

**Policy Focal-Point: Praxis in the Transformation of Local Wisdom-Based  
Tenun Ikat Clusters from an Ecofeminist Perspective in East Sumba Regency**

***Vocal-Point Kebijakan: Praksis dalam Transformasi Klaster Tenun-Ikat  
Berbasis Kearifan Lokal dari Perspektif Ekofeminisme di Kabupaten Sumba Timur***

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**ABSTRACT**

*East Sumba Regency is included in the 3T area category (underdeveloped, isolated, and poorest). Covid-19 pandemic, flash floods, and Seroja hurricane are predicted to increase the worsening poverty. This condition encourages the pursuit internal strength to increase the community's resilience. This paper describes two findings: 1) the praxis of focal point in the transformation of local wisdom-based tenun ikat (handwoven fabric) clusters from an ecofeminism perspective, and 2) best practices as the basis of integrating tenun ikat in the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Daerah/RPJMD) of East Sumba Regency. The paper uses several conceptual frameworks such as agent, agency, and agent network from an ecofeminism perspective. The research used the Participatory Action Research method from an ecofeminism perspective. The results show that the praxis of the focal point is significant in the transformation of local wisdom-based tenun ikat and the supervision of the integration of tenun ikat in policies implemented in the RPJMD of East Sumba Regency in 2021-2025.*

**Keywords:** cluster, East Sumba, ecofeminism, resiliency, tenun ikat



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## INTRODUCTION

Aa East Sumba Regency, one of the first regencies on Sumba Island, has the highest poverty rate of the 3 other regencies that were established later. According to the Central Statistics Agency for East Sumba Regency (Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumba Timur, 2020), there were 77,390 residents (30%) who were categorized as poor. In addition, the poverty depth index (8.57), the poverty severity index (3.14), and the relative position of both the depth index and the severity index (more than 1) put East Sumba Regency as the region with the highest poverty index compared to the other districts in East Nusa Tenggara Province. Therefore, this Regency is one of the 62 regencies in Indonesia designated by the government as underdeveloped regions in Presidential Regulation Number 63 of 2020 concerning Stipulation of Underdeveloped Regions for 2020-2024.

Other facts of poverty can be observed through the poor Family Health Index (*Indeks Kesehatan Keluarga/IKS*) which has an impact on high rate of maternal and newborn mortality (The Ministry of Health of Republic of Indonesia, 2018). The Family Health Index of East Sumba Regency is 0.09, which is the lowest compared to other districts/cities in East Nusa Tenggara Province. This number is well below the average IKS in East Nusa Tenggara (0.1222) and below the national IKS average (0.163). Both the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) in East Sumba Regency are still considered high. Moreover, East Sumba Regency is one of the six contributing regencies/cities for high MMR/IMR in East Nusa Tenggara, which also positions NTT as a province with high rates of MMR and IMR in Indonesia.

Furthermore, severe poverty actually occurred 17 years after East Sumba Regency gained their regional autonomy, which means that they have greater flexibility in managing their own resources. In contrast, East Sumba Regency actually has abundant natural resources, livestock resources, socio-cultural resources, and *tenun ikat pahikung* (handwoven fabric) that has been widely known abroad for years, even before Indonesia's independence (Kapita, 1976b, 1976a). Therefore, severe poverty rate in the region indicates that there are problems in the management of these resources (Hunga, 2021).

In the midst of this poverty, women struggle with their stereotypically feminine power, through *tenun ikat*. *Tenun* (weaving) is an important identity and symbol in funeral rituals and *belis* or marriage dowry from a woman. Thus, *tenun* has dual meanings and functions related to women's lives as an entity in the society and women as part of socio-cultural, economic, environmental, and spiritual life (Hunga, 2016; Kapita, 1976b, 1976a).

