



## **LAMTEUBA IN TRANSITION: A SOCIO HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON AGRICULTURAL CULTURAL CHANGE**

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### **Abstract**

This study explores the transformation of agricultural culture in the Lamteuba community from a socio-historical perspective, with particular emphasis on the shift from cannabis cultivation to turmeric farming. The primary objective is to identify the driving factors behind this agricultural transition, the challenges encountered during the process, and the resulting social and cultural impacts. Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected through field observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that this shift in agricultural practice was influenced by multiple factors, including adverse experiences stemming from law enforcement actions, rising individual and collective awareness, family influence, government and local authority-led socialization efforts, and the relative ease of cultivating turmeric. The community faced several challenges, such as restoring the village's reputation, maintaining crop quality, coping with unpredictable environmental conditions, and acquiring knowledge on turmeric cultivation. The transition has had a positive impact, marked by improved social stability, enhanced household economic sustainability, and renewed hope for a future free from the negative stigma that once plagued the village. Thus, this agricultural shift reflects not only a change in commodity production but also a broader transformation in the identity and social structure of the Lamteuba community.

**Keywords:** *Lamteuba, Farming Culture, Agricultural Transformation, Socio-Historical, Social Change*

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### **A. Introduction**

Lamteuba is a rural settlement located in the Seulimuem sub district of Aceh Besar, geographically positioned in a highland region that is relatively remote from urban centers. The area comprises eight villages, including Gampong Blang Tingkeum, which is well-known for its fertile and strategically situated agricultural land, making it highly suitable for both farming and plantation activities. With a land area of approximately 10 hectares, most of which is dedicated to agriculture, the village's geographic isolation, limited infrastructure, and constrained economic resources have historically driven local residents to pursue short-term, high yield crops most notably cannabis cultivation.

In the social history of Lamteuba, cannabis has not only functioned as an illicit crop but also as part of a locally embedded tradition. Among some Acehnese communities, cannabis is traditionally perceived as a culinary spice, akin to turmeric, ginger, or galangal (Lia, 2022). This local interpretation stands in sharp contrast with the national legal framework, which classifies cannabis as a Category I narcotic, prohibited for any use whether medicinal or culinary. The divergence between local traditions and state-imposed regulations has generated ongoing legal and social tensions within the community.

This conflict is particularly visible in Gampong Blang Tingkeum, where cannabis was widely cultivated by taking advantage of the secluded topography, away from public and governmental oversight (Apriana, E., 2021). The notoriety of cannabis cultivation has, over time, stigmatized Lamteuba as a "black zone" a designation burdened with negative connotations. However, increasing law enforcement operations, public awareness campaigns led by government agencies such as the National Narcotics Agency (BNN), and growing community consciousness have catalyzed a significant shift in agricultural practices (Ira Helviza, 2016, p. 46).

A major transformation is now underway: the transition from cannabis to turmeric cultivation. This shift is not solely economic in nature but reflects broader changes in cultural identity and social structure. Turmeric was chosen not only for its compliance with legal norms but also due to its compatibility with local soil conditions and climate (Widyawati et al., 2023). Furthermore, the successful export of turmeric to neighboring countries such as Thailand demonstrates that legitimate, law-abiding agriculture can also be economically viable and even globally competitive when properly managed.

Despite its promise, this transition has not been without obstacles. The move from cannabis to turmeric has posed numerous technical, social, and psychological challenges. Farmers must develop new agricultural skills, work to rehabilitate the village's negative image, and establish sustainable markets for their crops. These difficulties highlight that agricultural transformation involves more than just substituting crops it necessitates deep changes in values, collective perceptions, and community institutions.

In this regard, a socio-historical lens provides a meaningful approach to exploring the dynamics of Lamteuba's agricultural transformation. This perspective enables a nuanced understanding of the historical roots behind cannabis farming, and how power structures, regulatory frameworks, and community awareness interact to influence social change (Nasution et al., 2020). It also reveals that agricultural practices in Lamteuba are not arbitrary but emerge in response to complex socio-economic, political, and cultural forces.

