

Synergy in resolving border disputes after regional expansion: a case study of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Langsa City

Sinergitas dalam penyelesaian sengketa perbatasan pasca pemekaran wilayah: studi kasus Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Kota Langsa

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ABSTRACT

The determination of village boundaries is a crucial aspect of village governance to ensure legal certainty, administrative order, and the prevention of conflicts between villages. However, in practice, boundary disputes still frequently occur, as experienced by Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Langsa Lama District, Langsa City, following the regional expansion in 2010. The lack of clear administrative boundaries has led to various issues, including land ownership disputes, difficulties in resource management, and obstacles to public service delivery. This study employs an empirical legal method with a sociological approach. Data were collected through field observations, interviews with village officials, and an analysis of relevant regulations, such as Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages and Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 45 of 2016. The findings indicate that efforts to resolve the dispute have been undertaken, including field inspections and the creation of a territorial map, but these have not yet resulted in final legal certainty. A multi-faceted approach is required, involving administrative measures through boundary remapping, legal measures through binding village regulations, and social measures through mediation and customary deliberation. These steps are expected to resolve the boundary dispute fairly and sustainably.

Keywords: Synergy, dispute, boundary marker, expansion, Meurandeh Dayah.

ABSTRAK

Penetapan batas desa merupakan aspek krusial dalam tata kelola pemerintahan desa guna menjamin kepastian hukum, ketertiban administrasi, serta mencegah konflik antar desa. Namun, dalam praktiknya, sengketa batas wilayah masih kerap terjadi, seperti yang dialami oleh Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Kecamatan Langsa Lama, Kota Langsa, pasca pemekaran wilayah pada tahun 2010. Ketidakjelasan batas administratif telah menimbulkan berbagai permasalahan, termasuk sengketa kepemilikan lahan, kesulitan dalam pengelolaan sumber daya, dan hambatan dalam penyelenggaraan pelayanan publik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode yuridis empiris dengan pendekatan sosiologis. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi lapangan, wawancara dengan aparatur desa, serta analisis terhadap regulasi terkait, seperti Undang-Undang Nomor 6 Tahun 2014 tentang Desa dan Peraturan Menteri Dalam Negeri Nomor 45 Tahun 2016. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa upaya penyelesaian sengketa telah dilakukan, termasuk inspeksi lapangan dan pembuatan peta wilayah, namun belum menghasilkan kepastian hukum yang final. Diperlukan pendekatan yang menyeluruh, mencakup langkah administratif melalui pemetaan ulang batas wilayah, langkah hukum melalui peraturan desa yang mengikat, serta langkah sosial melalui mediasi dan musyawarah adat. Langkah-langkah ini diharapkan dapat menyelesaikan sengketa batas wilayah secara adil dan berkelanjutan..

Kata kunci: Sinergitas; Sengketa; Tapal Batas; Pemekaran; Meurandeh Dayah

1. INTRODUCTION

Each region possesses its own autonomy based on territorial characteristics. The autonomy of regions, particularly at the village level is implemented through various policy regulations, one of which is Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages. A common legal issue at the village level is boundary disputes, which are highly likely to occur, especially in villages with abundant natural resources and significant regional economic development potential.

The establishment and affirmation of village boundaries are crucial steps in ensuring legal certainty, administrative order, and effective resource management. This also supports village autonomy and prevents conflicts that could harm the community. The affirmation of village boundaries is not merely a formality but an integral part of sustainable village development and management (Suardita & Adrie, 2023).

Village boundaries play a crucial role in defining territorial limits and jurisdiction. Clear boundary delineation enables each village to manage its natural resources, infrastructure, and public services in a more structured manner. Additionally, village boundaries help prevent disputes between villages, safeguard the rights and obligations of each party, and clarify the jurisdiction of village governance. Overall, the purpose of boundary establishment is to promote peace, order, and sustainable progress at the regional level (Walker & Peters, 2001).

To prevent conflicts between villages, over territorial boundaries, consistent coordination among all stakeholders, including the government, is essential. Conflict resolution requires an approach that involves all relevant stakeholders and the consistent enforcement of laws legal norms. Thus, a well-defined village boundary can support social and economic stability at the village level (Hasim et al., 2025). For example, in remote areas with several small villages, clear boundaries help ensure that each village has control over its own land and resources. This prevents conflicts over grazing rights, water access, or other valuable assets that may arise in the absence of well-defined boundaries.

Technically, the framework for delineating village boundary patches is articulated in Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 45 of 2016 on Guidelines for Determining Village Boundaries. Essentially, this regulation governs the procedures and technical directives related to the establishment of village boundaries in Indonesia. The primary objective of this regulation is to provide a clear and systematic guide for village boundary delineation to minimize conflicts and ensure efficient regional administration.

