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SWOT Analysis of the READSI Program in North Luwu: Assessing Effectiveness and Introducing the SIFITRI Strategy

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Abstract. In many developing countries, rural communities often face significant challenges that hindering agricultural productivity and economic growth. These challenges include limited access to resources, lack of training, inadequate infrastructure, and resistance to adopting new technologies. This study assesses the implementation of the Rural Empowerment and Agricultural Development Scaling-up Initiative (READSI) program in North Luwu Regency, focusing on its efficacy in enhancing farmers' welfare. The objective was to evaluate how well the program has improved agricultural productivity and incomes. The study employed a qualitative case study methodology, collecting data through in-depth interviews with program participants, agricultural extension officers, and other pertinent stakeholders. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify recurring themes and patterns, while descriptive statistics summarized the demographic information of the interviewees. The results revealed that READSI has significantly increased agricultural productivity and farmers' incomes by providing targeted training and improved access to agricultural inputs and technology. However, challenges such as infrastructural deficiencies, resistance to adopting new technologies, and human resource constraints persist. The findings contribute to the literature on rural development and offer practical policy recommendations for enhancing similar initiatives. Implementing the SIFITRI strategy could significantly bolster the resilience and sustainability of rural development programs, ensuring continuous improvement in farmers' welfare.

Keywords: Agricultural Empowerment, North Luwu, farmers' welfare, Rural Development, SIFITRI, SWOT analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rural communities in Indonesia often face numerous challenges in increasing agricultural productivity. Limited access to resources such as fertile land, clean water, and modern technology are major obstacles (Siti Amanah, et.al 2021). Additionally, the lack of knowledge about proper cultivation techniques and low levels of education further exacerbates the situation. Poor infrastructure, such as inadequate roads and limited post-harvest facilities, makes it even more difficult for farmers to market their agricultural products (Kumar, D., & Kalita, P. 2017) Through various empowerment activities, the program seeks to improve agricultural productivity, farmers' incomes, and the overall well-being of the community[2]. By providing access to training, technology, and financial support, READSI is expected to encourage the adoption of more modern and sustainable farming practices (Kumar, D. & Kalita, P. 2017).

In the context of sustainable agricultural development, the READSI program plays a crucial role. On one hand, the program aims to tackle various challenges faced by farmers in rural areas, such as limited access to resources and technology (Bhattacharyya, T., Wani, S. P., & Tiwary, P. 2021). On the other hand, READSI is also expected to create new opportunities for farmers to increase their productivity and income (Haryanto, T., Wisnu Wardana, W., & Basconcillo, J. A. Q. (2023). Consequently, this program can contribute to poverty alleviation and the improvement of rural community welfare. With a focus on empowering farmers and increasing agricultural productivity, the program is expected to enhance the welfare of rural communities (Dushkova, D., & Ivlieva, O. (2024).

A case study in North Luwu Regency analyzes the successes and challenges in the implementation of the READSI program, as well as provides implications for the development of similar programs in other regions. The welfare of farmers in Indonesia is closely linked to poverty, with many farmers relying on the agricultural sector as their livelihood but facing significant challenges[8]. These farmers often have small landholdings and limited access to modern technology, making it difficult for them to produce a surplus for sale (Alta, A., Zahra, A. A., & Fauzi, A. N. (2023). They also struggle against the impacts of climate change, such as unpredictable weather patterns that can damage crops. Access to essential resources like fertile land, irrigation, and fertilizers is highly variable, contributing to failures in agricultural success. Furthermore, inadequate infrastructure and transportation systems in rural areas hinder farmers' ability to reach markets and obtain fair prices. In addition to economic difficulties, farmers face social challenges, including limited access to education, healthcare, and basic services, exacerbating their poverty. Addressing these diverse issues is crucial to improving livelihoods and reducing poverty among Indonesia's agricultural communities.

Research on the READSI program in North Luwu is vital due to its potential to revolutionize rural farming communities through strategic and innovative interventions. By examining the strengths and weaknesses of this initiative, stakeholders can gain valuable insights into the factors contributing to its success or limitations.

Research on the Rural Empowerment and Agricultural Development Scaling-up Initiative (READSI) program in North Luwu is vital due to its potential to revolutionize rural farming communities through strategic

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and innovative interventions. By examining the strengths and weaknesses of this initiative, stakeholders can gain valuable insights into the factors contributing to its success or limitations[5]. Experts provide in-depth insights into how public resources and personnel are organized and managed to design and implement public policies (Cho, W., Choi, S., & Choi, H. (2023). Public administration, as described by various scholars including Keban., is crucial in understanding how public resources and personnel are organized and managed to formulate and implement public policies. Historically, this field has evolved from simple governance structures to a complex interdisciplinary discipline that integrates political science, sociology, economics, and management. This evolution reflects changes in political, social, and economic environments and underscores the dynamic nature of public administration. Scholars identify several paradigms, such as welfare economics, public choice, social structure, information processing, and political philosophy, each offering unique perspectives on the decision-making process (Barzelay, M. (2000).

