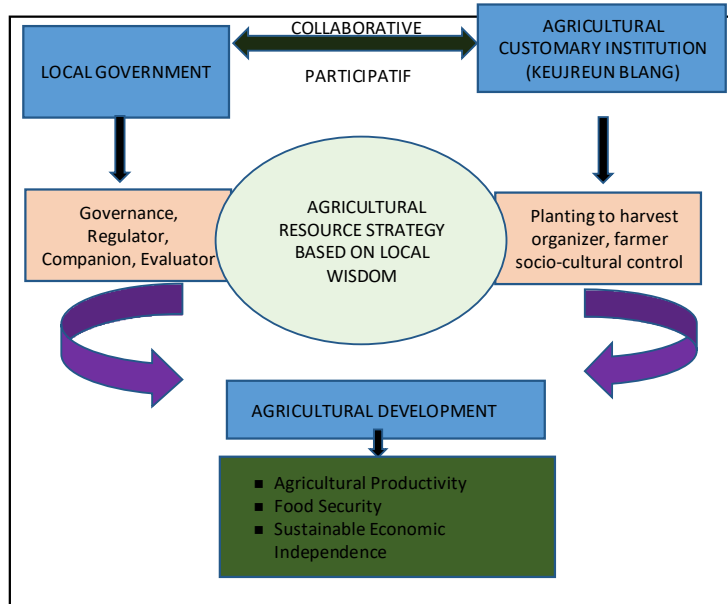


Figure 4. Collaborative Agricultural Resource Strategy Based on Acehnese Local Wisdom
Source: Research Data, 2025

The figure above illustrates that the harmonisation between the government and traditional institutions aims to optimise the roles and functions of customary institutions as a resource that supports the government in improving rice productivity. This foundation and legal recognition are essential to ensure that the roles of agricultural resources at the village level can be organised effectively (Hasan & Azis, 2018). Moreover, efforts undertaken by the government must involve collaboration with the *Keujreun Blang* customary institution in implementing structured programmes. These programmes include the synchronised planting system and the values of mutual cooperation among farmer groups (Wiranda & Sari, 2019). The synchronised planting system facilitates monitoring efforts through socio cultural resources as well as political resources that are integrated into regional development processes (Aditia et al., 2025). Therefore, the local government has principles and performance indicators that guide development planning, including key indicators related to agricultural development which serve as priority indicators for sustainable regional food security (Helmi & Ali, 2020).

The legal status of the *Keujreun Blang* customary institution represents the values of local wisdom in sustainable agricultural development in West Aceh. Elements of local wisdom in rice cultivation reflect traditional knowledge, customs, and cultural practices that have been passed down through generations (Setiawan, 2022). Based on the findings, several elements of local wisdom in rice agriculture include the traditional calendar based planting system, mutual cooperation, traditional water distribution systems, seed selection and pest control, as well as ritual ceremonies. The coherence of these systems forms a routine responsibility of local resources in managing rice fields to ensure sustainable food security (Adebimpe Oluwabukade Adefila et al., 2024).

The traditional calendar system also plays a role in rice cultivation planning which has been regulated in the duties and functions of the *Keujreun Blang* customary institution, particularly the coordination of time for entering the rice fields. This coordination is determined collectively through consultation and decision making organised by *Keujreun*

Blang. The findings reveal that this alignment process, which begins from pre planting to post harvesting, governs the socio cultural and economic traditions of farmers. These traditions provide opportunities for the local government to strengthen alignment with community preferences in agricultural planning (Mardhiah et al., 2023). However, such alignment must also be embedded within public policy frameworks to enhance the integration of socio cultural values that contribute to sustainable economic outcomes for farmers (Sukayat et al., 2023). The application of strategies based on local wisdom also includes the value of mutual cooperation (Sovia & Widodo, 2024). Mutual cooperation represents a long standing cultural practice within traditional institutions. Therefore, the role of customary institutions is vital for fostering solidarity among farmers in order to improve rice productivity.

The water distribution system for rice fields is also one of the elements of local wisdom that is traditionally managed by the Keujreun Blang customary institution. The technical guidelines for this system have been regulated under Governor Regulation Number 45 of 2015 concerning the management of water distribution to rice fields. The findings indicate that West Aceh Regency has not yet organised these technical guidelines effectively at the field level, as authority and control remain delegated to the heads of farmer groups. However, the situation in West Aceh shows that water availability is still very limited and relies heavily on rainfed fields. The local government has attempted to anticipate this issue by providing water pumping machines to farmer groups according to their needs. This support can be optimally utilised only when farmer groups actively participate in rice field management. LUO et al., (2020) explain that the involvement of traditional institutions has legitimate authority to support the government in managing ecosystem services that can be adapted to modern agricultural facilities. Therefore, a targeted and effective water management system is necessary to meet farmers expectations ((Liu et al., 2023). Furthermore, water supply facilities for rice fields are essential for strengthening the green economy system to promote sustainable agricultural governance (Krisnawati et al., 2024). Within the context of local wisdom in Aceh, the Keujreun Blang customary institution plays an important role in water management. Nevertheless, the government as an organisational entity must empower this institution to carry out its functions effectively as a community based organisation responsible for water distribution to rice fields (Maulida et al., 2018).

