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ABSTRACT

This research explores farmers' social challenges in Indonesia and UNDROP's response to these challenges. Challenges include limited access to resources and land, agrarian conflict, difficulty accessing adequate seeds, and economic uncertainty. UNDROP provides a vital framework to fight for farmers' rights, emphasizing land, seed, and food rights. A qualitative research method was used using the UNDROP perspective. Data was collected through primary and secondary sources and analyzed using data reduction, presentation, and conclusion-drawing methods. The results show the need for more vigorous law enforcement and better protection of farmers' rights. Efforts to address farmers' social challenges include the implementation of the Farmer Protection and Empowerment Act, providing financial and technical support, and implementing UNDROP by the government and various relevant parties. This study concludes that collaboration between the government, farmer organizations, NGOs, and the international community is crucial in ensuring the protection and welfare of farmers. Implementing UNDROP is crucial in ensuring farmers' rights are protected. This research contributes significantly to understanding the social challenges farmers face in Indonesia and the efforts that can be made to address these challenges effectively.

Keyword: Challenges, Peasant Social, United Nations, Human Rights, Rural Communities

1. Introduction

Indonesia currently faces several challenges in terms of farmers' rights. Current constraints to farmers' rights in Indonesia include unequal access to resources and land, low farmer welfare, and lack of legal protection. Other challenges also impact farmers' production and income. One of the main problems is poverty in farming households, which is caused by limited access to productive resources such as land, technology, and capital (Baiti et al., 2017). Another problem is the need for more empowerment and participation of farmers, especially in rural areas, in decision-making processes related to their livelihoods (Sitanggang, 2020). However, the most crucial problem for
Indonesian farmers is that land ownership and access to land has also been a long-standing issue, characterized by tensions between the government, local and international businesses, and farmers (Jamil, 2019).

In response to these problems, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Farmers and Others Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) was formed with fundamental principles that include recognizing the dignity of rural populations, their contribution to global food production, and their unique relationship to land, water, and nature. The Declaration describes the individual and collective rights granted to farmers and people working in rural areas, emphasizing their right to enjoy these rights as individuals, as well as in association with others or as communities. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Farmers and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) was created by the UN Human Rights Council on December 17, 2018 (Hasan & Nordin, 2023). The UN Declaration is also the basis for conversation and cooperation between indigenous peoples, governments, and the general public in protecting and developing the rights of indigenous peoples (Masiun, 2016). This explains that UNDROP is present as a solution and basis for maintaining and fighting for the rights of farmers in developing countries.

Based on the literature study explains that the problems of farmers' rights in Indonesia include several things. The struggle for farmers' rights in Indonesia is a big challenge (Widian & Subono, 2019). The land tenure system in Indonesia is very diverse, one of which offers convenience to migrant farmers but at the same time prioritizes customary rights in land tenure in Indonesia so that it can cause conflict (Khoirunisa, 2022). Land conflict and agrarian reform are also pressing issues in Indonesia, as democratization creates a new context for people's claims to land (Lucas & Waren, 2013). Agricultural policy in Indonesia, influenced by regional autonomy, is also a problem in agriculture (Siregar & Sukwika, 2007).

Poor social and institutional aspects, declining crop species, and unequal economic benefits for farmers indicate the need for institutional restructuring and capacity building (Morizon et al., 2023). Social inequality, agrarian conflicts, and the need for equal access to agrarian resources are the main concerns surrounding the social challenges of farmers' lives (Shohibuddin, 2016). It is important to note that social challenges in farmers' lives include survival strategies, welfare improvement, and climate change (Pangesti & Widiyanto, 2015). Farmers may face social inequalities due to factors such as race, gender, or socioeconomic status, which may affect their access to resources and support (Olumba & Alimba, 2022; Wang & Li, 2016; Fibiger et al., 2023). Multi-stakeholders are needed to address social challenges in farmers' lives and agrarian issues and promote economic democracy in Indonesia (Faedlulloh, 2016). Collaborative approaches and sustainable innovation involve government agencies, private sector organizations, research institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and local communities (Hidayati et al., 2023). The policy-making
process needs to involve non-governmental organizations (NGOs) so that rights can benefit local communities (Rahayu et al., 2022).