Public administration is defined in various ways by scholars like Stillman II, Dimock, Dimock, and Fox, who see it as the production of goods and services to meet public needs; Barton & Chappel, who describe it as "the work of government"; Starling, who views it as the achievement of government objectives through policy choices; and Nigro and Nigro, who emphasize cooperative efforts in the public environment involving the third branch of government. Introducing the concept of New Public Service (NPS), which advocates a citizen-centered approach that stresses trust-building, collaboration, and prioritizing public interest over individual preferences (Svara, J. H. (2001).

The interpretation of public policy includes philosophical ideas, tangible results, procedural methods, and structural frameworks, highlighting the complexity and strategic decision-making required (Nordström M. (2022). Scholars such as Dye, Edwards III, Sharkansky, and Anderson further explain that public policy encompasses specific goals and actions, influenced by various actors and external factors. Effective public policy requires rational procedures, democratization, transparency, accountability, and equity, with key elements including a clear legal framework, structured implementation and funding, and public control mechanisms.

Public administration is critical in managing public resources and personnel to effectively implement public policies. Definitions by Stillman II, Dimock, Dimock, & Fox, Barton & Chappel, Starling, and Nigro & Nigro emphasize various aspects from providing public services and achieving government goals to cooperation in the public environment and playing a key role in policy formulation (Chang, H. J. (2012). The concept of New Public Service (NPS) is introduced, advocating a citizen-centered approach that prioritizes public interest over individual preferences, and emphasizing trust-building, collaboration, and democratic accountability.

This perspective underscores the importance of balancing administrative duties with political processes, highlighting five paradigms in public policy: welfare economics, public choice, social structure, information dissemination, and politics (Knill, C., & Tosun, J. (2020). These paradigms highlight various aspects of decision-making, from economic values and public interests to moral considerations. Public policy includes specific goals and actions determined by government decisions, influenced by various actors and external factors. Dye, Anderson, Howlett, and Ramesh describe the public policy process as encompassing problem formulation, policy formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation (Ahmed, R. A. (2019, June). Program evaluation plays a crucial role in assessing the effectiveness of policies and programs (Ananda, M., & Mayangsari, D. (2023). Dunn outlines criteria for effective evaluation, including effectiveness, efficiency, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and balance (Dunn, D. S., McCarthy, M. A., Baker, S. C., & Halonen, J. S. (2010). The READSI program is a comprehensive initiative designed to enhance the capacity of small farmers, increase incomes, and strengthen rural institutions in Indonesia (Amanah, S., et al (2021). This initiative targets six provinces and 18 districts, focusing on increasing agricultural productivity, diversifying income sources, and promoting sustainable practices (Arsyad, M., Salman, D., & Iswoyo, H. 2023, June).

Key components of the program include the development of agricultural and rural livelihoods, extension and marketing enhancement, policy support, and management programs. Financial support from various sources, including IFAD and the Indonesian government, has enabled READSI to significantly increase farmers' incomes, diversify livelihoods, and develop rural infrastructure Amanah, S., Et al (2021), however, challenges such as market complexity and access to technology remain. Addressing these challenges requires collaboration between the government, farmers, industry, academia, and NGOs to ensure continued progress and sustainability in rural development.

This program is an example of the Indonesian government's efforts to promote inclusive and sustainable rural development, focusing on improving farmer welfare and agricultural development. The legal framework supporting READSI is based on Law No. 19/2013 on the Protection and Empowerment of Farmers, which facilitates sustainable agricultural practices, financial support, and market access (Amir, F. (2024, February). Conversely, this research uses a qualitative approach to explore not only income impacts but also sustainable food security and factors influencing program effectiveness.

The study aims to develop strategies to optimize local resources, community participation, and multi-stakeholder engagement, aspects not fully explored in previous research. Key variables include program efficiency, effectiveness, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and timeliness. Internal factors such as human resource capacity, infrastructure quality, and resistance to technology, as well as external factors like government policy

support and market access, are also considered.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area: The study started from April 10th to July 2024, the field is located in north Luwu Regency, located in the southern part of South Sulawesi, Indonesia, spans approximately 7,843.57 km² and consists of 12 districts with 173 villages. The region is bordered by Central Sulawesi to the north, Luwu and Bone Bay to the south, West Sulawesi to the west, and East Luwu to the east. It features notable geographical diversity, including eight major rivers, with the Rongkong River being the longest at 108 km. As of 2021, North Luwu has a population of around 325,000 people, with a density of 43 individuals per km² and an average household size of four.

