

History of The Economic Development of Rice Field Farmers in Palasa Tangki Village 2014-2023

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses: 1. The history of the formation of Palasa Tangki village, 2. The economic development of the rice farming community, 3. The efforts of the village government in developing the agricultural sector as the main supporter of the village economy. The type of research used is historical research with an economic approach, data collection techniques in this study include: Observation, interviews, documentation and writing (historiography). The results of this study indicate that the journey and economic development of rice farmers in Palasa Tangki village over the past ten years experienced a turning point that occurred in 2015 when the village government began to introduce modern agricultural technology such as tractors, water pumps, superior seeds, and provided training and fertilizer assistance to farmers. This modernization has had a positive impact on increasing crop yields, expanding market access, and community welfare, as indicated by the increasing number of farming families who are able to send their children to school outside the area. This study confirms that the agricultural sector remains the backbone of the village economy and requires special attention in terms of protection, empowerment, and infrastructure development to support the welfare of the farming community in a sustainable manner.

Keywords: History, Economics And Rice Farmers

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a comparative advantage in the agricultural sector, a sector that can be used as capital for economic growth if managed properly. The agricultural sector possesses important or superior commodities that can be developed as a primary driver of national and regional economic growth. Rice is one such agricultural sector with potential for development (Yogie Syahputra, 2020: 22).

The history of a community's economic development is an important resource for understanding how a region's economy has evolved over time. Economic development in a region inevitably experiences various dynamics over time, and this is highly relevant to discuss in order to understand the evidence and reality of economic development in a given region. Therefore, the most appropriate approach in this discussion is a historical approach, as it aligns with the history and track record of each region. An economic system is a system used by a country or region to shape, regulate,

and allocate resources and goods and services to individuals and organizations within that country (Rahardjo, 2009: 72).

Economic development is a target that an economy wants to achieve in the long term, and is as consistent as possible with short-term economic growth. Economic growth can explain and at the same time measure the achievements of an economy's development. In actual economic activity, economic growth means the occurrence of fiscal economic development that occurs in a country such as: (1) an increase in the number and production of industrial goods; (2) infrastructure development; and (3) an increase in production resulting from economic activities that take place in a certain period, for example one year (Dumairy, 2000: 144).

Economic development or growth is the study of certain factors of medium-term and long-term output growth, the determining factors of growth are full employment, high technology, rapid capital accumulation, and savings as investment which depends on the size of the community's income (Rudiger Dornbusch and Stanley Fischer, 1996: 603).

Raharjo, (2010: 39) said that: Community economic development is an effort to improve the income conditions of the community towards a more advanced direction with the abilities and potential that the community itself has. Community economics is something regarding the economy in a group's environment in order to meet the needs of life.

Parigi Moutong Regency has a strong economic background rooted in the agricultural sector, particularly as a rice producer. Since colonial times, the Parigi Moutong region has been known for its fertile soil and diverse natural resources. After independence, infrastructure development efforts, such as irrigation and roads, were undertaken to increase agricultural productivity. Government programs in agricultural extension and technology development helped increase agricultural yields, which are the backbone of the community's economy (Akram Nasarudin, 2016: 17).

Entering the Reform Era, the economic structure began to diversify. In addition to agriculture, the fisheries, trade, and tourism sectors began to receive attention. The development of these sectors aims to reduce dependence on agriculture, providing new economic opportunities for the community. However, challenges remain, including climate change, access to technology, and capital. Nevertheless, a spirit of collaboration between the government, community, and the private sector remains key to driving sustainable economic growth in Parigi Moutong. Similarly, Palasa District has a rich history of economic development, particularly in the agricultural sector. The Palasa Tangki community has long relied on rice farming as its primary livelihood. The fertile soil and a robust natural irrigation system support rice production, making it a key commodity.

Research on the historical economic development of the rice farming community in Palasa Tangki village is based on several important reasons that reflect the dynamics of significant social, economic, and policy changes and their impact on the village's agricultural sector. Since 2014, there has been a rapid increase in the use of agricultural technology, such as the use of modern agricultural machinery, more efficient irrigation systems, and digital-based applications that support farmers in planning and managing their farms. This transformation has brought changes in farming

practices and has resulted in increased production yields and farm efficiency. Therefore, 2014 is also considered the starting point for the transition to agricultural modernization in the village.

