

Become a Successful Agricultural Entrepreneur Through the Support Programs for Youth in Indonesia

Siti Nurlaela^{1*}, Salsadila Panicara², Dicky Mustofa³, Hanum Sasilia⁴

¹⁻⁴Politeknik Pembangunan Pertanian Yogyakarta Magelang, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: nurlaela77yk@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Farmer regeneration is a strategic response to the agrarian crisis in Indonesia, where youth participation in agriculture remains limited. To address this challenge, the Ministry of Agriculture introduced the Young Agricultural Entrepreneurial Development Program (PWMP), which provides capital assistance to young farmers. Despite its potential, the program's sustainability has been questioned, requiring empirical evaluation. This study employed a quantitative approach to analyze business characteristics, challenges, turnover, networking practices, and sustainability prospects of PWMP beneficiaries. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 100 participants, with 73 valid responses obtained between November and December 2024 across several provinces. Findings show that most PWMP-supported enterprises are on-farm businesses (53%), with an average duration of 3.7 years, and are concentrated in Central Java. Major constraints include high dropout rates due to alternative employment choices (48%), low turnover with 44% reporting earnings below IDR 2,000,000, and limited collaboration, as 57% lack business partners. Nevertheless, 52% of enterprises demonstrate potential for sustainability. The study concludes that PWMP has engaged youth in agricultural entrepreneurship but faces structural and managerial challenges. Strengthening the program through mentorship by successful agricultural entrepreneurs is recommended to enhance knowledge transfer, resilience, and long-term viability of youth-led agribusinesses.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, farmer regeneration, PWMP, young farmer

INTRODUCTION

The agricultural sector plays an important role in contributing to state revenue. The agricultural business field in broad (including forestry and fisheries) fisheries ranks second with an average annual contribution of 13.02% to Indonesia's GDP, with a narrow agricultural contribution of 9.67% [1]. Given the importance of the agricultural sector in development in Indonesia, the regeneration of farmers is one of the keys to the sustainability of agricultural development. However, currently, most young people are not interested in working in the agricultural sector. The

reluctance of the younger generation to work in the agricultural sector is a significant problem and is related to the increasing lack of young farmers.

Farmer regeneration is a crucial issue in ensuring the future sustainability of the food production sector. Concerns about the regeneration of farmers are happening not only in Indonesia but also in the entire world. There needs to be several approaches related to farmer regeneration, both from the community and from government support. There are three models of succession or regeneration from society, namely, the independent

model, the parent facilitation model, and the parent grant model. [2]. Meanwhile, programs from the government are also an essential approach because this condition urgently requires program intervention from the government, as well as financial support, training, and business ecosystems that support the emergence of youth farmers.

Similar programs are also carried out in various countries. In Afrika, there is the Farmer Regeneration Program (FMNR), which aims to restore degraded land and increase agricultural productivity. The program has been widely implemented in many regions, particularly in Africa, and has demonstrated significant environmental and socioeconomic benefits, while similar programs in Europe are also Adequate generational renewal is an important contributor to resilient and sustainable agricultural systems [3]–[6]. Indonesia has made several efforts to increase youth interest in the agricultural sector [7]. One of the government's programs to increase the interest of young people in becoming farmers is the Young Agricultural Entrepreneurial Development Program (PWMP). The Agricultural Young Entrepreneurial Development Program (PWMP) is one of the government's efforts to encourage the younger generation, especially graduates of formal education in the agricultural sector, to enter the agribusiness sector with an entrepreneurial approach. This program aims to create young farmers who are competent, creative, and independent through mentoring, training, and providing access to financing and markets. Through this approach, PWMP not only addresses the issue of farmer regeneration but also contributes to increasing the competitiveness of agricultural products in the era of globalization. The PWMP program was launched in 2016. Some have succeeded in developing their businesses and continue to increase turnover, but there are also those who fail and do not continue their business.

Program evaluation is essential to ensure that young farmers do not switch from their farming ventures. Some young farmers choose to abandon their farming business because they are not prepared for the risk of loss. There is an identity gap of young Indonesian farmers in developing

agricultural businesses and overcoming the tension they experience as farmers. [8]. Entrepreneurial sustainability is the key to the success of the PWMP program. Evaluate the possible impacts of broadly implemented risk management as well as measure supporting measures for young farmers in the EU while also identifying areas needed for improvement [6].