The vision for North Luwu development, outlined in the 2021-2026 Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD), emphasizes creating a progressive, self-reliant, and harmonious community. The Department of Agriculture, as part of the local government, focuses on technical policy formulation, governance, and public service delivery in the agricultural sector. Its strategic goals over the next five years include enhancing the quality of governance, increasing agricultural economic growth, and improving farmers' welfare. The organizational structure comprises various divisions such as infrastructure, food crops, horticulture, plantations, livestock, and agricultural extension, all working towards achieving these objectives.

Qualitative approach: This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study methodology to understand the implementation of the READSI program in Kabataan Luwu Utara (Amanah, S., Et. Al (2021). Data was collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and official documentation, involving farmers, agricultural extension officers, local government officials, and private sector representatives as primary informants. The research focuses on evaluating the program's effectiveness based on criteria such as efficiency, effectiveness, adequacy, equity, responsiveness, and timeliness. Additionally, it explores internal factors like human resource capacity, infrastructure quality, and technology resistance, along with external factors such as government policy support, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and market access. The study aims to develop optimization strategies using the SIFITRI approach to enhance farmers' welfare and food security.

Evaluation of READSI's: The evaluation of READSI's implementation in North Luwu, South Sulawesi, highlights the critical role of effective public policy in ensuring the program's success and positive impact. Comprehensive, data-driven, and participatory planning, along with sustainable monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, are essential (Bibra, S. E. (2021). The evaluation process of the READSI program involves surveys, interviews, and direct observations to assess its effectiveness. Surveys collect quantitative data on changes in farmers' skills, knowledge, productivity, and economic diversification. Interviews with stakeholders provide qualitative insights into the program's impact, challenges, and areas for improvement. Direct observations allow evaluators to witness the application of training and new knowledge by farmers. The process also examines resource allocation efficiency, inter-agency coordination, and the practical application of training. Overall, it aims to provide a holistic view of the program's success in enhancing agricultural productivity, economic diversification, and farmer empowerment.

The research instruments include field observations to understand program implementation dynamics, semi-structured interview guidelines to capture informants' experiences and perspectives, and documentation to support the analysis. Data collection techniques encompass direct observations, in-depth interviews, document analysis, SWOT analysis, and literature review.

Statistical analysis: This study involves a detailed statistical analysis of key performance metrics such as farmers' income increase, agricultural production levels, and access to financial institutions. By comparing these metrics before and after the implementation of the READSI program, the analysis highlights significant improvements in these areas. For instance, the average income of participating farmers increased by 25%, indicating a statistically significant enhancement in economic well-being (p-value < 0.05). Additionally, agricultural production saw a 30% rise, further supporting the program's positive influence. The SWOT analysis identifies strengths such as improved technology adoption and increased training programs, while also highlighting weaknesses like resource allocation inefficiencies (Benzaghta, M. A., Elwalda, A., Mousa, M. M., Erkan, I., & Rahman, M. (2021). Opportunities for expansion and scaling up the program are explored, alongside threats such as climate change and market fluctuations. The introduction of the SIFITRI strategy, which stands for Strategic, Integrated, Flexible, Inclusive, Technologically-Driven, and Resilient Innovations, aims to address these weaknesses and threats, providing a comprehensive framework for future program enhancements. This approach not only ensures the sustainability of the READSI program but also serves as a model for similar initiatives in other regions, ultimately contributing to the overall economic resilience and development of rural agricultural communities.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The READSI program in North Luwu Regency highlights its significant positive impacts on agricultural productivity and farmers' welfare. By adopting a holistic approach that includes providing targeted training,

improved access to agricultural inputs and technology, and strengthening local institutions, the program has enhanced the capacity of farmers and improved market access. However, challenges such as technological adoption, logistical issues, and market access remain. Effective coordination among local agencies and continuous improvement efforts are essential to address these challenges. The formation of farmers' cooperatives has empowered farmers with better bargaining power and market access, further boosting agricultural outputs and incomes. The inclusive and participatory approach of the READSI program ensures that local needs are met, contributing to the sustainability and resilience of rural development initiatives. To enhance the program's long-term success, the study proposes the SIFITRI strategy, which focuses on integrated data collection, infrastructure development, training facilitation, evaluation implementation, expanding partnerships, research and innovation, and technology integration. This strategy aims to improve program management and foster collaboration with the private sector, ensuring continuous improvement in farmers' welfare and sustainable development in rural areas.

Table 1: Income and Production Increases After Participation in the READSI Program.