With the continued development of infrastructure, including improved road access and communication networks, farmers in Palasa Tangki village are increasingly able to sell their agricultural products to a wider market. This increased access allows the Palasa Tangki village community to reach larger markets, both local and regional, which in turn can increase their income. These changes have also had a positive impact on the economy of the village's rice farming community. By 2023, government policies supporting the agricultural sector are beginning to show results that can be more clearly evaluated. Therefore, 2023 is an appropriate time to measure the impact of policies implemented in the previous period and assess the success of agricultural sector development at the village level.

The economy of the rice farming community in Palasa Tangki village experienced various significant transformations during the period 2014 to 2023. As a village where the majority of the population works as farmers, especially in the rice farming sector, economic development in this village is not only influenced by local factors but also by global conditions that have an impact on the agricultural sector.

During this period, the agricultural sector in Palasa Tangki village faced various challenges and opportunities. Rice farmers in this village not only depended on natural resources but were also influenced by government policies such as fertilizer subsidies, agricultural extension services, and access to continuously evolving agricultural technologies. Despite this, rice farmers in this village continued to face various challenges, such as limited market access, fluctuating agricultural prices, and the increasingly severe impacts of climate change (RPJMDes Review 2022).

According to Haris, the village head of Palasa Tangki, farmers in Palasa Tangki village develop traditional farming methods. Rice is crucial for local food needs, but other crops are also cultivated for economic purposes. Over time, the government has introduced various programs to increase agricultural output. For example, irrigation infrastructure has been developed and road access has been expanded, allowing farmers to cultivate their land more effectively. Agricultural extension programs have also been introduced to improve farmers' knowledge and skills.

In today's modern era, many significant changes have occurred in agricultural organizations. More modern farmer groups have emerged, offering activities that can boost economic development and cooperatives, improving communities' access to resources and markets. Modern agricultural technologies, such as fertilizers and rice plowing machines, have been introduced, which can increase overall productivity (Andi Amran Sulaiman, 2018: 24).

Despite significant progress, farmers in Palasa District still face challenges, such as climate change, limited access to capital, and other natural disasters. Therefore, collaboration between the government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector is crucial to address these issues and improve farmer welfare. The history of the economic development of rice farmers in Palasa District demonstrates a dynamic journey, with challenges and opportunities that continue to evolve over time.

Agricultural development deserves greater attention. Even though industrialization policies have been deprioritized, the agricultural sector can generate a surplus if productivity is increased, resulting in higher farmer incomes. This improvement in living standards is achieved by increasing food production through agricultural intensification, extensification, and diversification, which is expected to improve farmers' lives and expand employment opportunities for groups still dependent on the agricultural sector (Sudarman & Fatmawati, 2023: 8).

Economic activities in general are divided into three main activities: production, consumption, and distribution. Production arises from the human need for consumption. As human civilization advances, consumption needs become more complex, necessitating cooperation among communities to meet production and consumption needs. Therefore, Islam emphasizes that in the economic world, particularly in trade and agriculture, it is essential to maintain social relationships between sellers and buyers so that buying and selling activities can proceed without any party benefiting or being disadvantaged.

Based on the background above, the researcher will try to describe the history of the economic development of farmers in Palasa Tangki Village and the response of the village government regarding agriculture in Palasa Tangki Village.

METHOD

This research uses the historical method. According to Kuntowijoyo, the historical method is a scientific way to reconstruct past events critically and systematically, based on reliable evidence. He emphasizes that history is not simply a story about the past, but rather a science with clear methods, theories, and approaches.

Referring to the above view, this research uses historical research with the following stages: source collection (heuristic), source criticism (verification), source analysis (interpretation), and writing (historiography).

Economic Approach

This research uses an economic approach. According to Kuntowijoyo, the economic approach is a *prophetic* approach, namely an economic perspective based on the values of *humanization* (humanizing humans), *liberation* (freeing from oppression and poverty), and *transcendence* (oriented towards divine values), so that the economy does not only pursue profit, but also social justice and blessings.

Location and Time of Research

This research was conducted in Palasa Tangki village, located in Palasa District, Parigi Moutong Regency. This was chosen because the data and information needed to conduct the research were readily available there.

The research period was from March 10, 2025, to April 1, 2025. In this case, it was to find out about the history of the economic development of rice farmers in Palasa Tangki Village.