However, *tenun ikat* was soon forgotten and overlooked, which is indicated by the absence of *tenun ikat* in the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (*Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Daerah/RPJMD*) of East Sumba Regency. *Tenun ikat* is not explicitly included in the policies and programs of the East Sumba Regency Government. This is ironic because the sectors that have been relied on so far, such as livestock and agriculture, have not been able to make significant contribution in solving the aforementioned poverty problems. In the last 10 years, livestock population in East Sumba Regency has fluctuated and tends to decline, and its productivity has not been optimal. As a result, *tenun ikat* is not explicitly included in the government's policy and program of East Sumba Regency. This is an expression of policy that ignores the strategic role of *tenun ikat* and weavers, most of whom are women. By ignoring this highly potential resource, this also means that the policy is not established based on the strength of productive local resources, it does not accommodate the problem of the actors' needs in it, and it is not regulated through the perspective of justice (gender) and sustainability (Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumba Timur, 2020; Hudang, 2016; Hunga, 2021).

This paper describes three findings: (1) The "invisibility" of *tenun ikat* from policy implementation, and (2) mainstreaming *tenun ikat* in policy implementation through best practices by Rispro LPDP – the Ministry of Finance program.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a Participatory Action Research method from the perspective of gender justice and environmental justice (sustainability), which is a method that is oriented to solving the subject's problems by actively involving them in the entire process right from the start. The method employs three significant matters that function as a unit; they are subjects' participation as an integral part of the researcher, research, and action. Therefore, by involving the subjects in this research together with the researcher as a single unit (package) of activities, the research aims to acquire the changes as desired by

the subjects (Gatenby & Humphries, 2000; Hunga, 2016; Kindon et al., 2007). In this case, the subjects are *tenun ikat* weavers who work with the researchers to determine their problems and needs. Next, they (both subjects and researchers) formulate an action plan (research and action) and measure the accomplishments to determine the next step.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The “Invisibility” of *Tenun Ikat* in Policy Implementation

In the last 10 years, *tenun ikat* has grown to a household-based micro-scale industry, which becomes the most numerous, fast-growing, and significant industry. Data from Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumba Timur (2020) shows that *tenun ikat* industry reaches 2,548 business units, or 61.31% of the total industry, absorbing 4,768 workers or 62.61% in East Sumba Regency. There are 18 types of processing industries in East Sumba and *tenun ikat pahikung* dominates the industry or almost 62% (Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Sumba Timur, 2020). There are 4,146 *tenun ikat pahikung* business units spread across 22 sub-districts (60% of villages in East Sumba). In a focus group discussion conducted with the owners of *tenun ikat* industry, it is estimated that the number of *tenun ikat pahikung* businesses is actually higher because they have not been properly recorded and formally organized. It is estimated that there are 5,000 *tenun ikat* business unit, which spreads over several clusters covering almost 50 villages in East Sumba Regency, and the business absorbs roughly 15,000 workers. These businesses are home-based, informal, unlicensed, and most of them are women's businesses.

*Tenun ikat* is known and has become a female power rooted in the local wisdom. Women and *tenun ikat* are closely related to gender construction, one of which is in the marriage custom called *belis* or dowry. In *belis*, *tenun ikat* is a part of *bola ngandi*, a female symbol exchanged for cattle and gold as a male symbol. Therefore, *tenun ikat* becomes the identity and existence of women in the community. The unity of symbols and meanings, as well as their wide-ranging uses, presents *tenun ikat* not only as mere garment for clothing, but it also contains multiple meanings and functions related to women's lives, as well as its socio-cultural, economic, environmental, and spiritual aspects (Hunga, 2016, 2021; Kapita, 1976b, 1976a).

Therefore, the regeneration of women and *tenun ikat* can be seen in the learning and formation of female *tenun* actors, which is called *Kawinni Gilling*. This term is an expression of knowledge and skill in the blue color of *tenun ikat* cloth, which requires difficulty and patience. Commonly, they occupy strategic positions and even prestige that they become the role model of every woman and perfect wife-material for men and families, as well as relatively high dowry. *Kawinni Gilling* can be recognized physically through their nails, fingers, and their blue-stained hands, which are the symbols of women who are diligent, skilled, and good at making money in the family. Thus, it is common to note *tenun ikat* as a female domain, which is strengthened by the social value of “*pamali*” for men to be involved in the process of acquiring blue color (*gilling*) in *tenun ikat* (Hunga, 2021).