Seed selection is also influenced by customary practices; however, this aspect has been coordinated with the government through the introduction of superior seeds that are compatible with soil conditions. Nevertheless, disagreements often emerge among farmer groups regarding priority setting. The government therefore needs to strengthen strategies for empowering customary farmer institutions by integrating traditional ecological knowledge to maintain sustainable rice cultivation practices (Budiyoko et al., 2025). This strategy requires government support through thematic training programmes aimed at improving farmers capacity both in seed selection and pest control. According to Rustriningsih et al., (2023) farmer empowerment has a significant effect on achieving sustainable rice productivity.

In addition, traditional agricultural rituals such as pre planting ceremonies, planting rituals, and post harvesting ceremonies represent elements of local wisdom that strengthen agricultural development. In West Aceh, these rituals have been consistently organised in accordance with local wisdom through annual government supported programmes. Their implementation requires the empowerment of the Keujreun Blang customary institution to synchronise government programmes and ensure effective and efficient rice field governance. As noted by Maulida et al., (2018), these rituals have long been practiced and continue to be trusted by farmers as spiritual guidance for seeking divine protection in rice

cultivation. Therefore, traditional rituals need to be maintained in accordance with the agricultural calendar to achieve ecological balance and food security within customary communities (Budiyoko et al., 2025). Moreover, these rituals strengthen farmer solidarity which contributes to improved productivity and food resilience (Sumarwati, 2022). This alignment is reflected in practices such as the Kenduri Blang, which is conducted collectively to support the continuity of rice farming development (Arifin & Manan, 2018). Thus, the role of the Keujreun Blang customary institution is highly significant as a local farmer based institution that contributes to sustainable local food security.

The Dynamic and Adaptive Role of Local Agricultural Resources in Enhancing Sustainable Development in West Aceh. The institutional role of local agricultural resources can strengthen participatory and inclusive capacities in the implementation of development initiatives. The organisational structuring within customary institutions requires strategic initiatives that align with the public organisation strategy theory, particularly in achieving innovation based sustainable agricultural development (Pasolong, 2023). In this context, customary institutions operate in accordance with public policy provisions in West Aceh, specifically Qanun Number 10 of 2008. The research findings indicate that institutional structuring within the Keujreun Blang customary body has not yet achieved full continuity in its organisational functions. Despite this challenge, the institution holds essential tasks and functions that support the government in strengthening local wisdom based rice agriculture. As a local resource, the customary institution contributes dynamically and adaptively to the social, cultural, and economic systems of farming communities in West Aceh. However, the organisational structure and its implementation require sustained governmental oversight to ensure that the tasks and functions of customary institutions can operate effectively. From the perspective of local wisdom, the cultural values embedded within these institutions can be optimally empowered by the Aceh Customary Council. Strengthening this institutional arrangement in West Aceh is crucial for enhancing sustainable agricultural development and local food security. Therefore, synchronising policy incentives for customary institutions must be formally established to support effective governance.

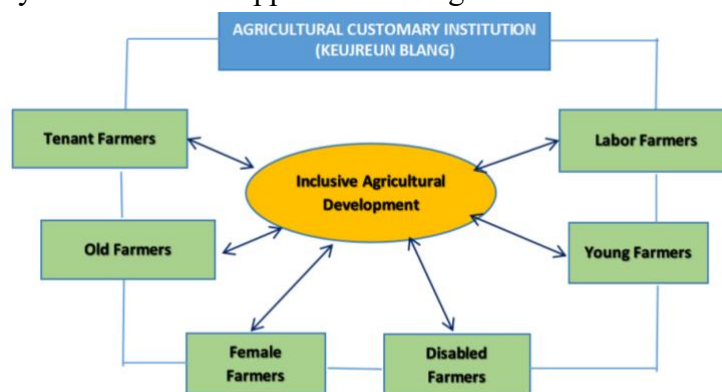


Figure 5. Dynamic and Adaptive Inclusive Local Resource Strategy

Source: Research Data, 2025

Furthermore, the strategy for empowering local resources can enhance farmers participation in inclusive agricultural development. The findings demonstrate that the Keujreun Blang customary institution functions as an organisational body that coordinates rice farming activities. This aligns with Ayu et al., (2023), who explain that strengthening the capacity of local resources contributes to improved agricultural development. Consequently, the presence of customary institutions supports participatory practices that elevate the long term social and economic well being of farming communities (Mursyidin et

al., 2023). The structural elements required to achieve an inclusive, dynamic, and adaptive local resource strategy are illustrated in Figure 5.