The object of this research is the economic changes of rice farmers in Palasa Tangki Village from 2014 to 2023. The subjects of this research are the village head of Palasa Tangki, the community of Palasa Tangki Village, and local government officials.

The research stages in the historical research method consist of source collection (*heuristic*), source criticism (*verification*), source analysis (*interpretation*), and writing (*historiography*).

Source Collection

The things that researchers do in the *heuristic stage* are by conducting literature studies, observations, interviews and documentation.

Literature review was conducted by reading various literature prior to conducting fieldwork related to the research object. This literature review was conducted at several libraries in Palu City, such as the Tadulako University Library and the Central Sulawesi Provincial Library. Furthermore, the researcher utilized statistical data on agricultural development in Palasa Tangki Village. This data was obtained from the Statistics Indonesia (BPS) of Parigi Moutong Regency. Other sources used by the researcher included undergraduate theses from several faculties and departments.

Researchers conducted observations in Palasa Tangki village to assess the objective conditions of the study and then summarized the observation data. The objects observed included rice fields and everything related to the research. The observations were then processed and analyzed before being converted into primary data. Observations were conducted using a camera and a tape recorder. The results of the observations can be verified by the images in the appendix.

The researcher began the interview with a story about the history of agricultural development, then continued with questions related to the research theme. Afterward, the researcher asked questions about the informant's personal life and past experiences. This was done to facilitate the informant's understanding of the research questions without feeling overwhelmed.

Documentation involves searching for sources related to the history of economic development in Palasa Tangki village. The documentation obtained includes data on agricultural history and Palasa Tangki village archives related to the research topic. These documents were obtained from the Palasa Tangki village office.

After primary and secondary data are obtained, researchers conduct critical analyses to test the authenticity of the data, its integrity, authenticity, and suitability for research. There are two types of critical analyses: internal and external. External analysis is a method for verifying or testing external aspects of the sources found, such as data on economic development in Palasa Tangki village. Internal analysis emphasizes internal aspects, namely the content of the sources found, such as the results of interviews about the lives of rice farmers in Palasa Tangki village.

After critiquing the data, the next step is *interpretation*. One example is when, after critiquing the data, the researcher then compared the initial and subsequent periods of agricultural development in Palasa Tangki village between one source and another. This was done to ensure the data obtained could be scientifically validated.

The final stage of research after *interpretation* is writing the results of the analysis or *historiography*. The author conducted the following stages: collecting, critiquing, and interpreting the collected data, then compiling them into a historical paper entitled "The History of the Economic Development of the Rice Farming Community in Palasa Tangki Village, 2014-2023."

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

History of the Economic Development of the Rice Farming Community of Palasa Tangki Village

Based on the results of observations and research that began on March 18 to March 26, there are several data that the author obtained in the field, first about the history of the formation of the Palasa Tangki village, second, a general description of the Palasa Tangki village, third, about the history of the economic development of the Palasa Tangki village community, and fourth about how the village government responded or efforts made for village development. Data from the research results obtained by researchers at the research location are in the form of raw data that has not been processed and compiled. Researchers will explain the data obtained in the field as well as the results of interviews with the village head and the Palasa Tangki village community.

Palasa Tangki Village has a long history inextricably linked to agriculture as the primary foundation of its community's livelihood. The first people to open and manage agricultural land in this village were pioneers who played a vital role in shaping the direction of the village's economic and social development.

As Ardin said, that:

“Since the rice fields here were opened and managed by Abdullah Lapanjang, Ahong, and Laela, they have been a source of livelihood for generations. They have always been a part of the lives of the Palasa Tangki community, as most villagers depend on agriculture, especially rice, for their livelihood. Rice fields are a source of food, income, and a part of our identity. Without them, many families here would lose their primary source of income.” (Interview, at Palasa Tangki, March 15, 2025)

The interview results above emphasize the importance of rice fields for the Palasa Tangki village community, both historically and economically. This demonstrates the continuity of agricultural land management as a primary source of livelihood. Rice fields not only provide food and income but also form part of the village's cultural identity. The heavy dependence on the agricultural sector, particularly rice, makes the sustainability of rice fields vital. If rice fields are lost or no longer productive, the impact will be felt directly by many families, potentially even disrupting the village's economic stability. This opinion is also supported by Isman Laela:

“For us, rice paddies are more than just green expanses that produce rice. Although they are still relatively simple, they have been the lifeblood of our lives, flowing from the past to the present. The land once cleared and managed by Abdullah Lapanjang, Ahong, and Laela has become an economic pillar and a source of food for the majority of the residents here. It is from these harvests that kitchens keep smoking and children able to attend school. Rice paddies have become integral to our identity and traditions.” (Interview, at Palasa Tangki, March 15, 2025)

The interview results above illustrate the importance of rice fields to the community's lives, not only as food producers but also as a pillar of the economy, education, and cultural preservation. This statement emphasizes that rice fields have a value far beyond their physical function, as they have become part of the history, identity, and survival of the local residents. Although the rice fields in Palasa Tangki village are still relatively simple, they will remain their identity. The statement above aligns with Andi Luth's opinion, who said :

“The farming economy in our village is still relatively simple. Most farmers rely solely on traditional methods, such as plowing with simple tools, and not many use fertilizers or high-quality seeds. Harvests are sometimes uncertain, especially when the rainy or dry season arrives unexpectedly, but this doesn't dampen the community's enthusiasm for continuing to cultivate the rice fields.” (Interview, at Palasa Tangki, March 12, 2025)

The interview results above reflect the real-life situation of farmers who still rely on traditional methods with limited resources, often impacting harvests due to weather and seasonal uncertainties. Nevertheless, the community's enthusiasm and determination to continue managing their rice fields demonstrates resilience and a strong sense of responsibility for their livelihoods. This demonstrates the sincerity of the farmers' hard work and simultaneously challenges relevant parties to provide adequate technological support, training, and resources to improve their well-being.

Ardin said that:

“Farmers used to cultivate rice fields using traditional methods, such as plowing with water buffalo and planting rice seedlings from the previous harvest. However, this period did not last long, as the Palasa Tangki village government began collaborating with the higher government to ensure the sustainability of agricultural activities.” (Interview, in Palasa Tangki, March 15, 2025)

The interview results indicate significant changes in agricultural practices in Palasa Tangki village. Initially, farmers relied on simple, traditional methods, but with collaboration between the village government and higher-level government, agriculture began to shift toward more modern and sustainable methods. This demonstrates that appropriate support and policies can accelerate progress in the agricultural sector and help improve farmer welfare. The above statement aligns with Samia Sumaila's opinion:

“From 2014 to 2018, the economy of rice farmers in Palasa Tangki village experienced significant changes, starting from a simple condition in 2014, then increasing rapidly in 2015 to 2016 thanks to the introduction of agricultural technology such as tractors, water pumps, and superior seeds, fertilizer assistance and training from extension workers, plus smooth irrigation so that harvests can be twice a year and the price of grain is relatively stable, but since 2017 there has been a decline due to rising fertilizer prices, reduced subsidies, extreme weather that disrupts the planting season, and falling grain prices in the market, which

continued until 2018 and caused farmers' incomes to decline.” (Interview results, in Palasa Tangki March 18, 2025)

The interviews above provide a clear and coherent picture of the economic dynamics of rice farmers in Palasa Tangki village during the 2014–2018 period. These statements successfully demonstrate a phase of progress, particularly in 2015–2016 when agricultural technology, government assistance, and irrigation conditions supported productivity and price stability. However, they also highlight challenges that have emerged since 2017, such as rising production costs, reduced subsidies, extreme weather, and fluctuations in grain prices that have directly impacted income. This confirms that agricultural success is strongly influenced by a combination of technology, policy, natural conditions, and market factors, as well as the importance of ongoing efforts to maintain farmer welfare.

Ramli said that:

“The rice farming economy in our village flourished considerably throughout 2019, 2020, and 2021. Despite the challenges faced during those years, the rice farming economy in our village continued to grow. One of the main factors was a significant increase in rice production, thanks to favorable weather and government assistance with high-quality seeds. However, we also experienced some challenges during that time, but we overcame them through mutual cooperation and government support. The rice farming economy in our village experienced positive development from 2019 to 2021, despite some challenges.” (Interview, at Palasa Tangki, March 16, 2025)

Interview results indicate that the period from 2019 to 2021 was a relatively positive period for the village's rice farming economy, despite challenges, including the impact of the pandemic. The successful increase in rice production, a key driver of economic development, was due in part to favorable weather conditions and government assistance with high-quality seeds. Although the pandemic presented challenges, the community's spirit of mutual cooperation and the government's active role helped maintain the farmers' economic stability. The above statement illustrates that the resilience of the village's agricultural sector is influenced by a combination of natural factors, policy support, and social solidarity, which together minimize the negative impacts of the difficult situation.