However, the effectiveness of PWMP needs to be continuously evaluated to ensure that the program's objectives are achieved as expected. The evaluation of this program is important to measure the extent to which PWMP has succeeded in encouraging educated young farmers to become agribusiness entrepreneurs who are innovative, competitive, and able to adapt to market dynamics. In addition, the evaluation can also identify various obstacles faced by program participants, both from the technical, institutional, and socioeconomic sides, so that it can be the basis for future program improvement and development.

The evaluation approach in this context includes an analysis of various aspects, such as the level of sustainability of the business built, the increase in participants' income, networking, and contribution to the development of local communities. Through a comprehensive evaluation, it is hoped that strategic recommendations can be made to strengthen PWMP in building an inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem in the agricultural sector. The evaluation of the support program for assisting young agricultural entrepreneurs aims to determine the increase in production in agricultural optimization, as well as support from other parties. [9].

This study aims to evaluate the implementation of entrepreneurship of young farmers who receive business assistance through the PWMP Program. This study seeks to describe business characteristics, problems and potential for business sustainability so that the success rate and sustainability potential of the business can be known. This research is important because the results of this evaluation can be a measure of the success of the program. This research can be an input for the government in improving support programs and business assistance for young farmers in the future.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research utilized a quantitative approach. A questionnaire was distributed through electronic form to 100 participants who received capital assistance pada tahun 2016-2023 from the

Agricultural Development Polytechnic. Young Program of the Agricultural Development Out of 100 participants, 73

completed and returned the questionnaire. This research was conducted from November to December 2024 in many provinces in Indonesia, where the participants run their businesses in rural areas, as described in Table 1. This study applied a census model, allowing all participants to have the

same opportunity to fill out the electronic form. A closed and open questionnaire was employed to collect data. Supported by the participant's business report. Data analysis was run by quantitative description.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Young Farmers

In general, business characteristics in young farmers are measured by income, average business scale, and business experience, as per research (Kusumastuti et al., 2019). The following table explains the gender, type of business, and length of business. The following are the characteristics of young farmers' businesses that receive PWMP funding assistance in Table 1.

balanced between men and women [11]. Furthermore, gender equality is also influenced by education. The education of young farmers is entirely undergraduate. They received financial assistance while in college and became alumni of the Yogyakarta Agricultural Development Polytechnic., so all of their educational strata are undergraduates. With this high education, women have excellent decision-making power [12], [13].

Variable	Number of Farmer	Percentage (n=73)
Gender		
1. Man	37	51
2. Woman	36	49
Jenis Usaha		
1. On-farm	39	53
2. Animal Husbandry	12	17
3. Food Process	11	15
4. Marketing	9	12
5. Others	2	3
Length of Business (year)		
1. 1	23	32
2. 3	17	23
3. 4	13	18
4. 6	9	12
5. 8	11	15
		Average: 3,7
Bussiness Location (Province)		
1. Central Java	39	53
2. Yogyakarta	17	23
3. West Kalimantan	6	8
4. South Kalimantan	5	7
5. East Java	4	5
6. West Java	2	3

Based on Table 1, the percentage of young farmers who are women has been balanced with men. Young farmers are 51% male and 49% female. Initially, agriculture was a typical male job, but as time went by, it changed and became

Most of the young farmers' businesses are on farms (53%). This is also significantly related to the educational curriculum they received while studying at the Yogyakarta Magelang Agricultural Development Polytechnic, as well as part of the mission of the Ministry of Agriculture, which has

the task of providing food for the Indonesian people, as researched [14] which states that education is very influential in the selection of business types in agriculture. In addition, animal farming (17%) is preferred because it has economic benefits. The decision of youth to engage in on-farm agriculture business is influenced by a variety of factors, which can be broadly categorized into demographic, educational, economic, social, and psychological dimensions [15]

In terms of business experience, the most is 1 year. This young farmer has started entrepreneurship since receiving PWMP assistance in 2023. Meanwhile, the average length of business is 3.7 years. Farmers must have consistency in the agricultural business. It is necessary to prove that they will remain in agriculture for at least 5 years. Business experience plays an important role in ensuring business success [10]. It is estimated that the younger generation will take a leadership role in the agricultural sector if it lasts for a long time. The ideal experience that shows the consistency of youth in the agricultural world is at least five years. The farmer's experience is influenced by environmental, technological, social, and economic factors. Understanding this experience is essential to develop effective policies and support systems that meet the needs and challenges of entrepreneurship in the highly dynamic and volatile agricultural sector.