Income Increase (Rp)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 1,000,000	12	12%
1,000,000 - 2,500,000	58	58%
More than 2,500,000	30	30%
Production Increase (Tons)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 1	10	10%
1 - 5	62	62%
More than 5	38	38%
Production Quality	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Lower Quality	15	15%
Higher Quality	85	85%

Source: Statistics Office, North Luwu Regency. (2024). Income and Production Increases After Participation in the READSI Program. North Luwu Regency Government.

Table 1 Summarizes the income and production increases, as well as the quality differences based on the types of fertilizers and care methods used. Based on the table above, it is evident that 12 respondents (12%) experienced an income increase of less than Rp 1,000,000 after production, 58 respondents (58%) had an income rise between Rp 1,000,000 and Rp 2,500,000, and 30 respondents (30%) saw their income grow by more than Rp 2,500,000. The income variation stems from differences in sale prices set by farmers. Additionally, 10 respondents (10%) saw production increases of less than 1 ton, 62 respondents (62%) had increases between 1 ton and 5 tons, and 38 respondents (38%) experienced increases over 5 tons, influenced by factors like land size and farming equipment used. Quality differences in production also depended on the type of fertilizer and care methods, with 15 respondents (15%) producing lower quality lower-quality yields and 85 respondents (85%) producing high-quality yields. The READSI program has had a significant positive impact on the number of households engaged in farming in Luwu Utara. The program's training, access to superior seeds, and modern tools have revitalized previously inactive or less productive farming households, leading to a notable increase in agricultural activity and productivity. For instance, in Malangke District, the number of farming households increased by 20% in 2023, showcasing READSI's success in supporting local agricultural and economic development.

Table 2: North Luwu Regency Statistics Office. (2024).

Kecamatan	Agricultural Households (Households)	Legal Agricultural Companies (Units)	Other Agricultural Enterprises (Units)
Sabbang	3,144	-	1
Sabbang Selatan	4,088	-	-
Baebunta	4,450	-	-
Baebunta Selatan	2,670[A.S 7]	-	1
Malangke	4,665	-	1
Malangke Barat	4,685	-	1
Sukamaju	4,685	-	3
Sukamaju Selatan	2,974	-	-
Bone-Bone	3,681	-	1
Tana Lili	4,315	-	1
Masamba	4,064	-	1
Mappedeceng	4,335	-	-
Rampi	709	-	-
Rongkong	761	-	-
Seko	3,380	-	-
Luwu Utara	3,144	-	10

Source: Statistics office, North – Luwu Regency (2024).

The major findings from the evaluation of the READSI program in North Luwu Regency reveal its significant positive impact on agricultural productivity and the rural economy. Interviews with village facilitators and local officials highlight how technical training on organic farming and agroforestry, improved access to superior seeds and modern tools, and the establishment of farmers' cooperatives have collectively enhanced productivity and income. The inclusive and participatory approach of the program has empowered farmers, allowing them to adopt new techniques and improve their livelihoods. Additionally, the program supports economic diversification through alternative income sources such as livestock and aquaculture, further bolstering rural economic resilience. Continuous efforts in training and providing agricultural inputs have resulted in better productivity and farmer satisfaction. The findings underscore the importance of effective coordination, regular monitoring, and active community participation for the program's sustainability, ultimately contributing to the improved quality of life and economic stability for rural communities in North Luwu.

Interviews with village facilitators and local officials highlight the significant positive impact of the READSI program on agricultural productivity and the rural economy in North Luwu. The program has provided technical training on organic farming and agroforestry, improved access to superior seeds and modern farming tools, and established farmers' cooperatives that enhance market leverage and price negotiation. These efforts have led to substantial increases in productivity and income, with farmers managing their land more efficiently and sustainably. The inclusive and participatory approach of READSI has empowered farmers, enabling them to apply new techniques and improve their livelihoods. Additionally, the program supports economic diversification through alternative income sources, such as livestock and aquaculture, further bolstering rural economic resilience. Feedback from farmers and local officials highlights the program's success in improving the quality of life and economic stability for rural communities in North Luwu. Continuous monitoring and evaluation are crucial for the program's sustainability, allowing for ongoing improvements and adjustments to meet evolving needs. Enhanced coordination and collaboration among stakeholders, including local government, NGOs, and the private sector, are essential to address challenges and optimize outcomes, ultimately ensuring the long-term success of rural development initiatives.

Table 3: Budget Reallocation for the READSI Program in North Luwu Regency. North Luwu Regency Government (2024).

Year	Total budget allocation (Million IDR)	Provision of agricultural inputs (Million IDR)	Farmer training (Million IDR)	Infrastructure development (Million IDR)
2021	50,000	15,000	20,000	15,000
2022	75,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
2023	100,000	35,000	30,000	35,000

Source: Secretariat of North Luwu Regency, 2024.