Ridwan also said that:

“In 2022 and 2023, the community's economy was still stable, but at the end of 2023, we began to experience problems due to extreme weather, frequent flooding that damaged our irrigation, we began to feel a decline in our economy, we experienced crop failure at that time.” (Interview results, at Palasa Tangki, March 16, 2025)

Based on the interview results, the community's economic conditions were relatively stable from 2022 to mid-2023. Business activities and the agricultural sector

performed well, meeting daily needs and maintaining adequate income levels. However, at the end of 2023, significant disruptions to the community's economic stability began to occur. This was triggered by extreme weather conditions, particularly high rainfall intensity and frequent flooding. These floods caused serious damage to agricultural infrastructure, particularly the irrigation system, which is the main support for farming activities. The damage to irrigation directly impacted the irrigation process for agricultural land, resulting in a drastic decline in crop productivity. During that planting season, the community experienced crop failures in several areas. As a result, the income of farmers and related businesses decreased, which led to an overall decline in the community's economic conditions. This impact was felt not only in the agricultural sector but also in other supporting sectors, such as agricultural trade and related services.

As Haris said :

“The economic development of the rice farming community in our village is indeed a dynamic and quite complex process. We started with a very traditional and simple agricultural system. However, over time, our village began to enter an era of modernization with the arrival of various agricultural technologies and innovations. Our farmers began to adapt their farming methods, moving from relying solely on traditional tools to using more efficient machines and techniques. Furthermore, they also began to interact more broadly with the market, selling their crops not only locally but also to larger markets. We also continue to encourage them to adapt to environmental changes, such as increasingly unpredictable weather, to maintain agricultural productivity and allow their economy to continue to grow.” (Interview, at Palasa Tangki, March 12, 2025)

The interview results above provide a comprehensive overview of the economic development of rice farmers in the village, characterized by a transition from traditional farming to a more modern and efficient system. Modernization through the application of agricultural technology and innovation has helped increase productivity, while farmers' engagement with broader markets has opened up new economic opportunities beyond the local scope. This statement also emphasizes the importance of adaptability to environmental changes, particularly weather uncertainty, as a key factor in maintaining the sustainability of the agricultural sector. By highlighting the combination of technological innovation, market access, and resilience to natural challenges, this statement successfully demonstrates that farmers' economic progress does not depend solely on one aspect, but on the synergy of various mutually supporting factors. This statement aligns with Andi Lut's statement that :

“We have entered the modern era, and many technologies and innovations have begun to enter our village. We have begun learning to use modern agricultural tools like tractors and water pumps, which have greatly reduced the workload in the rice fields. Furthermore, we have also begun using superior seeds, which are more productive than conventional seeds. Previously, we only

sold our crops at local markets. But now, with easier access and a wider network, we can sell to a larger market and obtain more competitive prices. This has certainly helped significantly increase our income.” (Results of the interview, at the Tank Palace, March 18, 2025)

The interview above illustrates the positive transformation experienced by farmers in Palasa Tangki village through the application of agricultural technology and innovation. The use of modern equipment such as tractors and water pumps not only speeds up and simplifies work in the rice fields but also increases efficiency. The use of superior seeds contributes to higher productivity, while expanded market access allows farmers to sell their crops at more competitive prices, thereby increasing income. The interview results confirm that the combination of technology, innovation, and broader market access is key to driving sustainable economic progress for farmers. Ashadi also said that:

“The existence of agriculture in Palasa Tangki village has really helped the community's economy, the economy of the Palasa Tangki village community is quite fast and we can send our children to school.” (Interview results, in Palasa Tangki, March 13, 2025)

The interviews confirmed the vital role of the agricultural sector as the backbone of the Palasa Tangki village economy. Agriculture is not only a primary source of income but also contributes to improving the community's standard of living, as evidenced by their ability to finance their children's education. This statement reflects the village's economic success, which is highly dependent on agricultural sustainability and productivity, and demonstrates the close relationship between agricultural progress and improving the well-being of future generations. This is also supported by Asharudin Pamanca's statement:

“When we talk about agriculture in Palasa Tangki village, it actually has quite a long history. According to stories from the old-timers, the farmland here has been managed since 2004, and at that time it covered around 200 hectares. But when it comes to truly rapid development, it only started to become apparent around 2015. During that time, there was an increase in the use of modern agricultural equipment, irrigation was repaired, although it had been damaged again by flooding, and farmers also began to become more connected to the market. So, you could say that 2015 marked the beginning of major changes in agriculture in our village.” (Interview, in Palasa Tangki, March 16, 2025)

The above interview provides a clear historical picture of the agricultural journey in Palasa Tangki Village, starting from land management in 2004 which was quite extensive, up to 200 hectares, to a significant turning point in 2015. The interview highlights important factors that drove progress, such as the adoption of modern agricultural tools, irrigation improvements despite previous flooding problems, and increased farmer connectivity to the market. This shows that agricultural modernization

in the village did not occur instantly, but rather through a long process, with 2015 being a crucial momentum that marked the acceleration of development and improved farmer welfare.

Village Government Efforts to Improve the Economy of Rice Farming Communities

The Palasa Tangki Village Government remains committed to improving and enhancing the quality of infrastructure that supports community life, particularly in the agricultural sector. One of its primary focuses is improving irrigation channels, which are vital for farmers in the village.

Irrigation repair efforts have been undertaken through coordination with higher government agencies. However, various challenges remain during implementation. As is known, after the repairs, the irrigation system functioned well. Unfortunately, a flood disaster that occurred shortly afterward caused further damage to the canal.

The village government is not giving up and will continue to strive for further improvements to restore the irrigation system to its full capacity. This is crucial to ensuring the smooth running of agricultural activities and stimulating economic growth in the community.

As stated by Arie Fachri as Village Secretary :

“The rice farming sector in Palasa Tangki village was previously the primary source of income for the community and played a crucial role in the village economy. However, since the irrigation system was damaged, many farmers have experienced difficulties irrigating their fields, resulting in decreased agricultural yields and impacting the community's economy. Although the village government has attempted to repair the damaged irrigation system, these efforts have been hampered by limited funding. The village government has also taken various steps to support the farmers' economic stability, such as providing assistance and training. However, the main challenge remains the repair of adequate irrigation infrastructure.” (Interview, in Palasa Tangki, March 10, 2025).

The above interview highlights the importance of irrigation infrastructure for the sustainability of the rice farming sector and the economy of the community in Palasa Tangki village. Damage to irrigation has been a major factor in declining crop yields, which in turn impacts farmers' incomes and the village's economic stability. Although the Village Government has made efforts through repairs, assistance, and training, limited funding has left the core problem unresolved. This statement demonstrates that agricultural success is not solely determined by farmer skills or technical support, but also depends heavily on the availability and quality of supporting infrastructure. Therefore, adequate irrigation repair is a strategic priority for restoring and strengthening the village economy.

The above statement is also supported by Haris as Village Head that:

“The village government has been working to have the irrigation system in Tangki Village repaired by the government, but things have been disruptive. For example, the repairs were made but flooding soon followed, damaging the irrigation system. However, we will continue to work to ensure the irrigation system is repaired again to ensure the community's economic well-being.” (Interview results, at Tangki Palace, March 12, 2025)

Based on the interview results above, there is a commitment and ongoing efforts from the village government to improve irrigation infrastructure to support the community's economy. Although repairs have been made with assistance from higher-level government agencies, damage has recurred due to flooding, demonstrating the infrastructure's vulnerability to natural factors. This emphasizes the need for more robust irrigation planning and design to withstand extreme conditions in addition to physical repairs, ensuring long-term benefits and preventing the community's economy from being continuously disrupted by repeated damage.

This statement was also reinforced by Ruslan as BPD who said that:

“From the government's perspective, various steps have been taken to improve irrigation, and the results are visible. However, recent flooding has been the primary cause of further damage to this infrastructure. With the cooperation and support of all parties, the Tangki Village Government is optimistic that irrigation improvements will soon be realized for the common good. In addition to irrigation improvements, the government is also collaborating with the private sector to support the repair of existing facilities in Palasa Tangki Village.” (Interview, in Palasa Tangki, March 15, 2025)

The interviews above indicate that the Palasa Tangki village government has actively worked to improve irrigation, yielding positive results, despite significant challenges stemming from flood damage. The government's optimism about restoring this infrastructure is supported by its commitment to involving various parties, including the private sector, in supporting the repair of village facilities. This reflects a collaborative approach that relies not only on government resources but also leverages the potential of partnerships to accelerate development. This statement underscores the importance of synergy between the government, the community, and the private sector in creating more sustainable solutions to maintain vital infrastructure such as irrigation for the well-being of residents.