This study is also of broader relevance in the context of sustainable rural development and the integration of local wisdom into national development frameworks. As village-based development becomes a central pillar of Indonesian policy, case studies like Lamteuba can inform more inclusive agricultural and narcotic policy interventions. These should not merely impose legal constraints, but also empower local communities

to transition toward lawful livelihoods through culturally sensitive and socially embedded pathways.

Under the title "*Lamteuba in Transition: Shifting Agricultural Practices from a Socio-Historical Perspective*," this paper aims to examine the driving forces behind the community's transition from cannabis to turmeric cultivation, the challenges encountered during this shift, and the social and cultural consequences that have followed. This study is intended not only as documentation of a local transformation but also as a critical reflection on agricultural and narcotics policy from a culturally contextualized standpoint.

Using a qualitative research design—including field observations, in-depth interviews with farmers and community leaders, and a comprehensive literature review this study provides a holistic account of the processes underpinning Lamteuba's agricultural shift. It examines how local communities negotiate change, rebuild social identities, and construct a farming culture that is not only lawful but also dignified and sustainable. In doing so, Lamteuba serves not merely as an example of crop substitution, but as a testament to how rural societies respond to legal and social pressures through pathways of conscious transformation and collective aspiration. Ultimately, this transformation affirms that genuine development does not solely emerge from external intervention. Rather, it is born from within through the initiatives, resilience, and determination of communities striving to forge better, more just, and more hopeful futures.

## B. Method

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a descriptive method (Sugiyono, 2019), aiming to develop a comprehensive understanding of the cultural transformation in agricultural practices among the people of Lamteuba, particularly in Gampong Blang Tingkeum. The transformation under investigation refers to the community's shift from cultivating cannabis a crop historically grown across generations to turmeric farming as a lawful and sustainable alternative. Through direct field engagement, the researcher gains access to rich, contextual data that reflect the lived experiences of the local population. The descriptive method is employed to construct an empirical narrative that illustrates how the community navigates legal, economic, and social challenges during this transition (Black & Champion, 1999). Central to this inquiry are the lived experiences of farmers, which serve as the primary lens through which the restructuring of their agricultural identity within the bounds of national regulation is understood.

Primary data were gathered through in-depth interviews with former cannabis farmers, community leaders, and local stakeholders involved in promoting the shift to turmeric cultivation. Informants were selected purposively, based on their relevance to the research objectives and their direct involvement in the transitional process. In addition to interviews, data were collected through direct observation of agricultural activities and community life, as well as documentation of village records, government reports, and previous academic studies relevant to the socio-historical context of Lamteuba. The collected data were then analyzed thematically to identify patterns and interrelations

emerging from the field (Sutrisno Hadi, 2002). To ensure data validity, triangulation techniques were employed, comparing insights drawn from interviews, observations, and documentary sources. This methodological framework enables a holistic portrayal of agricultural transformation not merely as a shift in crop selection, but as a broader reconfiguration of values, perceptions, and social structures within the community.

## C. Results and Discussion

### 1. The Social History of Lamteuba

According to oral narratives passed down through generations, Lamteuba was once a large lake located at the foothills of Mount Seulawah Agam. This lake was reportedly divided into two parts by an Acehnese Islamic scholar, Sultan Salatin Alaidin Riayat Syah (Po Teumeureuhom). The first section came to be known as Kuta Cot Puteng. Over time, as the water receded and the lake became increasingly shallow, it gradually turned into fertile land, which today is utilized for community plantations. The second half of the lake remained inundated for a longer period until another scholar created an outlet referred to as *lham teubai* (meaning "thick digging tool") or according to another version, *lham teuba* (a digging tool brought by the early settlers of the area). This intervention facilitated the lake's complete drainage, allowing the land to become habitable. The name *lham teubai* evolved over time into Lamteuba, the name by which the region is currently known (Achmad Fauzan, 2024, p. 32).