However, the narrative is overlooked, even almost invisible as modernization aggressively takes over Sumba, and economy and market are intensifying. At the same time, the diminution process of meaning occurs towards commoditization through a demystification process of the value of ‘*pamali*’ to facilitate the acceleration process, and the inclusion of male actors in all work chains, especially the blue color (*gilling*). The dialectic of 'new' actors and structures forms a space in the system for 'new' actors and at the same time marginalizes female *tenun* actors from their attachment to nature, natural color materials, and endless exploration in eco-friendly creations of *tenun ikat*. The narrative (logic and practice) of male *tenun* actors is an expression of patriarchy that meets the narrative of capitalism in poverty. They converge for the acceleration of economy and production through the use of chemical colors, achieving quantity and scale of production, rapid marketing, and immediate revenue. The knowledge of “perception” and balance is obviously inconsequential and overlooked for both systems. This implicates on the fact that *tenun* changes its meaning into mere money-making machine and loses its original meaning as a narrative of women's ‘deepest’ expression with nature, family, and society, as well as their God. The narrative fades and few people know the “background story” of *tenun ikat*. As a result, women are subordinated and even marginalized and exploited. Women are marginalized from the central arena of *tenun ikat* and they are valued unequally in Sumba society which is still dominated by men through patriarchy. However, in the midst of the onslaught of the commodification of *tenun ikat* products, there are still female actors who continue to maintain the original ecofriendly culture of *tenun ikat* (Hartmann, 1976; Shiva & Mies, 2005).

*Tenun ikat* developed naturally and traditionally, and the industry seemed to take place in an empty space without a system that regulates the production and marketing relations, as well as the distribution of economic resources originating from production and marketing activities. As an implication, *tenun ikat* as the main source of income does not develop significantly in alleviating poverty in this area. This is an irony because *tenun ikat* is highly valued as work of art, fetches high price, and becomes the target of world collectors who will pay great monetary value for it; however, at the same time, it does not have a significant economic impact on the producers. Inefficient production and marketing circulation, lengthy marketing chain, inaccessible market information, and limited innovation and technology are complexities in the development of *ikat* in East Sumba Regency. They often use “*ijon*” system to reduce the waiting time for their goods to be sold. The urgent need for money forces them to sell their products at low cost. This condition initiates high number of weavers who are ensnared in debt and inhibits capital accumulation for business development. Another serious problem in the last five years has been the influx of “imitation” *tenun ikat* and other weaving products originated from outside East Sumba, which increasingly threatens the original product. There have been many 'imitation' *tenun ikat* from Java, for example from Jepara, Pekalongan, Klaten, and other *tenun* clusters in Java.

The younger generation's interest in *tenun ikat* also dwindles, which is mainly caused by low wage in *tenun* businesses. They only earn IDR 200,000 per cloth with an average working time of 50 effective working days. The younger generation is more interested in working outside the island of Sumba to become international female workers (*Tenaga Kerja Wanita/TKW* or *Tenaga Kerja Indonesia/TKI*). In addition, systematic regeneration is a problem because skills in *tenun* is not included in formal/non-formal school curriculum. This is a serious problem for the sustainability of *tenun ikat*. Another serious issue is the protection of East Sumba *tenun ikat* to prevent plagiarism and the recognition of *tenun ikat* products produced by other parties and people outside East Sumba.

### **Mainstreaming *Tenun Ikat* in Policies: Best Practice of Rispro LPDP - Kemenkeu Program**

The logical framework of this research is built using the concepts of agent, agency, and praxis in the system of thought (Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 2010), which is developed in the policy network theory (Rhodes, 1990). It is finally integrated in the perspective of ecofeminism (Shiva & Mies, 2005) because the main issue of *tenun ikat* is closely related to gender and resources.