The social challenges of farmers in Indonesia generally speak of farmers' rights that should be protected and encouraged by various stakeholders. From the perspective of UNDROP, this declaration wants to support and address social challenges in the lives of farmers through various efforts. The declaration addresses the insecurities of farming communities by respecting their rights, ensuring equitable access to control and resources, and respecting the dignity of farming communities and their role in global feed production (Claeys & Edelman, 2019). In addition, UNDROP aims to promote the right to food and farmers' livelihoods by providing policy space for states to protect farmers' rights (Haugen, 2020). UNDROP collaborates with various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to support farmers' rights and struggles facing social challenges, such as land grabbing, unfair prices, and lack of climate literacy (Spi.or.id., 2019). In addition, UNDROP seeks to facilitate farmers' access to resources, technology, and information needed to improve agricultural yields and overcome their social challenges.

Apart from the previous explanation, researchers are interested in knowing about the obstacles and social challenges in the lives of farmers. Social challenges in farmers’ lives can come from various aspects, including economics, technology, and culture. Farmer organizations also play an essential role in helping to overcome various social challenges faced by farmers, such as through the struggle for farmers' rights and the settlement of cases that affect farmers' lives. Therefore, to address social challenges in farmers' lives, an in-depth understanding of the various aspects that affect farmers' lives and collaborative efforts from various relevant parties are required. UNDROP is an adopted UN medium on international human rights that upholds the rights of farmers and other rural workers. The declaration by UNDROP is a form of victory for farmers and all rural workers, as there was previously no human rights document that expressly recognized their rights. Therefore, this research wants to examine more deeply how UNDROP's perspective sees the social challenges faced in the lives of farmers.

2. Research Method

This research was conducted to determine how UNDROP responds to social challenges in farmers' lives. Therefore, the researcher used qualitative research methods and UNDROP's perspective. Qualitative research methods are used to investigate human and social issues, and researchers will report findings based on data display reports and data analysis that has been carried out, which will then be thoroughly explained in the research report (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This research uses an approach from the UNDROP perspective to be relevant to the problems farmers face in Indonesia. In the data collection technique, researchers used primary and secondary data sources.
In addition, data analysis techniques were carried out using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 2018).

The data collected in this study includes primary data and secondary data. Primary data collection used in this research is observation and interview data. Observation is the systematic observation and recording of the symptoms studied. An interview is a conversation with a specific purpose carried out by two parties related to the interviewer and the interviewee to the questions and answers carried out by the two parties. The secondary data in this study are in the form of stationery, cameras, audio/sound recorders, documents, literature books, and journals.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Perspectives of the UN Declaration on the Human Rights of Peasants and Rural Workers on Farmers' Social Challenges

The majority of Indonesia's population, 29.7% or around 35.93 million people as of August 2017, according to data from Indonesia's Central Bureau of Statistics (2018), work in the agricultural sector. However, those involved in agriculture face several problems. According to Araf (2002), the problems of agriculture in Indonesia are inseparable from the political and agricultural policies implemented, primarily related to the failure of agricultural programs during the Old Order era that focused on significant structural changes related to land ownership and rights. At this time, SPI (Indonesian et al.) considers that in the current food system, what is prioritized is not state sovereignty but food security. They highlight that it is not the protection of farmers' human rights that is the focus, but rather the tendency to support corporations. There are land and resource grabs, food estate projects, and import volumes that hamper local production (Spi.or.id, 2021).

Farmers face several problems in obtaining land rights, including agrarian conflicts, difficulties in accessing land, and loss of income sources. Agrarian conflicts often occur due to land ownership disputes between farmers and other parties, which can result in the loss of agricultural land and jobs (Sinaga & Adi, 2020). This situation can affect the welfare and sustainability of farmers' agricultural businesses. In addition, control over land by other parties can also affect the sustainability of their agricultural activities (Puspitaningsih, 2023). Furthermore, farmers often need help obtaining an adequate supply of seeds in terms of quality and quantity, which can hinder the success of their crops (Spi.or.id, 2008). Implementing laws that protect plant variations can reduce farmers' rights to seeds because they prioritize protecting the rights of seed variety makers over farmers' rights (Igj.or.id, 2015).

We are seeing the social challenges experienced by farmers. On December 17, 2018, the United Nations General Assembly finally approved the Declaration on the Rights of Farmers and Other Individuals Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP). The birth of UNDROP marks a long journey
in which farmers and communities worldwide who make a living from natural resources in rural areas have finally reached a significant milestone (Bachriadi, 2019). Based on UNDROP's perspective on the social challenges experienced by farmers that need to be upheld, the ratification of UNDROP has 28 articles. However, to assess the condition of farmers' human rights in Indonesia, focus can be given to three main articles, namely Article 17, which discusses land rights; Article 19 on the right to seeds; and Article 15, which discusses the right to food and food sovereignty (Papuabaratanews.co, 2023).