The social life of the Lamteuba community is marked by a strong sense of interaction, collectivism, and social solidarity that continues to thrive today. Similar to other villages in Aceh, Lamteuba's social fabric is deeply shaped by communal cooperation and Islamic values that underpin interpersonal relations. Social practices such as mutual assistance, visitation among neighbors, and cooperative labor remain integral components of daily life, reinforcing communal bonds (Tasrim et al., 2023).

Religious values serve as a fundamental cornerstone in shaping the community's social character. As the dominant faith, Islam exerts a significant influence on the norms governing social conduct (Fazal & Saleh, 2022). Teachings on mutual respect, the preservation of kinship, and compassion among individuals form the ethical foundation for maintaining societal harmony. Strong familial ties further reinforce collective consciousness, motivating community members to actively engage in social and religious activities (Dewi & Fazal, 2024).

A variety of social practices are embedded in daily life, including *gotong royong* (mutual assistance) for infrastructure development and environmental upkeep, the communal implementation of *fardhu kifayah* (collective obligation) for funeral rites, as well as participation in religious events such as the celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday (Maulid), Tarawih prayers during Ramadan, and large-scale *zikir* gatherings. These activities are primarily undertaken by male community members. Women also play a pivotal role through their involvement in family welfare programs (PKK), community health services (Posyandu), *majelis ta'lim* (religious study circles) in

the village prayer hall (*meunasah*), and communal work efforts, indicating a gender-balanced participation in maintaining the village's sociocultural order.

The youth of Lamteuba are likewise actively engaged in sustaining community life. Their participation in communal labor, funeral visits (*takziah*), regular religious gatherings, and sports activities contributes significantly to strengthening social ties and cultivating a shared sense of identity within the village. Economically, the agricultural sector constitutes the primary livelihood for the residents of Blang Tiengkeum, with most households depending on farming activities in rice fields and plantations. The area's fertile soil presents considerable potential for a wide range of agricultural commodities. However, the region's social history cannot be fully understood without acknowledging the past prevalence of illicit cannabis cultivation, which posed a significant challenge for the community.

In earlier times, the clandestine cultivation of cannabis was relatively widespread (Lia, 2022), driven by the lucrative economic prospects associated with the crop. According to Mr. Mukhlis Yusuf, the village secretary:

"there were instances where residents openly grew cannabis, even around their own homes. This was largely due to limited enforcement by law authorities, who conducted inspections and arrests only sporadically. The weak regulatory environment allowed such practices to persist relatively unchecked". (Interview with Mukhlis Yusuf, 53 years old, Secretary of Blang Tingkeum Village on October 11, 2023).

Over time, however, increased legal awareness and more decisive law enforcement measures led to a gradual decline in cannabis cultivation. Furthermore, extensive media coverage of arrests and narcotics-related offenses contributed to a growing sense of fear and caution among residents. This transformation illustrates a crucial phase in the social history of Lamteuba, where economic necessity intersected with legal risk and evolving moral considerations. In sum, Lamteuba's social history encapsulates a dynamic interplay between cultural and religious values and the complex realities of socioeconomic change. The traditions of communal cooperation, collective solidarity, and agricultural livelihood represent enduring elements within a continually shifting landscape shaped by policy developments, external influences, and the community's own growing consciousness.

## 2. Traditional Agricultural Systems in Lamteuba

The traditional agricultural system in Lamteuba reflects a long-standing form of adaptation by the local population to the region's geographic, climatic, and natural resource conditions (Zulfah et al., 2023). Located in a mountainous area with fertile soil, the people of Lamteuba have historically depended on agriculture as their primary livelihood, employing methods rooted in indigenous knowledge and customary practices. This model of agriculture not only sustains the local economy but is also deeply embedded in the community's social and cultural fabric.

Most farmers in Lamteuba follow a subsistence agriculture model, cultivating crops primarily to meet household consumption needs. The principal crops include upland rice, maize, cassava, local vegetables, and various leguminous plants. Planting cycles are organized seasonally, guided by indigenous ecological knowledge and an agrarian calendar aligned with local climatic patterns. Farming is predominantly manual, relying on simple tools such as hoes, sickles, and traditional ploughs, often drawn by domesticated animals like buffalo or oxen.