The logical framework in the research context related to the transformation of *tenun ikat* clusters is formed through several steps. First, agents (actors) in *tenun ikat pahikung* cluster are selected because they have a strategic role in social practice in the system that have the potential to become agents of change in the transformation of *tenun ikat pahikung* cluster, both at micro (inter-cluster), medium (between clusters), and wider macro level in East Sumba and its relation (networking) with those outside of Sumba. Secondly, The process of understanding and synergizing the strategic role of actors comes from their habits, which are considered as a mental or cognitive structure that direct the actors to use their capital in dealing with systems in a certain space (arena) and time. The capital could be in the form of knowledge, skills, and authority/power that comes from local socio-cultural capital that already exists in *tenun ikat pahikung* system (cluster). The structure of space also determines the praxis of agents (personally or collectively) in determining the strategies to maintain and increase their existence in the system as a space or environment in which the capitals (symbolic, social, economic, and cultural) the actors aim to achieve exist. (Bourdieu, 1977).

Third, the dialectic of actors and structures are created for the distribution of resources. In practice, each actor (individually or collectively) has a different access to valuable resources. This happens because the structured systems tend to be stratified, creating dependency and domination. Therefore, it is necessary to regulate the system in the mobilization of two types of resources: allocative resources that produce economic institutions and authoritative resources that produce political institutions. Meanwhile, legitimacy is related to normative regulation that produces legal institutions (Giddens, 2010). Dialectics between actors and structures that create a network of actors, both personal and community, are important in the efforts to create a more equitable distribution of resources (Ritzer, 2014). The distribution of resources is an issue that has prompted attention to the theory of networks in policy to regulate these resources in the system (Parsons, 2011).

Fourth, the policy network creates a network between actors and institutions in coordinating various interests and resources to ensure the distribution of resources for various parties and the efficiency in the implementation of public policies. Within the institutional framework, the policy network theory emphasizes the principle of regulating actors through a regulatory legitimacy to ensure resource

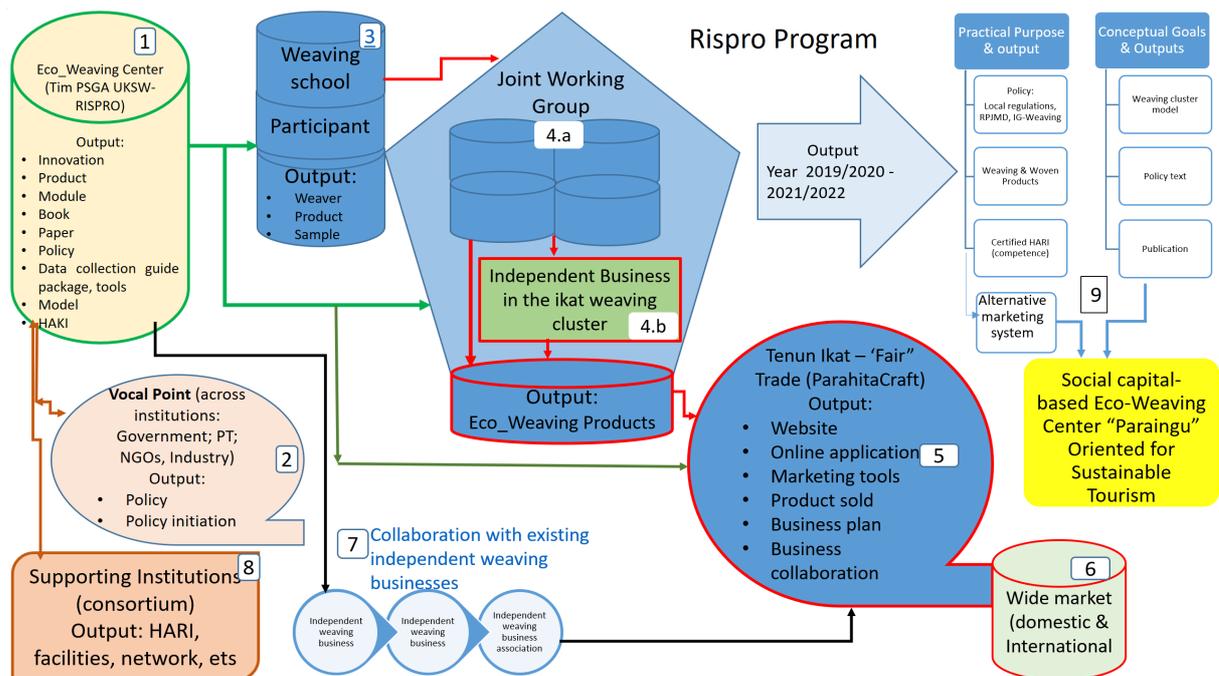
optimization, distribution, representation, behavior formation, and public accountability (Rhodes, 1990). Giddens (2010) defines this as a structural arrangement in forming a system through institutions that provide a regulatory legitimacy in the distribution of allocative and authoritative resources.