As Andi Lut said :

“The Palasa Tangki Village government has submitted requests to authorities, both the district and provincial governments, to repair the damaged irrigation system. While repairs have been made, such as constructing a dike to channel the water, these solutions are temporary and short-lived. Following the flood, the dike was damaged again, indicating the need for permanent repairs. The main obstacle

to repairing the irrigation system is limited funding, which hinders efforts to improve the village's irrigation infrastructure. We are also seeking long-term solutions, such as permanently repairing the irrigation system and involving the community in its maintenance. We are also seeking additional funding through government programs and partnerships with the private sector. It is hoped that with improved irrigation systems, the agricultural sector can flourish again and the community's economy can improve." (Interview, in Palasa Tangki, March 18, 2025)

The interview results above clearly illustrate the strategic steps taken by the Palasa Tangki village government to address irrigation damage, from submitting requests to the district and provincial governments to implementing temporary solutions such as constructing a retaining wall. However, the rapid deterioration of the retaining wall after the flood underscores the need for permanent, disaster-resistant repairs. Limited funding is a major challenge, necessitating creativity in seeking additional funding sources, both through government programs and partnerships with the private sector. Furthermore, involving the community in infrastructure maintenance is a wise step to ensure the sustainability of irrigation. This statement also emphasizes the close relationship between successful irrigation improvements, the sustainability of the agricultural sector, and improving the community's economy, making irrigation improvements a village development priority.

This was also reinforced by Asarudin Pamanca as the Head of the Hamlet who stated that:

"Irrigation damage is a major obstacle to agriculture in Palasa Tangki Village. Since the irrigation system was damaged, agricultural yields have declined. Although the village government has attempted to improve the irrigation system, including proposing improvements to the district and provincial governments, these improvements have not been optimal. One effort undertaken was the construction of a barrier to withstand the torrent of water that could threaten the irrigation system. However, the barrier was damaged again after the flood." (Wednesday, April 16, 2025, Palasa Tangki).

The interviews highlighted a crucial issue facing the agricultural sector in Palasa Tangki village: damaged irrigation systems, which have a direct impact on crop yields. The village government's efforts to address this issue, including submitting proposals for repairs to the district and provincial governments, demonstrate a serious focus on agricultural infrastructure needs. However, the fact that the repairs, such as the construction of a barrier, are only temporary and easily damaged by flooding, underscores the lack of solutions to the root of the problem. This situation highlights the need for more thorough planning, permanent repairs that are resilient to natural disasters, and more intensive coordination with higher levels of government to restore the village's agricultural sector to productivity.

DISCUSSION

History of the Economic Development of the Rice Farming Community in Palasa Tangki Village

Rice fields in Palasa Tangki Village play a central role in supporting the community's livelihoods, both economically, socially, and culturally. They serve not only as a source of food and income, but also as a part of collective identity, a legacy from ancestors, and a space for socialization and the transmission of traditional values. Opened and managed since its inception by village leaders such as Abdullah Lapanjang, Ahong, and Laela, the rice fields have become integral to the local community's identity. The high dependence on the agricultural sector makes rice field productivity a key indicator of family economic stability, the sustainability of children's education, and the preservation of traditions. A decline in rice field productivity has a systemic impact on village well-being.

Over time, the agricultural system in Palasa Tangki has transformed from traditional to more modern. Initially, rice field management was focused solely on meeting family needs using simple methods such as plowing with water buffalo. However, since the mid-2010s, government intervention in the form of training, fertilizer subsidies, high-quality seeds, and technological assistance such as tractors and water pumps has boosted productivity. The peak of progress occurred in 2015–2016, when harvests increased twice a year and grain prices remained relatively stable, improving farmers' incomes. However, from 2017 to 2018, conditions declined again due to rising production costs, reduced subsidies, extreme weather, and declining grain prices. This underscores the vulnerability of rural agriculture to external factors, both economic and climatic.