A defining feature of Lamteuba's traditional agricultural system is the collective ethos underpinning its labor practices. Activities such as land clearing, planting, and harvesting are frequently conducted communally through a system of mutual cooperation known locally as *meuripee* or *meugaca*. These reciprocal labor exchanges are not monetized; instead, they are founded on social bonds and communal solidarity. This practice not only enhances efficiency in agricultural work but also reinforces social cohesion and mutual trust among villagers (Lestari et al., 2019).

Beyond technical aspects, Lamteuba's agricultural system also possesses a spiritual dimension. Prior to planting, some households continue to perform traditional rituals or offer prayers, seeking divine blessings and protection for their crops. These religious expressions coexist with agricultural activities, forming part of a living belief system that shapes the community's interaction with nature.

Over the past two decades, however, traditional farming practices in Lamteuba have come under increasing pressure. Climate change, soil degradation, the introduction of modern agricultural technologies, and declining interest among younger generations in farming have contributed to the gradual erosion of customary systems. Many youths have migrated toward alternative occupations perceived as more economically viable, leading to a reduction in available labor and, in some cases, the abandonment or repurposing of agricultural land.

Despite these challenges, a segment of the population continues to uphold traditional farming as a marker of cultural identity and as a form of resistance against dependency on industrial agricultural models, which are often environmentally unsustainable. In this context, traditional agriculture in Lamteuba is viewed not merely as an economic pursuit, but as a cultural legacy that embodies a balanced relationship between humans and the natural world.

### 3. Factors Driving the Transition from Cannabis to Turmeric Cultivation

The transformation in agricultural practices in Gampong Blang Tingkeum, Lamteuba, reflects a multifaceted process shaped by social, economic, legal, and collective consciousness dynamics regarding the adverse consequences of cannabis farming. This transition was not abrupt; rather, it unfolded over a prolonged period marked by painful experiences, growing awareness, and active involvement of various actors, including family members and state institutions. The key factors contributing to this agricultural shift are outlined below:

### a. Adverse Experiences of Local Farmers

One of the primary drivers encouraging the community to abandon cannabis cultivation was the accumulation of negative experiences stemming from increased surveillance by state authorities. Widespread dissemination of information via mass media and firsthand accounts about arrests and the threat of severe legal penalties for those involved in cannabis production instilled a pervasive sense of fear and collective trauma among the local populace. For instance, the arrest of two individuals in the Lamteuba area on charges related to cannabis misuse, facing the prospect of harsh punishment, served as a critical turning point that reshaped community perceptions and prompted a reevaluation of long-standing agricultural practices. As conveyed by Eva Azhari:

“Her husband, a farmer, has witnessed numerous incidents related to cannabis cultivation that have left the community with distressing memories and psychological trauma. The frequent arrests and the sight of individuals becoming fugitives pursued by law enforcement have created an atmosphere of anxiety and unrest within families, undermining their sense of safety and peace.” (Interview with Eva Azhari, 36 years old, Housewife, conducted on November 4, 2023).

“Furthermore, Muhammad Riza noted that the youth of Blang Tingkeum have grown increasingly uneasy about the looming social and legal risks associated with cannabis cultivation. This pervasive sense of apprehension has gradually fostered a collective awareness, ultimately motivating the community to seek safer and more sustainable agricultural alternatives”. (Interview with Muhammad Riza, 33 years old, Youth Representative of Gampong Blang Tingkeum, conducted on May 16, 2024).

Based on the author's analysis of the testimonies provided by Eva Azhari and Muhammad Riza, it becomes evident that the trauma and anxiety associated with cannabis cultivation are not limited to the direct perpetrators but extend to family members and the broader community. The pervasive fear of legal repercussions capable of affecting anyone involved has created a tense and distressing atmosphere in everyday life. As illustrated by Eva, the psychological and emotional toll within households suggests that the consequences of cannabis farming go beyond economic factors, reaching deeply into the familial and social fabric.