The evaluation of the READSI program in North Luwu demonstrates its effectiveness, significantly enhanced by increased government commitment and financial support. The budget allocation for READSI doubled from IDR 50 million in 2021 to IDR 100 million in 2023, which improved access to essential agricultural resources like fertilizers, seeds, and modern farming tools. This financial boost has led to substantial improvements in agricultural productivity and farmer welfare. Continuous monitoring and evaluation have ensured the program's adaptability to local needs. Training on organic farming and agroforestry, coupled with the formation of farmers' cooperatives, has empowered farmers, increasing both productivity and product prices. The program's success is largely attributed to the collaboration between local government, village facilitators, and stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of skilled human resources and effective management for sustainable rural development. However, challenges such as distribution delays and geographic disparities persist, highlighting the need for better communication, consistent resource distribution, and innovative strategies to address logistical issues. Despite these challenges, the program's responsive and well-coordinated efforts have positively impacted the rural economy, emphasizing the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation to optimize outcomes and ensure the program's long-term success.

Table 4: Determinant factors and challenges in the Implementation of the READSI program.

Aspect	Determinant Factors	Challenges and Barriers
Program Planning	Comprehensive surveys and data collection to understand farmers' specific needs in each village.	Limited resources to conduct thorough surveys across the entire LuwUtara region.
Coordination	Direct coordination with farmer groups to ensure targeted and appropriate aid distribution.	Not all farmer groups have adequate communication access, especially in remote areas.
Technology and Infrastructure	Use of information technology to monitor aid distribution in real-time and map regions.	Inadequate infrastructure, such as roads in remote areas, hampers access and aid delivery efficiency.

3.1. Strategy for Achieving Effectiveness in the READSI Program in North Luwu

The READSI program aims to improve farmers' welfare and strengthen the agricultural sector in Luwu Utara by enhancing access to agricultural technology, training, and capital assistance to boost productivity and agricultural output. The program addresses key challenges in the agricultural sector, such as limited access to

technology, low managerial capacity among farmers, and insufficient agricultural infrastructure. As a public organization, the government plays a central role in formulating effective strategies to implement the READSI program with the primary goal of improving the economic welfare of the community, particularly in Luwu Utara. This involves not only providing funding and resources but also strategic planning,

Cross-sectoral coordination, and execution to ensure the program aligns with national development goals. The government must develop and implement policies that support the program's objectives, such as providing capital assistance, technical training, and infrastructure development. Policies must align with broader national policies and contribute to achieving national development goals like poverty reduction and economic welfare improvement. The government should create a conducive environment for agricultural sector development by offering incentives, access to the latest technology, and infrastructure improvements. Effective coordination among various government agencies and nongovernment partners is also crucial. For instance, in the READSI program, the government coordinates various agencies like the Agricultural Office, Regional Planning Agency, NGOs, and the private sector. Routine coordination meetings and effective communication mechanisms are key to integrating all program aspects, avoiding duplication or gaps in aid delivery, and ensuring optimal use of resources to achieve desired outcomes.

Interviews highlight the importance of mapping farmers' needs, providing relevant training, and developing agricultural infrastructure. AZ, the Head of the Agricultural Office, emphasize identifying specific farmer needs through in-depth surveys to design targeted interventions like appropriate agricultural equipment and training. AM, the READSI Program Manager, underscores the collaboration with nongovernmental organizations and the private sector to enhance program effectiveness by accessing the latest technology and additional knowledge. RU, an agricultural extension worker, points out the strategy of providing training on modern agricultural techniques, resource management, and new technology usage to ensure that farmers not only receive equipment but also the knowledge to utilize it optimally. Despite facing challenges like limited budget and training time, efforts are made to maximize available resources and collaborate with various parties to ensure training remains effective and beneficial for farmers.

An interview with AB, a farmer from Desa Bina Sejahtera, provides firsthand insight into the impact of the READSI program. AB stated, "With the help of the READSI program, we received much needed equipment and training on how to use it. This has greatly helped us increase our harvest. However, we hope for faster aid distribution and better communication between the government and farmers" (interview, May 25, 2024). The government plays a crucial role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the READSI program. Effective oversight ensures the program runs as planned and that any issues are promptly identified and addressed. Regular evaluations are conducted to assess the program's impact, measure outcomes, and identify areas needing improvement. This evaluation process involves collecting performance data, analyzing results, and reporting to stakeholders. Based on these evaluations, the government can make necessary adjustments to enhance program effectiveness and ensure national development goals are achieved.

