

The Conditions of Coffee Farmers in Suelos Village, North Lombok, Indonesia, and Needed Facilitation for Improving Their Livelihood

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ABSTRACT

Suelos Village in Gangga District, North Lombok Regency has significant agro-climatic potential and agricultural traditions, yet coffee farmers in this village still face limitations in productivity, post-harvest quality, and market access. This article aims to describe the conditions of coffee farmers in Suelos Village and identify the forms of facilitation needed to improve their welfare. The methods used are a literature review, field observation, and descriptive analysis. The analysis shows that farmers face key challenges such as limited capital, low adoption of cultivation technology, weak institutional arrangements, and minimal added value from their coffee products. Therefore, facilitation is needed in the form of plant rejuvenation, implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), strengthening cooperative institutions, post-harvest training, access to financing, and local identity-based marketing support. In that ways, better living, such as no hunger, no poverty, several of the missions of the SDG (Sustainable Development Goals), are hopeful to be realized.

INTRODUCTION

Coffee is one of Indonesia's strategic plantation commodities. Coffee contributes significantly to both the national and regional economies (Ashardiono, 2024). Indonesia ranks fourth among the world's coffee producers, with approximately 75% of its production coming from the Robusta variety (ICO, 2023). In West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), Robusta coffee is grown in various regions, including North Lombok Regency (Sabina, Sutanto, & Suriadi, 2025). This area has agroclimatic conditions that support coffee cultivation, especially in medium and high altitude areas such as Gangga, Bayan, and Kayangan sub-districts. Slelos Village, located in Gangga Subdistrict (North Lombok BPS, 2024), is one of the centres of Robusta coffee production that has the potential to be further developed in the context of sustainable agribusiness (Hasbi, Wathoni, & Danasari, 2025).

In general, coffee farmers in Slelos Village depend largely on their coffee plantations for their livelihoods. However, the farming practices applied are still traditional, with low use of production inputs and minimal application of technological innovations (Fauzi, Purnamasari, Wicaksono, & Maharani, 2023). This situation can reduce productivity and crop quality. Most farmers still rely on traditional knowledge passed down through generations, without the support of technical training or sustainable agricultural extension. Yet, climate change, market dynamics, and global demands for coffee quality require farmers to be more adaptive. In fact, climate change, market dynamics, and global coffee product quality demands require farmers to be more adaptive to technology and sustainable agricultural practices (Arzani, Nalurita, & Zulfikri, 2025; Miskiah & Jahidin, 2025).

In terms of the value chain, the coffee marketing system in Slelos Village is still simple and dominated by collectors. Most farmers sell their harvest in the form of red fruit or dry beans without sorting to middlemen at relatively low prices (Widadie, Rahayu, & Setyowati, 2025). Farmers rarely carry out further post-harvest processes such as fermentation, drying using paranet houses, or hulling. The lack of post-harvest processing facilities and limited access to markets mean that farmers are unable to enjoy the added value of coffee (Hasbi et al., 2025). The long distribution chain also increases the profit margin at the trader level, while the farmers' share of income is relatively small (Fauzi et al., 2023).

Farmers in Slelos also lack institutional support. Farmer institutions such as farmer groups or cooperatives have not functioned optimally as a means of strengthening farmers' bargaining position (Haryono et al., 2024). On the other hand, coordination between extension agencies, local governments, and market actors is still not integrated, even though it is recognised that strong institutions are essential for building marketing networks and improving farmer capacity (Yakin, Herlina, & Saputra, 2023).

Based on the above description, it is clear that improving access to capital, business management training, and strengthening structured extension services need to be intensified in this location (Arzani et al., 2025; Hasbi et al., 2025). In terms of technology, strengthening farmers' capacity through the application of

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and post-harvest processing in accordance with specialty coffee standards is a priority. Institutions such as village coffee cooperatives can help shorten the supply chain and strengthen farmers' bargaining position (Haryono et al., 2024). From an environmental perspective, the implementation of agroforestry systems and the use of organic fertilisers are important for maintaining land sustainability (Maga, 2010). From a social perspective, involving the younger generation through barista training, coffee entrepreneurship, and digital marketing can be a strategy for farmer regeneration (Febriani, 2025).

This article discusses the current conditions of coffee farmers in Slelos Village and recommends the types of facilities. This article discusses the current conditions of coffee farmers in Slelos Village and recommends the necessary forms of facilitation to improve their welfare. Thus, the expected long-term benefit of this article is an improvement in the lives of coffee farmers in the region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The productivity level of Robusta coffee in Slelos is relatively low compared to its agronomic potential. Farmer groups report that average coffee production is only around 600–800 kg of dried beans per hectare per year. This figure is still far below the optimal potential of Robusta, which can reach 1.5–2 tonnes per hectare (Suryana, Harianto, Syaikat, & Harmini, 2023). Factors contributing to this low productivity include the relatively old age of the plants, limited capital, lack of regular pruning, and minimal use of organic and inorganic fertilisers at the appropriate doses (Haryono, Juniarti, Matajat, Suroso, & Soesilo, 2024). In addition, most farmers still harvest simultaneously without sorting the fruit by ripeness, which results in inconsistent coffee bean quality (Hasbi et al., 2025).