On the other hand, Muhammad Riza's account underscores that this unease has not remained confined to the domestic sphere but has also permeated the youth community. Young individuals in Blang Tingkeum have come to realize that persisting in cannabis cultivation does not offer a viable or dignified future. Gradually, this realization has crystallized into a collective drive to seek alternative forms of agriculture. The shift toward turmeric cultivation, therefore, is not solely a reaction to legal pressures but also a conscious effort to preserve social dignity and foster a more stable livelihood. This situation reflects that change is not merely externally imposed, but also internally driven rooted in a shared vision of a more meaningful and sustainable future. The

interplay between past hardships and a renewed will for transformation serves as a critical foundation for the ongoing socio-agricultural transition in Gampong Blang Tingkeum.

b. Individual Awareness within the Community

As age and life experience accumulate, members of the community have gradually come to recognize the long-term implications of engaging in cannabis cultivation. This growing awareness is largely shaped by a sense of remorse over the social and psychological harm it has caused, along with a deep concern for the future of the younger generation. As articulated by Mr. Muhammad Subhan:

“Reflections on past experiences have prompted a shift in attitudes and decisions, leading to a transition toward agricultural practices that pose no legal risks and carry greater ethical significance.” (Interview with Muhammad Subhan, 55 years old, Village Head of Blang Tingkeum, conducted on November 4, 2023).

c. The Role of the Family

The family plays a central role in facilitating this transformation. Through internal dialogue and protective efforts toward its members, the family emerges as a pivotal agent in the transition toward legal and sustainable agriculture. As emphasized by Eva Azhari:

“The role of the family is vital in safeguarding and protecting its members from risks that may disrupt the harmony of life, including legal repercussions stemming from illicit activities such as cannabis cultivation. According to her, the family bears both the right and the responsibility to create a secure and supportive environment, serving as the frontline in promoting a shift toward a more dignified life and lawful sources of income. Conversations and the emergence of awareness within the family unit form a crucial foundation in the decision-making process to abandon high-risk activities.” (Interview with Eva Azhari, 36 years old, Housewife, on November 4, 2023).

In a similar vein, Juliana further emphasized that:

“the shift from cannabis cultivation to lawful agricultural practices such as turmeric farming cannot be separated from the active involvement of family members who strive to redirect life orientations toward more constructive paths. The growing awareness of the importance of earning a lawful livelihood has become a compelling reason for many families to reject participation in cannabis related agriculture. Thus, the family is not merely a place of shelter, but a formative space for values and life choices, enabling each member to pursue a life of peace, dignity, and alignment with prevailing legal norms.” (Interview with Juliana, 29 years old, Resident of Gampong Blang Tingkeum, May 14, 2024).

d. Outreach by the Aceh Provincial National Narcotics Agency (BNNP) and Lamteuba Community Health Center

The systematic efforts carried out by the Aceh Provincial National Narcotics Agency (BNNP) and the Lamteuba Community Health Center through outreach and educational initiatives have played a significant role in facilitating this agricultural transition. Activities such as seminars, public awareness campaigns, and intersectoral collaborations have broadened community understanding regarding the dangers of cannabis cultivation and the importance of engaging in healthy and lawful farming

practices. While not all residents responded with equal enthusiasm, these initiatives have nonetheless proven effective in fostering public awareness. As noted by Mukhlis Yusuf, Secretary of Gampong Blang Tingkeum:

“The community's enthusiasm towards the outreach activities is quite high, although some still perceive them as mere formalities.” (Interview with Mukhlis Yusuf, 53 years old, Secretary of Blang Tingkeum Village on October 11, 2023).