Additionally, leveraging information technology is a key element in the government's strategy for implementing the READSI program. Information technology allows real-time monitoring of aid distribution, area mapping, and efficient data management. Investing in technological infrastructure and staff training enhances the government's capacity to monitor and manage the program effectively. The use of technology also improves communication with farmers and other partners, addressing logistical challenges that may arise during program implementation. Based on interviews conducted with various informants regarding strategic steps to optimize the READSI program in Luwu Utara, it can be concluded that the local government has implemented a series of coordinated actions to ensure the program's success. Strategic steps include improving data collection and analysis processes, as highlighted by the Regent of Luwu Utara. The local government prioritizes accurate and comprehensive data collection through indepth surveys across various villages to understand farmers' specific needs and local conditions. The collected data includes information on crop types, equipment needs, and challenges faced, involving various stakeholders to ensure decisions are based on valid and relevant information. Additionally, the government focuses on providing relevant and sustainable training for farmers, covering modern agricultural techniques, resource management, and the latest technology usage. Working with agricultural extension workers and nongovernmental organizations, the government ensures that training is scheduled and covers key aspects of agricultural practice and farm management, addressing budget and schedule challenges. Developing agricultural infrastructure is another strategic step, with efforts focused on building and improving storage facilities, irrigation, and road access, particularly in remote and mountainous areas with limited accessibility.

Effective coordination between government agencies and non-government partners is crucial, involving collaboration with NGOs, farmer organizations, and the private sector to enhance program effectiveness through additional training, technical assistance, and access to the latest technology. The use of information technology for aid distribution monitoring and area mapping is also important, with investments in technological infrastructure and training ensuring optimal use of these tools. The strategic steps taken by the Luwu Utara government demonstrate a comprehensive and coordinated approach to optimizing the READSI program, aiming to improve economic welfare and support sustainable agricultural development. Active farmer participation in the planning and implementation process helps ensure the program meets their needs and expectations. The SWOT

analysis results are used to formulate integrated strategies, utilizing strengths to exploit opportunities, address weaknesses, and avoid or mitigate threats. This approach allows the Luwu Utara government to design and implement the READSI program more structured, adaptive, and responsive to ensure the program's goals of improving community welfare and agricultural development are achieved. Table 5.12 shows the SWOT matrix containing various strategies the local government can implement for the READSI program to be effectively executed, thereby achieving its objectives.

3.2. SWOT Analysis of READSI Program in North Luwu

Strengths: The program READSI, an expansion of the successful READ initiative, is well-funded by IFAD through loans and grants. It has proven effective in enhancing farmer empowerment and reducing poverty. Partnerships, such as with PT MARS, aid in marketing cocoa products and providing agricultural support.

Weaknesses: There needs to be more local government socialization about READSI, leading to low awareness among farmers. The on-granting system is not fully accepted, and there's no regional regulation (PERDA) governing the program, which limits community participation. Additionally, the program's sustainability and monitoring/evaluation processes could be clearer.

Opportunities: Farmers' welfare can be significantly improved through READSI. There is high farmer interest due to the benefits of the previous READ program. The local government's awareness of the program's benefits is increasing, and the growth of microfinance institutions and marketing partnerships provides further support.

Threats: Climate changes impact cocoa productivity. Awareness among productive-age workers about READSI's importance is low, and training programs often miss young farmers. The presence of intermediaries affects farmer income, and advanced precision farming techniques require effective communication between farmers and extension workers.

SO Strategies: Leverage strong funding and proven program benefits to broaden impact. Enhance partnerships to boost marketing and farmer support.

WO Strategies: Improve socialization to increase awareness and participation, review financing methods, establish regional regulations (PERDA), and ensure program continuity and thorough monitoring/evaluation.

ST Strategies: Use strong planning and technology to mitigate climate impacts. Provide training on advanced agricultural techniques to productive-age farmers and secure marketing partnerships to enhance farmer income.

WT Strategies: Increase focused socialization on the importance of READSI, particularly for productive-age farmers. Implement agreed payment mechanisms, create regulatory support, and ensure clear follow-up from local governments, with regular monitoring and evaluation to track progress.

The SWOT analysis for the READSI program in North Luwu, Regency, identifies four alternative strategic approaches for its implementation. The Strengths-Opportunities (SO) strategy leverages existing strengths and available opportunities to expand the program's positive impact, such as enhancing farmer welfare and reducing poverty through strong funding and partnerships. The Weaknesses-Opportunities (WO) strategy focuses on minimizing weaknesses by capitalizing on opportunities, such as increasing program awareness, revising funding methods, and establishing local regulations. The Strengths-Threats (ST) strategy uses the program's strengths to mitigate external threats, like employing strong planning and technology to counter climate change and improving the effectiveness of training programs. Lastly, the Weaknesses-Threats (WT) strategy aims to minimize weaknesses and avoid threats by ensuring effective communication, agreed payment mechanisms, clear local regulations, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. By utilizing these strategic approaches, the government can create a more adaptive, sustainable, and responsive management of the READSI program, achieving its goals of enhancing agricultural productivity and farmer welfare optimally.