Clear boundaries are not only essential for preventing disputes between villages but also for supporting more structured regional management and development. The Minister of Home Affairs Regulation also emphasizes the importance of community consultation and participation at every stage of the process, as well as the active role of local governments in facilitating and resolving issues (Black & Andersen, 2012). However, in some cases, strict regulations can hinder innovation and economic growth, as seen in areas where zoning laws restrict the types of businesses that can operate. Additionally, excessive government involvement in boundary disputes may cause to bureaucratic delays and inefficiencies, hampering timely resolution and causing frustration among the affected parties (Putra, 2021).

Border issues between villages, despite being regulated by law and guaranteed by the state, continue to occur. Conflicts over disputed areas are still prevalent, and one common problem in many regions between villages is the establishment of administrative boundaries. This is a crucial initial step in preventing border conflicts (Kalempang, 2018). However, these boundaries are often not clearly defined, or there may be misunderstandings between villages regarding land disputes that frequently arise in border areas between villages.

One common debate among villages concerns boundary disputes that arise as a consequence of regional expansion. Upon further examination, this process can yield beneficial outcomes. The process of regional division is carried out by splitting an area into two or more distinct regions, thereby serving as a mechanism to establish new areas as autonomous entities (Kusuma & Sintasari, 2023). The occurrence of regional expansion, emerged from

increasing spatial openness and opportunities granted to local governments to create new regions, which is a strategic step in advancing regional autonomy. This phenomenon is further supported by extensive geographical developments, heterogeneity of social conditions, and population growth, all of which significantly influence the capacity of local governments to pursue equitable development through regional expansion. The proliferation of regions underscores the need to clearly delineate boundaries between areas to prevent potential disputes among communities (Budijaya & Heryanto, 2024).

Therefore, the determination of territorial boundaries has been one of the ongoing issues in Indonesia, as these boundaries relate to various factors such as politics and the wealth of natural resources present in the area. Boundary issues arise, leading to overlapping borders between villages. Complications in establishing village boundary markers result in disputes over village boundaries, creating ambiguity in determining new boundaries between villages. This, in turn, leads to conflicts among the villages involved regarding the distribution of resources, administration, and public services, inequities in development, legal understanding and land ownership, community involvement, and coordination between villages (Gosal et al., 2025).

This is the situation experienced by Gampong Meurandeh Dayah with several other Gampongs within its vicinity. Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, located in the Langsa Lama District of Langsa City in Aceh Province, is one of the Gampongs formed from the division of the original Gampong Meurandeh in 2010, which was split into four (4) different Gampongs: Gampong Meurandeh Aceh, Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Gampong Meurandeh Tengah, and Gampong Meurandeh. This is reflected in the provisions of Article 2, paragraph (1) of Qanun Number 4 of 2010 concerning Amendments to Qanun of Langsa City Number 10 of 2008 on the Establishment of Gampongs in Langsa City. This division has resulted in boundary disputes among the four Gampongs. The division has led to changes in the shape of the Gampong areas, so any form of arrangement in each village will affect the administrative areas of each Gampong, especially since this division has created uncertainty regarding the boundary markers in Gampong Meurandeh Dayah.

The boundaries of Gampong Meurandeh were determined by several natural markers, such as rivers that form boundary lines, ditches, and other unclear physical markers. Unfortunately, this condition has led many residents to be unaware of the exact location of the Gampong Meurandeh Dayah boundaries. Additionally, the expansion of the area has also posed new challenges, where the government of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah faces difficulties in determining the residency status of its citizens. This is due to the shifting boundaries of residential land, where areas that were once part of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah on the southern side, adjacent to Gampong Meurandeh Tengah, have now shifted under the jurisdiction of Gampong Meurandeh Tengah. This change has created problems for Gampong Meurandeh Dayah in managing governance activities related to the distribution of resources, administration, and public services, leading to disruptions. This change has sparked ongoing disputes between the two Gampongs that remain unresolved.

Based on the above description, this study addresses the following questions: 1) What are the legal policies related to the determination of territorial boundaries based on regulatory provisions in Indonesia? and 2) How is the synergy of the Gampong Meurandeh Dayah government in determining its territorial boundaries? The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze the legal frameworks related to the determination of territorial boundaries based on the applicable regulations in Indonesia. It also aims to explore the synergy of the Gampong Meurandeh Dayah government in determining its territorial boundaries. This research presents several significant contributions to the framework of boundary delineation in Indonesia, with a particular emphasis on Gampong Meurandeh Dayah.