In an interview with Suharmansyah, the Head of Community Empowerment at the Aceh Provincial Narcotics Agency (BNNP Aceh), it was explained:

“Efforts to eradicate cannabis are carried out through two main approaches. First, the control of narcotic circulation, both domestic and international. Second, efforts to reduce the demand for cannabis among the community, particularly from individuals involved in its distribution chain. According to Suharmansyah, if demand is not seriously addressed, the circulation of cannabis will continue to grow over time. As a concrete step, BNNP Aceh actively conducts confiscation and destruction of cannabis plants found, both in the forests and mountains as well as those imported from abroad. This measure not only aims to disrupt supply but also serves as a firm statement that the state is present to protect the community from the dangers of narcotics.” (Interview with Suharmansyah, 40 years old, Head of the Community Empowerment Team at BNNP Aceh, on March 6, 2024). Suharmansyah emphasized the importance of a dual approach: reducing the supply of cannabis while also lowering demand through education and social rehabilitation. Support from health professionals like Nurul Baiti is also a crucial complement in supporting this transition process.

Nurul Baiti, a healthcare worker at the Lamteuba Health Center, explained:

“Her team routinely conducts outreach activities aimed at reducing cannabis use in daily life. These sessions are held twice a year and receive a fairly positive response from the community. The enthusiasm shown by the residents in attending the outreach activities reflects their awareness and desire to live healthier lives, free from the influence of narcotics. Additionally, on several occasions, the Lamteuba Health Center has also collaborated with BNNP Aceh in providing educational sessions on the dangers of cannabis. This collaboration aims to provide comprehensive understanding and seek the best solutions to create a better society, free from the dangers of narcotics.” (Interview with Nurul Baiti, 47 years old, Healthcare Worker at Lamteuba Health Center, on March 7, 2024).

#### e. Social Factors in the Community

The social transformation in Blang Tingkeum reflects a collective consensus and concern over the negative impacts of cannabis cultivation. This change is the result of intense social interaction, mutual reflection, and a community agreement to create a more stable life in accordance with legal norms. Muhammad Subhan stated that social unrest due to legal risks and stigma became a strong catalyst for the shift in farming culture.

#### f. Ease of Turmeric Cultivation

Turmeric was chosen as an alternative due to the ease of cultivation, requiring minimal labor, and its relatively high economic value in the market. This plant is also

more resistant to pests, making it more advantageous both technically and financially. Farmers such as Sulaiman assess:

“Turmeric has a broad market, and its demand remains stable as it is used as a base ingredient in various household and industrial needs. The community has embraced this transition positively, recognizing turmeric as a crop that is not only profitable but also free from legal risks. The success of the socialization efforts and the technical ease of cultivating this plant has made turmeric a symbol of change toward legal, safe, and sustainable agriculture.” (Interview with Sulaiman (42 years old), Turmeric Farmer from Blang Tingkeum, November 3, 2023).

#### 4. Societal Impact Following the Transition from Cannabis to Turmeric Cultivation

The social transformation experienced by the community particularly in the context of transitioning from cannabis cultivation to turmeric has yielded substantial implications across various dimensions of daily life. These impacts are deeply influenced by the region's geographical conditions, the socio economic characteristics of the population, and the extent of community engagement in the change process. This shift affects not only the economic landscape but also initiates alterations in social structures at both familial and communal levels. Gradually, this transition has fostered a new identity for Gampong Blang Tingkeum. Previously recognized as a hub for cannabis cultivation, the village is now emerging as a model of lawful and productive agriculture. This change in identity has stimulated the formation of new habits and practices that align more closely with prevailing legal frameworks and societal norms.

From a sociological perspective (Martono, 2011), such a transition represents a significant cultural shift. The community has begun to abandon practices deemed illegal, embracing new, constructive alternatives. The reallocation of land use from cannabis to turmeric cultivation reflects a profound cultural reorientation. In the past, many residents relied economically on cannabis production, attracted by its high returns despite the legal risks it entailed. The cultivation of cannabis had become deeply embedded in daily routines, particularly given the village's remote location and limited access to oversight, which made the activity difficult to detect. These geographical and logistical factors contributed to the normalization and persistence of cannabis cultivation, making any shift away from it a formidable challenge requiring collective resolve and sustained effort.