Finally, in the context of this research, the actors become focal points in different roles that form a network of actors (agents) in the transformation of *tenun ikat pahikung* cluster in a wider scope; thus, the actor network is placed in micro to macro structure. The unification of actors in networks (asymmetrical) is a concurrent effort to strengthen the capacity of actors individually and collectively to transform the system. In the micro structure, it is directed at strengthening and expanding *tenun ikat pahikung* cluster as a system that supports the dynamics of actors for the distribution of resources to produce *tenun ikat pahikung* products. In the medium-macro structure, it is an effort to integrate policy makers to be part of team who would encourage *tenun ikat pahikung* as a strategic sector in the policies of the East Sumba district government. Therefore, the network dialectic of actors and structures encourages to regulate the transformation of system through institutions that provide regulatory legitimacy in the distribution of allocative and authoritative resources (Giddens, 2010; Ritzer, 2014).

The relevance of ecofeminism perspective in *tenun ikat* weaving is due to gender inequality and environmental injustice issues at the same time. Gender issues are closely related to the gender construction of agents, agencies and their praxis in producing *tenun ikat pahikung* products. At the same time, strategic resource management issues are closely related to the environment. The simultaneous interrelation of two issues exists in the system and creates poverty problems, especially in the community of *tenun ikat pahikung*, most of which are women (Hunga, 2016, 2021).

The fifth aspect is the engineering management of *tenun ikat*. Referring to the problems above, a 'new' redefinition and reconstruction is needed in placing *tenun ikat* as an economic power based on local wisdom that not only provides space for women's economies but also solves poverty problems through strategies to create connectivity and synergy in East Sumba more broadly. Therefore, the dissemination of *tenun ikat pahikung* cluster engineering is then carried out in East Sumba. The model developed is an adaptation of the model developed in a batik cluster in Central Java Province in 2013, which was subsequently initiated and adapted according to the context of East Sumba Regency in 2018, and it was then strengthened through Productive Innovative Research (*Riset Inovatif Produktif/RISPRO*) by LPDP-the Ministry of Finance for 2019/2020 fiscal year. There are three sub-systems that we need to consider in the adaptation process of this model. They are *tenun ikat* as a unit placed in the context of dialectical interactions and cultural resources in '*Paraingu*', natural resources, and related creative sources, which support each other in the context of *tenun ikat* cluster.