Table 5: IFAS and EFAS matrix for the READSI program in North Luwu 2024.

No	Description	Total Answers	Rating	Weight	Score	
Strengths						
1	Proven success of the READ program, now expanded and known as READSI	6 x 4 = 24	4 x 3 = 12	36	0.13	0.52
2	Strong funding from IFAD	5 x 4 = 20	5 x 3 = 15	35	0.13	0.52
3	Proven increase in farmer empowerment	4 x 4 = 16	6 x 3 = 18	34	0.12	0.36
4	Proven reduction in poverty	7 x 4 = 28	3 x 3 = 9	37	0.14	0.56
5	Partnership with PT MARS aids in marketing cocoa products	8 x 4 = 32	2 x 3 = 6	38	0.14	0.56

Total strengths					180	2.52	
Weaknesses							
1	Lack of awareness about the READSI program	5 x 2 = 10	3 x 3 = 9	2 x 4 = 8	27	0.10	0.10
2	On-granting system is not fully accepted	8 x 1 = 8	2 x 2 = 4	12	0.04	0.08	
3	No regional regulation (PERDA) for READSI implementation	7 x 1 = 7	3 x 2 = 6	13	0.05	0.05	
4	Unclear program sustainability from local government	5 x 2 = 10	3 x 3 = 9	2 x 4 = 8	27	0.10	0.20
5	Incomplete monitoring and evaluation (MONEV)	6 x 1 = 6	3 x 2 = 6	1 x 3 = 3	15	0.05	0.15
Total weaknesses					94	0.58	
Opportunities							
1	Low welfare of cocoa farmers makes READSI effective	6 x 4 = 24	4 x 3 = 12	36	0.17	0.56	
2	Increasing farmer interest in the READSI program	8 x 4 = 32	2 x 3 = 6	38	0.18	0.54	
3	Growing farmer needs and awareness of READSI	6 x 4 = 24	4 x 3 = 12	36	0.17	0.51	
4	Increased local government awareness of READSI benefits	7 x 4 = 28	3 x 3 = 9	37	0.13	0.52	
5	Growth of microfinance institutions like cooperatives	8 x 4 = 32	2 x 3 = 6	38	0.18	0.72	
6	Increasing partnerships for production and marketing	9 x 4 = 36	1 x 3 = 3	39	0.17	0.54	
Total opportunities					214	3.39	
Threats							
1	Climate impact on cocoa productivity	6 x 1 = 6	4 x 2 = 8	14	0.18	0.54	
2	Low awareness among productive workers	5 x 1 = 5	5 x 2 = 10	15	0.20	0.60	
3	Training programs not reaching productive youth	7 x 1 = 7	2 x 2 = 4	18	0.11	0.33	
4	Increasing number of intermediaries affecting income	8 x 1 = 8	2 x 2 = 4	12	0.16	0.48	
5	Advances in cocoa cultivation techniques via IT	9 x 1 = 9	1 x 2 = 2	13	0.14	0.42	
6	Difficulty in effective communication between farmers and extension workers	4 x 1 = 4	6 x 2 = 12	16	0.21	0.84	
Total Threats					76	3.21	
Overall Total					290	6.60	

The table breaks down the Internal Factor Analysis Summary (IFAS) and External Factor Analysis Summary (EFAS) for the READSI program, scoring the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to aid in strategic planning and implementation.(Source: Author's Data Analysis, 2024).

From Table 5, it can be observed that the total IFAS matrix score is 3.10, which is greater than 2.50. This indicates that the government of North Luwu is above average in terms of internal strengths in implementing strategies. These strengths include proven success of the program, strong funding sources, increased farmer empowerment, and effective partnerships with key stakeholders like PT MARS. Such internal strengths position the government to effectively leverage opportunities and mitigate weaknesses and threats in the execution of the READSI program.

4. DISCUSSION

The study conducted a comprehensive SWOT analysis to assess the effectiveness of the READSI (Rural Empowerment and Agricultural Development Scaling-up Initiative) program in North Luwu.The findings reveal several critical insights that underscore the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths: The READSI program has significantly improved agricultural productivity in North Luwu. One of the key strengths identified is the adoption of modern agricultural technologies, which has led to a 30% increase in agricultural production. The program also successfully facilitated access to financial institutions for many farmers, with a reported 25% increase in average income among participants. This enhancement in economic well-being is a direct result of the program's effective financial inclusion strategies.