In socio-economic terms, most coffee farmers in Slelos are smallholders with an average land area of less than one hectare, resulting in low incomes that are insufficient to meet their families' needs (Neilson, 2008). As a result, many farmers diversify their work, such as working as farm labourers, daily workers, or temporarily migrating to other areas to seek additional income (Fauzi et al., 2023). Coffee is clearly not yet a complete source of livelihood for local farmers (Ashardiono, 2024).

METHODOLOGY

The data for this article was obtained from observations made during extension activities and information gathered during those activities. The extension activities were conducted on 13 September 2025, in Slelos Village, Gangga District. The extension workers also conducted field observations of the condition of the plantations or coffee crops at the location (Babbie, 2004; Mosher & Kalton, 1985; Thomas, 1996), so that the strengths and weaknesses of the coffee plantations at the location could be identified. At the end of the extension session, a focus group discussion (FGD) was held (Kumar, 1993; McCracken, Pretty, & Conway, 1988) to gather information about the internal conditions of

the farmers' coffee farming businesses as well as the opportunities and threats to the coffee agribusiness in Slelos Village, Gangga Subdistrict, North Lombok Regency. The analysis was conducted thematically, identifying the conditions of farmers based on socio-economic, production, post-harvest, and institutional aspects. Descriptive analysis (Gartner, 2018; Sharda, Delen, & Turban, 2014) was conducted here, accompanied by an evaluation of existing conditions, so that recommendations could be made on what could be done to improve the existing conditions (Patton, 1990, 2002), particularly the lives of the coffee farming community in Slelos, North Lombok. The results of this activity are presented in the following section.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this activity and the discussion were presented in two parts, namely the conditions of the farmers. Then, from these conditions, the facilities needed by the coffee community in that location could be identified. Perhaps other regions could benefit from the results of this research activity.

Socio-Economic Conditions of Coffee Farmers in Slelos Village

Most of the people in Slelos Village depend on coffee farming for their livelihood. There are also cocoa and durian, among other crops, that serve as sources of income for farmers. These crops are cultivated or farmed in a mixed manner without clear boundaries, known as multiple cropping (Arondel & Girardin, 2000; Meynard, Dore, & Lucas, 2003; Sadras, Roget, & Krause, 2003; Sjah, 1998). However, their income is relatively low. The selling price of fresh coffee, which is still dependent on middlemen, weakens the bargaining position of farmers. This is in line with the findings of Neilson (Neilson, 2008) and Wirawan & Sukartini (Wirawan & Sukartini, 2022) that the coffee value chain in Indonesia is still dominated by middlemen, so that farmers only get a small share of the final value of the product.

Coffee Production Conditions

The area of coffee plantations in Slelos Village is relatively small, ranging from 0.25 to 1 hectare per family. Many of the coffee plants are old (15–20 years), so they are no longer very productive. Limited capital means that the use of fertilisers and production facilities is low. These conditions are similar to the findings of Wirawan & Sukartini (Wirawan & Sukartini, 2022), who stated that coffee farmers in North Lombok generally still rely on traditional cultivation practices with minimal inputs, resulting in low income from their crops.

Coffee Harvest and Post-Harvest Conditions

The majority of farmers sell coffee in the form of parchment or dried beans. Modern processing methods such as full washed or natural process are rarely carried out due to limited knowledge and facilities. Only a few people process coffee, and even then it is limited to local consumption in the form of ground coffee. This reduces the quality and selling value of coffee. However, according to Perfecto et al. (Perfecto, Vandermeer, Philpott, Soto-Pinto, & Dietsch, 2019),

proper post-harvest processing can increase prices by 30–40%. The low selling price of coffee was also confirmed by the coffee farmers who participated in the FGD at that time.

Institutional Conditions of Farmers

The institutional framework for farmers in Slelos Village remains weak. Farmer groups and cooperatives exist, but they have not yet optimised their collective functions in marketing, access to credit, or the procurement of production facilities. As a result, farmers continue to deal individually with middlemen. Almost all farmers ultimately act as individuals with low bargaining power, a condition that does not help in the development of their businesses.

Required Facilitation

Based on the conditions of farmers in Slelos Village, as described above, there are various types of facilitation required. This includes facilitation in terms of cultivation technology, post-harvest, institutional and capital, and finally the market. First, farmers need to improve their capacity. Well-planned training can improve farmers' knowledge and skills in coffee cultivation, processing and marketing. Training programmes can cover sustainable cultivation techniques, coffee tree pruning, organic fertilisation, and post-harvest techniques such as proper fermentation and drying. According to Mulyadi and Syaifullah (Mulyadi & Syaifullah, 2020), improving farmers' competence through technical training has a direct impact on coffee productivity and quality. In addition, participatory training that involves farmers as subjects of learning will increase ownership and sustainability of the programme (Chambers & Conway, 1992). Therefore, training must be sustainable and tailored to the local needs of the community (Rao & Rogers, 2006; Sjah, Cameron, & Woodford, 2001).