The following points of innovation have been identified:

1. **Emphasis on Local Context:** This research carefully investigates Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, based on an examination of data from Gampong Meurandeh. By prioritizing the

- local context, the research provides in-depth insights into the social, political, and economic dynamics that influence boundary demarcation at the village level. This approach differs from many previous studies that generally lack specificity and fail to engage with particular cases.
2. **Analysis of Governance Synergy:** This research examines the interaction between the Gampong government and the local community in the formation of territorial boundaries. Through the analysis of collaborative efforts and communication between these two stakeholders, this research offers a new perspective on the importance of community involvement in the decision-making process regarding territorial boundaries.
 3. **Holistic Understanding of Boundary Issues:** By synthesizing these diverse perspectives, including administrative authority, local wisdom, and lived experiences of community members, the research is able to present a more holistic understanding of the challenges and potential resolutions that may arise during boundary delineation. This includes not only institutional dynamics and legal complexities but also cultural, historical, and interpersonal dimensions that are often overlooked in more formalistic or top-down studies.
 4. **Practical Policy Recommendations:** Based on insights gained from the findings, this research aims to provide actionable policy recommendations for implementation by local governments and Gampong authorities. These recommendations are anticipated to facilitate the mitigation of boundary disputes and enhance resource management at the village level, particularly through the clarification of jurisdictional responsibilities and the promotion of inclusive dialogue mechanisms that can prevent prolonged or escalated conflicts.
 5. **Contribution to Legal and Social Literature:** By illuminating issues related to territorial boundaries and the resulting conflicts, this research makes a significant contribution to the legal and social literature in Indonesia. It explores the intersection of statutory law and customary practices, and demonstrates how local governance arrangements can either exacerbate or resolve spatial disputes. It is hoped that this research can serve as a foundational reference for future investigations into village autonomy, legal pluralism, and natural resource management in rural settings.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs an empirical legal research method. Empirical legal research on field-based facts. This research observes human behavior through interviews and direct observation (Leavy, 2017). The approach applied is a sociological approach. The research was conducted in Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Langsa Lama District, Langsa City. Primary data were obtained through direct observation of the research objects, as well as through direct interviews with informants to complement the data needed (Angkasa et al., 2019; Bachtiar, 2018). The secondary legal materials in this study include Indonesian regulatory legislation, including the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia and related laws concerning the research object. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews with village officials and 50 community members, as well as literature studies which include law books, law journals, and scientific works which aim to analyze and evaluate the synergy of the village government in determining territorial boundaries to create legal certainty for the community.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Legal Policies Related to the Determination of Territorial Boundaries Based on Regulatory Provisions in Indonesia

The Republic of Indonesia is a unitary state based on law. Following the amendments to the 1945 Constitution (hereinafter referred to as the UUD 1945), this country

constitutionally recognizes regions with special and distinct characteristics, as stipulated in Article 18B, paragraph (2) of the UUD 1945. This recognition serves as the foundation for the implementation of autonomy, aimed at realizing the ideals of autonomy (Ulya, 2014). One example of this is the Province of Aceh, which was designated as a region with special autonomy status through Law Number 18 of 2001, and subsequently reinforced by Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Government of Aceh (Syahzevianda et al., 2019).

The Government's policy in this regard aims to provide greater flexibility to the Aceh government in managing and governing its region (Armia, 2017). Within the framework of special autonomy, Aceh is granted greater authority compared to other provinces in Indonesia, including natural resource management, Islamic law implementation, and political and governance regulations (Ulya, 2016). This is intended to restore peace and recognize the rights of the customs and culture present in Aceh.

The authority of local governments in determining boundary markers is also part of the autonomy granted to regions, including Aceh (Syahzevianda et al., 2019). In this case, local governments have the right to establish and regulate their administrative boundaries in accordance with applicable regulations. However, the determination of these boundaries must be carried out with consideration for coordination with the central government to avoid overlapping or ambiguous regional boundaries.

At a smaller level, this authority also applies at the gampong (village) level, which has the right to manage its territory, including in terms of spatial planning and the utilization of natural resources. This is in line with Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, which grants extensive authority to village governments in managing the potential within their regions, while also ensuring the sustainability of village development through the active participation of local communities. Since the enactment of the Village Law, the position of villages has been strengthened, allowing them to play a crucial role in local governance and development (Nadir, 2013).

Indonesian law regulates the procedures for determining village boundaries, as outlined in Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation No. 45 of 2016 concerning Guidelines for Establishing Village Boundaries (hereinafter referred to as Permendagri No. 45 of 2016). This regulation defines village boundaries as separators between adjacent villages, which may take the form of natural or artificial boundaries. Furthermore, according to Article 1, Point 9 of Permendagri No. 45 of 2016, a village boundary is defined as the administrative territorial division between villages, represented by a series of coordinate points on the Earth's surface. These boundaries may include natural features such as mountain ridges (watersheds), river medians, and/or artificial features in the field, which are recorded in the form of maps.