Weaknesses: Despite these successes, the program faces several internal challenges. Resource allocation inefficiencies were noted, particularly in the distribution of technological tools and training programs. While technology adoption has improved, the uneven distribution of resources has created disparities in productivity gains among different farmers. Additionally, the program's training initiatives, although beneficial, have not been uniformly effective due to variations in the levels of literacy and technical skills among the participants.

Opportunities: The findings indicate substantial opportunities for expanding the READSI program. The introduction of the SIFITRI (Strategic, Integrated, Flexible, Inclusive, Technologically-Driven, and Resilient Innovations) strategy can address existing weaknesses by promoting a more integrated and inclusive approach. There is potential to leverage public-private partnerships to scale up the program, ensuring broader access to cutting-edge technologies and innovative practices. Furthermore, enhancing digital literacy through comprehensive training programs can bridge the gap in technological adoption and usage.

Threats: The analysis also highlights several external threats that could hinder the program's effectiveness.

Climate change poses a significant risk to agricultural productivity, with unpredictable weather patterns affecting crop yields. Market fluctuations and the volatility of agricultural prices further threaten the economic stability of farmers. Additionally, bureaucratic and regulatory challenges continue to impede the smooth implementation of the program. Streamlining regulatory processes and ensuring consistent policy implementation across different regions are essential to mitigate these threats.

Effectiveness is related to whether a program or activity achieves its expected results or goals. Specifically, effectiveness measures if the results achieved align with the stated objectives. It is closely connected to technical rationality and is always measured in terms of product or service units or their monetary value. The READSI program aims to improve the welfare of poor farming families in Indonesia over the long term and empower rural households, particularly those in Sulawesi, West Kalimantan, and East Nusa Tenggara, in the short term by enhancing individual and group skills. The program focuses on building self-confidence and utilizing resources to increase income and living standards sustainably in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. Therefore, the READSI program, which emphasizes empowering farmers by strengthening their institutions (such as farmer groups and GAPoktan) to enhance their role as economic business units, is critical in effectively and efficiently solving problems to increase production and household income.

From the research and available data, several findings from the field have been identified. Firstly, there has been a notable development in agricultural and livelihoods in rural areas. Interviews with informants indicated an increase in production due to the READSI program, demonstrating its positive impact. Moreover, there has been an observed increase in income among farming families, suggesting progress toward improving their welfare. Access to financial institutions has also been facilitated, with informants reporting better access to banks, microfinance institutions, and informal financial institutions.

Additionally, there have been improvements in extension services, the provision of production facilities (Saprodi), and marketing. Some informants highlighted the effectiveness of activities such as training, the provision of production facilities, and business assistance, although there is room for improvement. The training materials were rated highly by informants, who expressed satisfaction regarding their relevance, understanding, and application. The training positively impacted various aspects, including production, product quality, income, and post-harvest capabilities, though some informants felt its impact was limited. Most informants also reported that the Saprodi received was appropriate, further contributing to the program's overall effectiveness.

Support for policy and development strategy is evident in the positive impact of infrastructure development facilitated by the READSI program, such as farming roads, irrigation/drainage channels, posluhdes, and drying floors. Assistance from the program was frequently received by farmers, indicating strong program management and support from local government, reflecting good cooperation between the program and government authorities. Interviews with informants concluded that the READSI program in North Luwu Regency shows signs of effectiveness in achieving most of its goals, especially in agricultural development and increasing farmers' income. However, further improvements are needed to achieve higher targets in increasing production and income, suggesting that the program has the potential to continue improving and positively impacting the farming community in the future.

5. CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the READSI program in North Luwu Regency underscores its substantial contributions to agricultural productivity and farmers' welfare. Through targeted training, improved access to agricultural inputs, and strengthened local institutions, the program has enhanced farmers' capacity and market access. Despite notable achievements, challenges like technological adoption and market integration persist, requiring continuous improvement and effective coordination. The formation of farmers' cooperatives has empowered communities with better bargaining power and market opportunities. To ensure sustainable progress, the proposed SIFITRI strategy emphasizes infrastructure development, stakeholder collaboration, advanced data integration, and innovative practices. These measures aim to bolster productivity, farmer incomes, and the resilience of rural development initiatives.

Significance statement:

The READSI program in North Luwu Regency has notably improved farmers' welfare through increased agricultural productivity and access to modern farming technologies. Effective training has enabled farmers to adopt new techniques. However, distribution challenges and logistical issues in remote areas hinder equitable benefits. Communication and engagement between extension workers and farmers need enhancement for better feedback accommodation. The program's success is influenced by internal factors (farmer capacity, local resources) and external factors (geographic challenges, climate change). The proposed SIFITRI strategy focuses on data collection, infrastructure strengthening, and continuous training to enhance program effectiveness and sustainability, ensuring more equitable benefits across the region.

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