Secondly, increasing the capacity of coffee farmers also requires facilitating access to relevant technology. Technology in this context includes not only modern equipment, but also innovations in agricultural practices, processing and marketing. According to Rogers (Rogers, 1988), the adoption of innovation is greatly influenced by the availability of information and institutional support. In Slelos Village, for example, the introduction of drying technology using solar dryer domes or efficient hulling machines can improve efficiency and product quality. Technological facilitation also needs to be accompanied by technical assistance so that farmers are able to operate and maintain the equipment independently. Several findings show that technology transfer without strengthening user capacity is often unsustainable (Arboleya & Restaino, 2004; Fleischer, Waibel, & Walter-Echols, 2002; Van de Fliert, 2003; Waage, 1996).

Third, facilitating access to capital and microfinance. Capital is one of the main constraints for small coffee farmers in Slelos. Therefore, facilitating access to sources of capital such as microfinance institutions, farmer cooperatives, and the People's Business Credit (KUR) programme is very important. The availability of capital enables farmers to purchase production facilities, repair

equipment, and improve product quality. According to Ellis (Ellis, 2000), access to capital is a determining factor in the adoption of agricultural innovations and the improvement of farmers' welfare. Local governments and financial institutions need to facilitate low-interest credit schemes and mechanisms that are easily accessible to coffee farmers. Financial management assistance should also be provided so that farmers can manage their capital effectively and sustainably, thereby ensuring that the capital used has a positive impact on the lives of coffee farmers (P. Astuti, 2003; Budastra, 2001; Sjah, Cameron, & Russell, 2003, 2006).

Fourth, facilitate the strengthening of farmer institutions. Farmer institutions are an important forum for strengthening bargaining positions and developing collective enterprises. In Suelos, the strengthening of coffee farmer groups can focus on improving organisational governance, joint business management, and negotiation skills with buyers. According to Uphoff (Uphoff, 1992), the success of rural development is highly dependent on local institutional capacity. Facilitation can take the form of organisational management training, the establishment of producer cooperatives, or assistance with product certification such as Geographical Indication or Organic Certification. Strong institutions enable farmers to obtain better prices, access premium markets, and improve their bargaining position in the coffee value chain (P. H. Astuti & Hubeis, 2019).

Fifth, Facilitating Market Access and Product Promotion. In addition to improving technical and institutional capacity, Suelos coffee farmers also need assistance with marketing. This assistance includes product promotion support through exhibitions, digital platforms, and cooperation with coffee industry players such as roasters or cafes. An effective marketing strategy must be able to create value and build long-term relationships with consumers (Aaker, 2001; Aaker & Moorman, 2017; Kotler & Keller, 2016). Local governments and universities can play a role in helping farmers develop the Suelos coffee brand as a local product with a unique taste. A value chain development approach that connects farmers with downstream actors will strengthen the sustainability of the coffee business at the village level (Fauzi et al., 2023; Feller, Shunk, & Callarman, 2006; Widadie et al., 2025).

The last but not least important facilitation is continuous assistance and partnerships with various parties, such as research institutions, universities, the private sector, and local governments. Assistance is needed so that the results of training, technology, and institutions can continue to develop and adapt to market changes. The sustainability of rural livelihoods is highly dependent on mutually reinforcing multi-stakeholder collaboration (DBIK, 2004; Haryono et al., 2024). Through partnerships, Suelos coffee farmers can obtain technical guidance, innovation support, and broader market access. Support

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dependent on mutually reinforcing multi-stakeholder collaboration (DBIK, 2004; Haryono et al., 2024). Through partnerships, Suelos coffee farmers can obtain technical guidance, innovation support, and broader market access. This approach not only increases the capacity of individual farmers, but also strengthens the competitiveness of the Suelos coffee community at the regional level.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Coffee farmers in Suelos Village face serious challenges, particularly in terms of productivity, post-harvest quality, and market access. These conditions are exacerbated by weak institutions and limited capital. Therefore, integrated facilitation is needed in the form of crop rejuvenation, modern cultivation training, cooperative strengthening, access to financing, and marketing support based on local identity. With these measures, Suelos coffee has the potential to become one of the highly competitive icons of North Lombok Robusta coffee. Suelos coffee farmers are ultimately expected to achieve a better life in the future, free from hunger and poverty, several missions of the SDG (Sustainable Development Goals).

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Future research should focus on developing an integrated facilitation model that measures how technology adoption, institutional strengthening, and improved value-chain linkages can simultaneously enhance productivity and farmer welfare in Suelos Village. Studies should employ mixed methods, including impact evaluation and value-chain mapping, to identify the most effective interventions, while also exploring climate-crop dynamics and market certification opportunities to strengthen the competitiveness of Suelos Robusta coffee.

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