According to Article 19 of UNDROP, there are references to farmers' rights to seeds, traditional protection of farmers, and decision-making related to the conservation and use of plant genetic resources, which are recognized as the right to maintain (Spi.or.id, 2020). Farmers' right to seeds is interpreted as an effort to protect farmers from crop failure, high economic costs, and price risks or fluctuations (Binadesa.org, 2023). Article 17 of the Farmers' Bill of Rights (UNDROP) recognizes the right of every farmer and individual living in rural areas to land ownership both individually and collectively, including the right to acquire, own, and manage land (Komnasham.go.id, 2021). This article ensures land rights for farmers and individuals active in rural areas, which has the potential to strengthen food sovereignty and farmers' welfare (Berkas.dpr.go.id, 2013). Article 15 of UNDROP affirms farmers' right to food and food sovereignty, providing a solid legal basis to protect their right to access adequate and nutritious food and to support farmers' food sovereignty. Therefore, article 15 of UNDROP is essential in fighting for farmers' economic, social, and cultural rights related to food and food sovereignty (Spora Institute, 2019).

Based on the previously described information, the author concludes that UNDROP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas) observes problems related to farmers' rights that require more vigorous law enforcement. In response, UNDROP developed a series of articles that specifically regulate farmers' rights. Land rights are still one of the most concerning conflicts in the country, in addition to the rights related to seeds, food, and food sovereignty, which are explained in detail in the articles stipulated by UNDROP. With the articles initiated by UNDROP, problems related to farmers' rights can be overcome with stricter law enforcement and better protection for the rights of farmers.

3.2. Addressing Farmers' Social Challenges

Agriculture has been a central element in the evolution of society throughout history. However, as the global population grows and the environment changes, new challenges continue to arise (Hermawan, 2024). Various efforts can be made to overcome social challenges for farmers. Law No. 19 of 2013 on the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers regulates protection efforts and gives power to farmers. This law involves various dimensions, including planning, protection, empowerment, funding sources, supervision, and community involvement (Dpr.go.id, 2013). Article
55 to Article 65 of the Farmer Protection and Empowerment Act regulates the consolidation and guarantee of the size of agricultural land provided by the government (Bphn.go.id, 2022). The government also sets up financing and funding sources to help farmers overcome challenges in acquiring equipment and production facilities and to ensure the stability of their businesses (Dpr.go.id, 2013).

The government needs to implement a farmer welfare program to provide adequate resources and ensure sufficient seed ownership for farmers (Wahyuni et al., 2021). One of the efforts to address the problems farmers face is to implement UNDROP and support the development of family farming within a decade (Spi.or.id, 2022). The UNDROP working group will consist of five independent experts with balanced geographical representation across continents, operating for three years. They will be essential in promoting learning, facilitating UNDROP implementation, identifying effective practices, and fostering collaboration for technical capacity building to achieve common goals. This step is an essential change in efforts to ensure the human rights of farmers around the world are implemented and become the basis for better public policies in implementing agrarian reform, food sovereignty, agroecology, climate justice, and rural development, as well as protecting farmers and rural working people from criminalization, intimidation, and legal discrimination (Hermanda, 2023).

Based on the explanation above, the author concludes that government efforts through the Law on Farmer Protection and Empowerment can overcome various social challenges for farmers. Besides that, the government prepares aid funds so farmers can obtain productive farming equipment and facilities. In addition, the government needs to implement a farmer welfare program to provide adequate resources and ensure farmers’ adequate seed ownership. Furthermore, finally, efforts to implement UNDROP to overcome farmers’ social challenges.

4. Conclusion

The conclusion of this study illustrates that farmers’ rights in Indonesia face several complex social challenges, such as agrarian conflict, limited access to land and seeds, and economic uncertainty. The research highlights the need for more vigorous law enforcement and better protection of farmers’ rights, particularly regarding land and seed ownership. UNDROP, as a new UN declaration, offers a vital framework to fight for farmers’ rights in Indonesia, emphasizing land, seed, and food rights.

Collaborative efforts between the government, farmer organizations, NGOs, and the international community are needed to address the social challenges farmers face. The Law on Farmer Protection and Empowerment is an important instrument that the government must effectively implement to ensure the protection and welfare of farmers. The government must also provide farmers adequate financial and technical support to improve their production and welfare. In addition,
implementing UNDROP by the government and various related parties can protect and secure farmers' rights. Thus, this research makes an essential contribution to understanding the social challenges faced by farmers in Indonesia and the efforts that can be made to overcome these challenges and fight for farmers' rights effectively.

References