This Conceptual-Adaptive Model is further developed into an operational governance model of *tenun ikat* in East Sumba Regency which relies on a system at three levels. First, in general, *tenun ikat* is placed as a unified (general) system in the system of Sumba community that determines the existence of *tenun ikat* in the context of dialectical interaction with three sub-systems in it: cultural resources in '*Paraingu*', natural resources, and other related creative sources. All three sub systems are contained within the context of *tenun ikat* cluster in '*Paraingu*'. Second, at a more specific level, *tenun ikat* exists in clusters, then these three sub-systems are integrated into three specific sub-systems of *tenun ikat* in a more holistic-integrative and cross-sectoral (intersectional) way. The three sub-systems are *tenun ikat* as a product of creative work based on local wisdom and knowledge, human resources of *tenun ikat* weavers (both female and male) as agents with their specific roles in the system, and institutionalization as a system that regulates the relations of actors (governance) that determines distribution and sustainability. Third, in the operational stage, the above governance model is translated into nine work packages, so it forms a management system of local wisdom-based *tenun ikat* in '*Paraingu*' social capital, which emphasizes the principles of justice in human relations (gender) and sustainability. Therefore, this operationalization model requires a holistic-integrative and cross-sectoral (intersectional) approach. The Operational Model for the Development of *Tenun Ikat* Creative Industries Based on Local Knowledge and Sustainable '*Paraingu*' Social Capital in East Sumba Regency can be seen in Figure 1 (page 125).



**Figure 1.** Ikat Weaving Governance Engineering

There are three best practices by the Focal Points that will be presented, which include the effort to unify focal points. The unification of Focal Point is not challenging because focal points/actors both as individuals and as a group have different knowledge and skills, as well as different authority and power in the system. This requires a strategy on how to find, shape, and formulate the role of each focal point to form a single unit (network). Actors as focal points are very important because they are the ones who have the knowledge and access to policy makers to “voice” the reason why *tenun ikat* should be noticed and included in the policies and government programs. The actors’ initiative to incorporate *tenun ikat* as an integral part of the East Sumba Regency government's policy has actually been discussed since 1991. However, the discussion did not proceed further, and it became a forgotten “voice” from the marginalized group.

This “voice” had its moment when *tenun* motif from East Sumba was claimed by a businessman from Jepara as a Jepara product. Plagiarism practice of *tenun* Sumba emerged in public and garnered many public responses, including the East Nusa Tenggara Provincial government and the observers of Sumba *tenun ikat*. This fact raises a shared awareness of the importance of protecting and regenerating East Sumba *tenun ikat* for its sustainability. The awareness is that *tenun ikat* is the identity and pride of Sumba people. This commitment intensifies because it is channeled through “*Lawu Hundarangga – Hinggi Ru'u Patuala*” Community on 27 May 2018. This community consists of representatives of elements of *tenun ikat* actors, observers, community leaders, government, and East Sumba Regency Local Parliament (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah/DPRD*). Interestingly, some of the Focal Point actors are men. The willingness of these men is certainly not uncommon because they come from a family of weavers. Even though they are not weavers themselves, they have the awareness that they (along with their families) will get benefits from *tenun ikat* in their lives, for example to afford schooling, establish businesses, and serve as a symbolic capital to increase prestige and family identity.

The second practice is Focal Point in the “negotiation room”. If we use Bourdieu's (1977) framework, we can illustrate that the actors (focal points) are creative actors who already have the knowledge, skills, and awareness that *tenun ikat* is a capital (economic, social, cultural, and symbolic) sourced from Sumbanese knowledge. They are also well acquainted with the arena/space that can be used, developed, and transformed to encourage *tenun* to become an integral part of policies and programs. This framework/logic of thinking is in Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) language as a habit that is formed based on everyday lives and all of which encourage their actions and commitments related to *tenun ikat*. This framework of thought and practice becomes the strength of the actors to bring the discourse to the negotiation level in order to integrate *tenun ikat* in the implementation of policy, and subsequently the issue is then mainstreamed in the government programs. In a series of discussions, it is also revealed that the praxis of Focal Point needs a formal umbrella in order to gain negotiating power and Giddens

(2010) perceives this as a regulatory legitimacy in the distribution of allocative and authoritative resources.