Nevertheless, over time, the community has begun to recognize the dangers associated with engaging in illicit agricultural activities. A growing commitment to discontinue past behaviors has emerged, driven by the desire to establish a safer and more stable living environment. The support provided by local leaders, village authorities, and government representatives has played a pivotal role in fostering collective awareness. It is increasingly understood that a sustainable and dignified future can only be secured through lawful and responsible conduct. As noted by Eva Azhari, a respected female figure in Blang Tingkeum:

“The cultivation of cannabis should no longer be a topic within our community. No farmer should intentionally grow cannabis in this village. We aspire to live in

peace, free from anxiety and fear.” (Interview with Eva Azhari, 36, Homemaker, conducted on November 4, 2023).

This statement reflects the community's strong desire to move away from its past and establish a more peaceful life, free from the shadow of legal violations. The positive impacts of this transition are beginning to be directly felt by the community. Although the process has not been easy and requires consistency, they are starting to experience a sense of calm in their daily lives. There is no longer the fear of raids by authorities or concerns about arrests. This has had a significant effect on the quality of life, both in terms of mental and social well-being. Economically, the income generated from cultivating turmeric is not as substantial as that from cannabis. However, the community now recognizes that lawful earnings, free from legal pressures, bring a unique sense of fulfillment. They are able to enjoy the fruits of their legitimate labor and feel more at peace in their lives. As one farmer, Mukti, expressed:

“After we transitioned from cannabis to turmeric, we feel safer. There is no longer the fear we once had. Now, we can work peacefully and collectively build a better future.” (Interview with Mukti, 50 years old, Farmer from Gampong Blang Tingkrum, November 4, 2023).

This statement reflects that the transition is not merely about replacing crops, but also about adopting a more humane and dignified way of life. This situation serves as a testament to the determination of the Blang Tingkeum community to keep their area free from illegal practices. They hope that no further cannabis cultivation activities will take place, and with support from all parties including authorities, the government, and the surrounding community efforts to maintain and enhance a clean and safe village can continue to be upheld.

## **5. Challenges and Obstacles Faced by the Community in the Transition from Cannabis Cultivation to Turmeric Cultivation**

The transition from cannabis cultivation to turmeric by the community of Gampong Blang Tingkeum has not been an easy process and has required significant time and effort. This shift touches not only the agricultural aspect but also the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of the local community. Support from various stakeholders has played a crucial role in driving the change that has brought positive impacts to the local community. Gampong Blang Tingkeum has become a focal point for the government's efforts to halt cannabis cultivation and create a safer and more orderly environment. Following the shift in agricultural land use, the social conditions within the community have improved. Awareness of the dangers and legal risks associated with cannabis cultivation has grown, prompting residents to gradually shift towards cultivating turmeric and other legal, economically viable crops. The negative perception of Gampong Blang Tingkeum as a "black zone" has slowly faded away.

### a. Restoring the Identity of Gampong Blang Tingkeum

The identity of a region is a source of pride for its inhabitants. However, the negative stigma that has long been associated with Gampong Blang Tingkeum as a cannabis-producing area is not easy to eliminate. Changing external perceptions requires a long process and continuous efforts. One of the local figures actively involved in restoring the village's identity is Sulaiman, a turmeric farmer. He not only focuses on turmeric cultivation but also encourages other residents to join in improving their social, economic, and family conditions. According to Sulaiman, the community has begun to realize that the identity of being a cannabis-producing area brings negative consequences. Now, they are collectively working to improve the image of their village, hoping it will no longer be known as the "black zone." While the income from turmeric is not as high as that from cannabis, turmeric cultivation offers a sense of comfort and tranquility, free from legal risks, and no longer attracts negative stigma from the outside world. Over time, the identity of Gampong Blang Tingkeum has gradually improved, offering hope and long-term benefits for the local residents.