Factors such as gender, age, education, and farming experience affect farmers' perceptions and risk attitudes (Ahmad et al., 2019). The same opinion was expressed by young farmers, often more educated and more networked, who are more active in developing their farms than their older counterparts [16]. Based on Table 1, the location of the most PWMP is in Central Java, one of the provinces on the island of Central Java with the second largest population of young farmers after West Java. Central Java plays a significant role in Indonesia's agricultural sector, particularly in rice production. The region's agricultural practices, challenges, and strategies for improvement are diverse and multifaceted. [17].

Evaluation of the Success of Young Farmers' Businesses

The success of young farmers' businesses is critical, especially for the main actors, namely young farmers. Farmers experience business problems that are not easy, so they must have the ability to continue to survive even though there are many problems, and sometimes they have to lose money. Challenges that hinder the transition from

subsistence to commercial agriculture remain, and this is related to the ability of young farmers to cope with existing problems [18]. The following are the problems experienced by young farmers:

Table 2. Problems of Young Farmers

Problems of Young Farmers	Number of Farmer	Percentage
1. Quit and find another job	35	48
2. Marketing	10	14
3. Weather	7	8
4. Raw Materials	6	8
5. Pests/cultivation	6	8
6. Capital	6	8
7. None	3	4

Based on Table 2, 48% of young farmers stop their businesses for several reasons. Young farmers face numerous challenges that impact their ability to sustain farming as a long-term career. These challenges can be broadly categorized into economic, social, and structural barriers. In field activities, the problems of young farmer entrepreneurship include: [18]. The obstacle occurs precisely in the perception that with higher education, youth will choose promising jobs rather than becoming farmers.

The problem of low perception of the farming profession is still a significant thing to be solved [19]—low income. Uncertainty in prices is one of the reasons why young farmers do not continue their businesses [20]. In addition, the problem of marketing agricultural products is also important to overcome. Young farmers face a variety of marketing challenges that hinder their ability to sell their produce and sustain their agricultural activities effectively. Problems such as lack of market information and not getting the right off-taker [21]. Young farmers play an important role in maintaining food security and the survival of communities and rural areas. An increasing number of young farmers who, if not productive and satisfied with their farming business, are likely to quit farming to take advantage of increased levels of education and employment opportunities outside of agriculture.

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In addition, the problem of marketing agricultural products is also important to overcome (14%). Young farmers face a variety of marketing challenges that hinder their ability to sell their produce and sustain their agricultural activities effectively. Problems such as lack of market information and not getting the right off-taker [21]. Young farmers play an important role in maintaining food security and the survival of communities and rural areas.

Table 3. The Success of Young Farmers' Businesses

Variable	Number of Farmer	Percentage
Monthly Omset		
1. 50.000-2.000.000	32	44
2. >2.000.000-5.000.000	26	36
3. >5.000.000-10.000.000	9	12
4. >10.000.000-50.000.000	3	4
5. >50.000.000	3	4
Number of partners		
1. None	41	57
2. 1-5	23	32
3. 6-10	4	5
4. >10-15	4	5
5. >15	1	1

Based on Table 3, the turnover of young farmers is still relatively low. According to the data of the integrated agricultural survey, around 72.19 % of farmers in Indonesia are classified as small-scale farmers with an average net income of IDR 5.23 million per year. If explained, the income of Indonesian farmers only reaches IDR 435,833 per month or around IDR 14,527 per day, very well below the poverty line, which is set at IDR—535,547 per month or IDR.17,851 per day [22]. The turnover of young farmers who receive PWMP is still below the standard of decent income, which is less than IDR 2,000,000 because the majority of his business has been a start-up for about one year. Uda Hungry farmers worked hard to increase turnover in the following year. The turnover rate is significant in the agricultural business. Millennial farmers' business performance is measured based on four primary indicators: turnover, sources of capital financing, production capacity, and marketing reach [23].