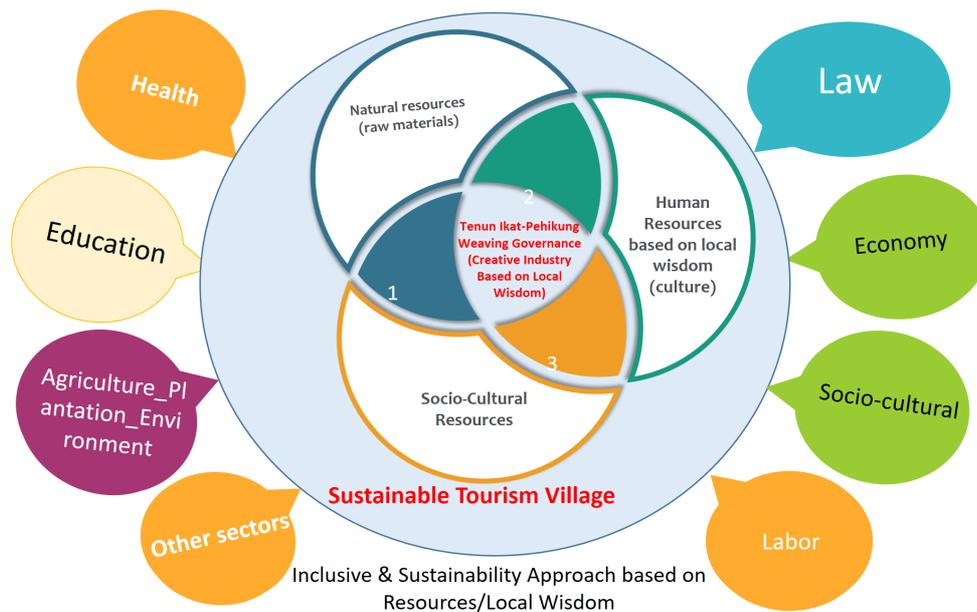
Therefore, "*Lawu Hundarangga - Hinggi Ru'u Patuala*" community's commitment is further strengthened in order to obtain a formal basis, which is the team of *Masyarakat Perlindungan Indikasi Geografis Tenun Ikat-Pahikung (MPIG Tenun Ikat - Pahikung)*. In this team, the Focal Points gain formality through East Sumba Regent's Decree according to their roles in their respective environments (Government, Local Parliament, Higher Education, *tenun* communities, and other supporting institutions) to access policy-making spaces to integrate *tenun ikat* in the policy implementation. Afterwards, the authors in collaboration with the MPIG team conduct a Focus Group Discussion to unite people's perception and then formulate the problems and needs, as well as action plans as a recommendation (policy brief) to the government and East Sumba Regency Local Parliament. For the authors, this process is an interesting lesson because academics, practitioners, politicians, and entrepreneurs attempt to provide spaces for dialogue to gain integrated knowledge and understanding of *tenun ikat* in the early days and current needs. Also, it is the forum to discuss various strategies to ensure that *tenun ikat* is integrated to related sectors and to support the sustainability of *tenun ikat* in its human resources, natural resources as the source of materials, raw materials, marketing, institutions, facilities and infrastructure, protection and regeneration.

The last practice is the praxis of focal point in the system. They are involved in overseeing the integration of *tenun ikat* in the government policies (RPJMD), managing the implementation of each regional apparatus programs or inter regional apparatus programs, and preparing the geographical indications of *tenun ikat* and the draft of Local Regulation on the Protection of *Tenun Ikat*. This section is a crucial part because it requires the strategic work of actors to find the problems and needs of *tenun ikat* in their respective sectors. For example, in agricultural sector, the problems and needs for *tenun ikat* is related to natural dye resources from plants in *tenun ikat* cluster, the alternative natural dye resources for *tenun ikat*, the extraction technology and practical guidance for weavers to use alternative natural dye resources, and so forth.