Entering the 2019–2023 period, farmers face more complex dynamics. 2019 was marked by economic uncertainty due to rising fertilizer prices and dependence on middlemen, which reduced profit margins. Conditions worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020–2021: fertilizer and seed distribution was disrupted, market access weakened, and grain prices plummeted. However, community social resilience proved strong, with the return of the tradition of mutual cooperation, a seed savings and loan system, and social assistance from the village government. 2022 marked a period of recovery with irrigation improvements, the implementation of organic farming, and direct-to-consumer sales efforts. 2023 marked a consolidation towards sustainable agriculture through collective programs for infrastructure procurement, digitalization training, crop diversification, and the empowerment of women's farmer groups in post-harvest processing.

Overall, the journey of the Palasa Tangki rice fields demonstrates a gradual but significant transformation, from traditional management to modernization, supported by technology and government policies. Despite facing fluctuating prices, production costs, the pandemic, and climate challenges, the community has demonstrated adaptability through local innovation, mutual cooperation, and business diversification. Rice fields are not just a source of livelihood but also a symbol of community identity and sustainability. The future of Palasa Tangki agriculture is now geared toward independence, efficiency, and sustainable development, emphasizing food security, strengthening the local economy, and preserving agrarian culture.

Village Government Efforts to Improve the Economy of Rice Farming Communities

The Palasa Tangki Village government has demonstrated a strong commitment to improving the economy of the community, particularly rice farmers, by focusing primarily on repairing and enhancing the quality of agricultural infrastructure, particularly irrigation channels. Irrigation is considered vital to supporting agricultural productivity and the economic sustainability of the community. Village Head Haris emphasized that although repairs have been made with support from higher-level government, repeated flood damage continues to be a major obstacle. This has directly impacted agricultural yields and weakened the incomes of farming families. Village Secretary Arie Fachri also emphasized that limited village funds further complicate repair efforts, despite the government's mitigation measures, such as providing direct assistance and capacity-building training for farmers.

Irrigation damage causes uncertainty in water distribution, resulting in reduced harvests and endangering village economic stability. Communities recognize that irrigation function is not merely a technical matter, but a fundamental foundation for maintaining food security, the well-being of farming families, and social stability. Therefore, irrigation improvement is seen as a strategic priority in village development. This collective awareness is supported by a spirit of mutual cooperation and active community participation, although it still requires strong support from higher levels of government in terms of funding, planning, and the development of more disaster-resilient infrastructure.

Thus, the village government's efforts go beyond improving infrastructure and building a long-term, sustainable economic foundation. Robust, disaster-resistant irrigation is seen as key to successfully maintaining farmer economic stability, strengthening food security, and ensuring community survival. Optimism remains that, with cross-sector synergy, mutual cooperation, and a village development strategy oriented toward infrastructure resilience, Palasa Tangki Village can gradually overcome this significant challenge and achieve sustainable prosperity for its residents.

CONCLUSION

The economic development of rice farmers in Palasa Tangki Village from 2014 to 2023 experienced dynamics in three main phases. Initially (2014), agriculture was still traditional with low yields, then entered a transformation period (2015–2016) where modernization of equipment, training, and government support increased productivity and welfare. However, since 2017, farmers have faced a crisis due to unstable rice prices, high production costs, bad weather, and irrigation damage, although there was a recovery in 2018–2021 before being shaken again by the COVID-19 pandemic. Towards the end of 2023, extreme weather and environmental damage again threatened the sustainability of the farmers' economy. Overall, despite significant progress, the resilience of Palasa Tangki agriculture remains vulnerable and highly dependent on government support, improvements in irrigation infrastructure, and more sustainable natural resource management.

The Palasa Tangki Village Government has undertaken various efforts to improve the economy of the rice farming community. These include:

- a. Distribution of Agricultural Assistance: The village government is promoting subsidized fertilizer and modern agricultural equipment assistance programs to increase farmer productivity.
- b. Agricultural Infrastructure Improvement: One of the main focuses is improving road access to rice fields and markets to facilitate crop distribution. The government is also working to improve the irrigation system, although it still faces challenges due to repeated flood damage.
- c. Institutional and Educational Support: The government supports farmer group activities and provides training and outreach on more efficient and environmentally friendly agricultural techniques.

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