Business networking is critical in entrepreneurial development. Young farmers have not yet done business networking. There 57% of young farmers who have not partnered with other parties. This condition is what caused the young farmer's business to lose money and stop business. The success of these farmers as entrepreneurs is due to their creativity, innovation, and ability to collaborate (often with agents from outside the agricultural field), along with their responsiveness to the demands and expectations of new societies regarding agriculture and food [11].

Table 4. Sustainability of Farmers' Businesses

Variable	Number of Farmers	Percentage
Sustainability of Farmers' Businesses	22	30
1. Remain	22	30
2. Increase	12	16
3. Decreased	20	24
4. Do not know		
Benefits for the community		
1. None	51	70
2. Using local workers	11	15
3. Helping the underprivileged	11	15

Based on Table 4, the highest sustainability of young farmers' businesses is fixed (33%) and increased (30%). If assessed, the success of this PWMP program is at least 66% of the total young farmers who are still surviving. Is this program successful? So, the answer is successful. This program is due to the magnitude of various challenges in agricultural businesses and also in accordance with research [24], which shows that PWMP is considered to be successful. The success of young farmer entrepreneurs is influenced by a variety of factors, which can be broadly categorized into motivational, social, economic, and personal competencies. Faktor internal seperti motivasi [25], [26]. In addition, production problems can be solved by increasing creativity, cooperation, and management [7].

Sustainability in farmer regeneration and agricultural businesses in young farmers plays an important role in ensuring that the problem of farmer regeneration is overcome. Sustainability issues are closely related to education, access to land, and family traditions, which affect

generational renewal and how it affects sustainability practices [27]. These actions can contribute to running businesses economically sustainably and to adapting production systems and policies to the current and future needs of region-based societies (Blanche et al., 2021).

Forming partnerships, developing innovative products, and seeking bank loans are all viable options to address the lack of capital. In addition, marketing issues are addressed through online marketing, building partnerships, and expanding networks. In addition to capital, young farmers need opportunities, mentors, and a supportive environment to succeed as entrepreneurs. The government must establish policies that support the efforts of young farmers during the pandemic. In addition, young farmers need training and infrastructure assistance in online marketing [7]. One of the farmers who has successfully partnered and exported various horticultural products is Mas Firman with the P4S Agro Kirana Kusuma platform. The product that is being worked on is the cultivation of Hawaiian papaya; by collaborating with off-takers, marketing problems can be overcome. In terms of collapse, because they have to produce continuously, these young farmers collaborate with local young farmers. Currently, Mas Firman has been able to produce continuously with a turnover of 10 million per month. The management area is in the Province of Central Java, which includes Wonosobo, Temanggung, Banjarnegara and Magelang.

CONCLUSION

The PWMP Program has succeeded in growing young farmer entrepreneurs in Indonesia. The results of the study show that the business characteristics of young farmers who receive PWMP capital are the type of business on the farm (53%), business duration of 3.7 years, and the most business locations in Central Java, Indonesia. The



Figure 1. Entrepreneurial Activities of Young Farmers Receiving PWMP in the Hawaiian Papaya Business

An agricultural business is considered successful if it can provide both economic and social benefits for the surrounding community. Efforts to grow each other and build a sociopreneur climate are an important reason for the success of rural agricultural businesses. Young farmers, often referred to as sociopreneurs in the agricultural sector, play a crucial role in sustaining food security and enhancing the viability of rural areas. Various collaborations in the agricultural sector, such as agro-tourism quality tourism, also facilitate community involvement. Young farmers also promote various activities (rural tourism, preservation of traditions and cultural heritage) and participate in local associations. Agriculture that is inclusive and beneficial to society can reduce inequality and ensure both technical and social sustainability (Albizia et al., 2021).

main problems are quitting because they choose another job (48%), turnover is less than IDR 2,000,000 (44%), not having a business partner (57%), and the potential for sustainability is 52%. It is hoped that the Ministry of Agriculture will assist by involving successful entrepreneur mentors.

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