### b. Quality and Processing of Turmeric

Maintaining the quality of turmeric is crucial for attracting both national and global markets. High-quality turmeric will increase trust and the selling price of the product. However, the initial processing of turmeric still faces many challenges, including cleaning, drying, and the lack of modern equipment. The processing time is long due to the continued use of traditional methods. Sulaiman explained that before turmeric can be distributed, it requires a long process from harvesting to drying. The lack of adequate facilities makes this process a major challenge for farmers. Furthermore, turmeric has a long harvest cycle of up to one year, which presents its own set of challenges. If harvested too early, the quality and selling price drop; if harvested too late, the turmeric becomes easily spoiled. Syakumi added that the quality of turmeric is highly dependent on the timing of the harvest. Improper harvesting times will affect both the price and the suitability of the turmeric for consumption. Therefore, farmers need the right knowledge and skills for cultivation and post-harvest management. Now, thanks to the establishment of home-based turmeric processing industries, production processes have become more structured and efficient. The processed turmeric products from Gampong Blang Tingkeum are gaining recognition and even opening up new business opportunities for farmers from other villages.

### c. Weather and Environmental Conditions

Weather and environmental conditions also pose significant challenges. Prolonged rainy seasons can hinder the planting and harvesting of turmeric. Sulaiman mentioned that such conditions cause the harvest period to extend, sometimes reaching up to two years. Unpredictable environmental conditions impact the quality of turmeric and the farmers' yields. Therefore, monitoring and adapting to the climate is essential to ensure the sustainability of turmeric farming in the area.

#### d. Community Attitudes Toward the Transition

Changing planting patterns requires acceptance and adjustment from the community. Although the transition to turmeric cultivation brings new hopes socially and economically, not all residents initially embraced the change. The relatively low price of turmeric and the lack of initial storage facilities were the primary reasons for the community's hesitation. Sulaiman explained that the community was initially reluctant because the income from turmeric was perceived as insufficient. However, with continuous socialization and collective efforts, the community slowly began to engage in turmeric farming. This process illustrates that change takes time, patience, and support from community leaders and external parties.

#### e. Knowledge of Turmeric Management

The lack of technical knowledge regarding turmeric cultivation and processing was an initial challenge in the transition process. Without adequate understanding, the harvests were suboptimal. The role of institutions, such as the local health center (puskesmas), is crucial in spreading information about the dangers of cannabis and the potential of alternative crops. Sulaiman noted that a doctor from the health center educated the community about the risks of cannabis and the benefits of turmeric cultivation. The community responded positively to this information, although they initially used rudimentary farming methods. Over time, increased knowledge has had a positive impact on agricultural yields and the economic sustainability of the community. Thus, this transition process is not just about replacing one crop with another but about creating a new system that is healthier, legal, and sustainable. The community of Gampong Blang Tingkeum has demonstrated a commitment to facing challenges and continues to strive toward a better life through turmeric farming.

### D. Conclusion

The transformation of agricultural practices in Lamteuba, particularly in Gampong Blang Tingkeum, reflects a long and complex process shaped not only by legal enforcement but also by a growing collective awareness among residents to abandon high-risk and illicit farming. The adverse experiences faced by many community members ranging from arrests to heightened surveillance served as a turning point that compelled a shift toward safer and more sustainable agricultural alternatives. In this context, turmeric emerged as a viable option, valued not only for its economic potential but also for its adaptability to local environmental conditions and ease of cultivation.

This transition, however, has not been without its challenges. Residents have had to confront and gradually repair the village's reputation, which had long been marred by its association with illicit crop cultivation. At the same time, they are adapting to new agricultural routines, with turmeric farming and processing still largely reliant on traditional methods. Environmental factors, limited technical knowledge, and the ongoing need to maintain product quality remain key obstacles to ensuring the long-term success of this shift. Despite these hurdles, the community is beginning to experience positive

changes, including improved social stability, enhanced livelihoods, and a stronger sense of solidarity. Ultimately, the community's aspiration is to see Gampong Blang Tingkeum free from its troubled past and recognized alongside other villages in Aceh as a clean, productive, and dignified rural society.

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