Based on Figure 5., the inclusive role of local resources must be sustained through comprehensive community based organisational engagement to advance the SDG 18 indicators at the village level in West Aceh. This objective is intended to harmonise the tasks and functions of local resources in order to strengthen local food security more effectively than before. Chaikin & Usiuk, (2019) emphasise that local empowerment strategies through customary agricultural institutions are essential for aligning sustainable food security with collaborative governance systems. This approach requires the integration of cultural management practices in rice agriculture through a comprehensive and sustainable framework in West Aceh.

6. CONCLUSION

The strategy for optimizing government resources in planning locally based agricultural development in West Aceh requires strengthening the roles and functions of the Keujreun Blang customary institution so that elements of local wisdom can be fully integrated into sustainable agricultural development. This synergy incorporates local values into rice cultivation practices, particularly in regulating planting schedules based on traditional calendars that are dynamic and participatory. The integration of local wisdom in rice farming also enhances sustainable cooperation among farmers. Furthermore, strengthening the capacity of customary agricultural institutions allows them to provide more participatory services in the traditional water distribution system. This system can be further optimized through government policies to ensure that water distribution meets farmers' needs. In addition, the selection of seeds and the use of natural pest control methods can increase the intensity of rice farming when carried out in collaboration with customary institutions, enabling the integration of local wisdom into modern and sustainable agricultural policies. Elements of local wisdom in sustainable agricultural development in West Aceh require formal recognition for customary agricultural institutions, particularly through the establishment of legal frameworks and incentive policies for the Keujreun Blang institution. This measure aims to enhance farmers' participation in inclusive and sustainable local agricultural development based on community resources and local wisdom.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged as part of academic transparency. First, data collection relied on the availability of key informants, which means that variations in experiences among gampong communities could not be fully documented. This creates the possibility that certain institutional dynamics were not captured comprehensively. Second, some empirical data related to institutional performance, water distribution, and program effectiveness were not recorded in standardized administrative formats, requiring the analysis to rely on triangulation of interviews and local documents. Third, the sensitivity surrounding issues of authority within customary agricultural governance limited the level of detail that some informants were willing to provide, which subsequently affected the depth of the analysis.

For future research, this study recommends expanding the scope through mixed methods to produce a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of customary institutions on sustainable agricultural development. Comparative studies across districts or provinces with different customary institutional structures are also necessary to identify broader variations in governance patterns. In addition, future research may explore how digital transformation, agricultural policy changes, and generational shifts among young farmers influence the sustainability of customary institutional functions within the context of

modern agriculture.

Future studies should explore how the duties and functions of the *Keujreun Blang* institution can be applied alongside policies aimed at strengthening the capacity of modern farmers so that these efforts align with socioeconomic and technological advancements that are continuous and comprehensive. Although the substantive scope of this study remains limited, challenges in developing agricultural human resources continue to be influenced by sociocultural factors that play a central role. Mapping inclusive agriculture in West Aceh and enhancing the participation of key stakeholders are essential steps toward achieving sustainable local food security.

Recommendations for the government and local communities emphasize the importance of strengthening the *Keujreun Blang* institution as a participatory body that operates through accountable and transparent systems in sustainable development. Policies promoting synergy between the government and customary institutions in agricultural governance should align with regional strategic plans, incorporating measurable priorities that correspond to village development targets based on adaptive and dynamic SDGs. Farmers in West Aceh are encouraged to cultivate stronger interest in empowerment initiatives that support local agricultural growth in order to increase rice productivity and strengthen local food security.

Author Contribution

Conceptualization and development of research idea: A.D.R.M, formulation of research questions, and theoretical framework were carried out by N.M and A.D.R.M. Methodology including research design, selection of approach, and analysis strategy was carried out by V.H. Formal analysis including data analysis, interpretation of results, and application of analytical techniques was carried out by C.A.H. Investigation included data collection, interviews, and field observations by C.A.H, C.I.A, A.D.R.M. Writing of the original draft refers to the writing of the initial manuscript by N.M and formulation of the main arguments and presentation of results was carried out by N.M and A.D.R.M. Review & editing included substantial editing, integration of reviewer feedback, and refinement of the manuscript's style and clarity was carried out by V.N and C.I.A.

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Data Availability Statement

All data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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