Therefore, the focus group discussions are conducted in stages, in each sector (Regional Apparatus Organization or *Organisasi Perangkat Daerah/OPD*) and then across OPD to find cross-cutting strategic issues. For the authors, this process is an important learning process, as the actors collectively learn about the subject (*tenun ikat*) as a unit from several aspects/sectors during this stage. In this series of discussions, Focal Points collectively formulate the significance of *tenun ikat* as a strategic issue to be used as the basis for integrating it into the design of technocrats that will be proposed as a draft for RPJMD to the elected Regent for the period of 2021-2026. Parallel to this series of discussion, a small team of focal points also work on the academic manuscripts and the actual draft of the local regulation on *tenun ikat* to be submitted to East Sumba Local Parliament.

In the system, "*Ruang Tenun Ikat*" (literal translation: *Tenun Ikat* Room) is the key word for integrating *tenun ikat* in the RPJMD of East Sumba Regency 2021-2025. Opening this space is tantamount to opening a dialogue, creating 'new' knowledge and arguments that could form the basis for legitimacy to include *tenun ikat* into policy recommendations. The focal points' strategy in building a network of actors at the actor level and strategic actors in sectors and across sectors as well as at the level of policy making is extremely crucial to include *tenun ikat* as its final output.

Furthermore, the personal and collective capacity of focal points in revealing the facts of poverty, the loss of resources, and the need of resources are often overlooked. There is also the need to develop the logic and perspective of *tenun ikat* within other sectors and its relevance in the context of the sustainability of East Sumba's socio-cultural capital. This becomes the main discourse within the negotiation room. Focal points (groups) in collaboration with other parties in a team succeeds in formulating three priority programs to solve poverty and sustainability problems in East Sumba. Figure 2 below describes several findings. They include three priority programs that are integrated and managed with inclusive and sustainable principles. First, integrated and sustainable agriculture and farming are directed to be managed through the transfer of appropriate technology based on local resources. This sector is directed to provide local food through institutions based in villages from the aspect of sustainability. Second, *tenun ikat* is a promising sub-sector that is promoted in a local wisdom-based creative industry which will focus not only to create jobs, but also to attract tourism and investment that strengthen local communities. Third, tourism is projected to be integrated with agriculture-livestock and *tenun ikat*-creative economy as shown in Figure 2 (page 126).



**Figure 2.** Logical Framework for Mainstreaming Ikat Weaving in the Long-Term Regional Development Plan of East Sumba Regency 2021-2026

By the time this paper was written, the importance of *tenun ikat* had been included in the discussion of East Sumba Regency Local Parliament and the RPJMD discussion team of the elected Regent for 2021-2026 period.

## CONCLUSION

In order to escape from poverty and maintain the sustainability of *tenun ikat* in East Sumba, the governance of *tenun ikat* based on internal strength is needed to build resilience through actors individually and collectively. *Tenun ikat* should be governed through the transformation of local wisdom-based *tenun ikat* clusters and sustainable “paraingu” social capital. The research employs several conceptual frameworks such as agent, agency, and agent network from the perspective of ecofeminism. The research method used is Participatory Action Research from the ecofeminism perspective.

The results showed several findings. They include the fact that *tenun ikat pahikung* is a strategic sector even though it is often overlooked as a part of daily economy. The “invisibility” of *tenun ikat* is mainly caused by modernization and capitalization of *tenun ikat* products, in which it reduces the value of *tenun ikat* to mere commoditized product, and in a patriarchal society, it is seen as women’s product in the fringes.

Second, the actors become focal points in different roles that form a network of actors (agents) in the transformation of *tenun ikat pahikung* cluster in broader scope, in which the network of actors is placed in both micro and macro structure. In the micro structure, it is directed at strengthening and expanding the cluster itself as a system that supports the dynamics of actors for the distribution of resources as an effort to produce *tenun ikat pahikung* products. In the medium-macro structure, it is done as an effort to integrate policy-making actors to become part of transforming *tenun ikat pahikung* as a strategic sector in the policies of East Sumba Regency government. Finally, the praxis of focal points is significant in the transformation of local wisdom-based *tenun ikat* system and the supervision of the integration of *tenun ikat* in the policy implementation as stated in RPJMD of East Sumba Regency of 2021-2025.

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