Article 1, Point 7 of Permendagri No. 45 of 2016 states that "village boundaries are divided into two types: natural boundaries and artificial boundaries." Natural boundaries, as defined in this regulation, include natural features such as mountains, rivers, coastlines, lakes, and other elements that are designated or recognized as natural boundaries. Furthermore, Point 8 of the same article affirms that "artificial boundaries consist of man-made features such as boundary pillars, roads, railway tracks, irrigation channels, and other elements that are designated or recognized as village boundaries."

Permendagri No. 45 of 2016 mandates that every local government establish and reinforce village boundaries. The implementation of this regulation is based on Article 106 of Government Regulation No. 72 of 2005 on Villages (hereinafter referred to as PP No. 72 of 2005). The determination and reinforcement of village boundaries are crucial programs as they provide legal certainty regarding village limits. The purpose of this initiative is to define the jurisdiction and administrative authority of village heads in implementing the regional autonomy governance system (Suardita & Adrie, 2023).

The establishment and reinforcement of village boundaries are regulated under Permendagri No. 45 of 2016, which replaces Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 27 of

2006 on the same matter. However, Permendagri No. 45 of 2016 does not eliminate existing land rights, customary rights (*hak ulayat*), indigenous rights, or other community rights.

The purpose of this regulation is to reflect the government's efforts to create administrative order, provide clarity and legal certainty regarding village boundaries, and ensure compliance with technical and legal aspects. The implementation team for determining and reinforcing village boundaries, as stipulated in Permendagri No. 45 of 2016, consists of the Central Government Boundary Determination and Reinforcement Team, the Provincial Boundary Determination and Reinforcement Team, and the Regency/Municipal Boundary Determination and Reinforcement Team.

In relation to this, prior to the enactment of this Ministerial Regulation, Permendagri No. 45 of 2016 outlines the stages for the determination and reinforcement of village boundaries, which include: First Stage : Collection and examination of documents; Second Stage: Creation of a working map. Third Stage : Tracing and determining boundary positions. Fourth Stage : Installation and measurement of boundary pillars. And, Fifth Stage: Creation of the village boundary map.

Before the enactment of Permendagri No. 45 of 2016, the process of determining and reinforcing village boundaries faced several significant shortcomings. First, the lack of clear standard procedures in document collection and examination led to variations in the quality and accuracy of the collected data. This often resulted in uncertainty in the establishment of legitimate boundaries. Second, during the working map creation stage, the lack of community and local stakeholder involvement often resulted in maps that did not accurately reflect real conditions in the field, potentially causing conflicts between neighboring villages. Third, in the tracing and determination of boundary positions, inconsistent measurement methods could lead to errors in boundary location determination. This issue was further exacerbated by insufficient training for personnel involved in the process. Fourth, during the installation and measurement of boundary pillars, inadequate supervision and evaluation often led to improperly installed pillars, reducing the effectiveness of boundary reinforcement. Finally, the creation of the final village boundary map was often not supported by a sufficient verification process, making the resulting maps less accurate and unreliable. All these shortcomings contributed to legal uncertainty and prolonged boundary conflicts between villages (Icayanti et al., 2023). With the enactment of Permendagri No. 45 of 2016, this process is expected to be improved and standardized to address the previously existing issues.

The mitigation of territorial boundary disputes under Permendagri No. 45 of 2016 involves several steps and procedures designed to resolve conflicts that may arise due to unclear or disputed village boundaries. This regulation emphasizes the importance of dialogue, mediation, and administrative resolution before resorting to legal action (Fauzi et al., 2022). The process aims to achieve fair settlements and reduce the potential for future conflicts. With a systematic and collaborative approach, it is expected that boundary disputes can be effectively and peacefully resolved.

3.2 Synergy of the Gampong Meurandeh Dayah Government in Determining Territorial Boundaries

The determination of village boundaries is a crucial aspect in supporting the continuity of village governance. Clear boundary delineation helps establish legal certainty, administrative clarity, and stability in inter-village relations (Helmi et al., 2023). The correlation between these aspects is framed within the principles of recognition and subsidiarity, ensuring that both boundary determination and village formation consider the historical context of the village, the interests of the local community, and the principles of good governance as the fundamental pillars.

Village boundary demarcation is generally a priority for the government, as it clarifies territorial limits. As mandated by the 1945 Constitution, certain governmental affairs fall

entirely under the authority of the central government, known as absolute governmental affairs, while others are classified as concurrent governmental affairs (Kristiono, 2015). However, in regional divisions, a regency/municipality may establish villages as the smallest administrative unit within the government structure. The governance of these villages is assigned by the central government, the provincial government, or the regency/municipal government (Helmi et al., 2023).

In accordance with Qanun No. 4 of 2010 concerning Amendments to Qanun of Langsa City No. 10 of 2008 on the Establishment of Villages (Gampong) in Langsa City, the number of villages increased to 66 as a result of regional expansion. The Langsa Timur District consists of 16 villages, Langsa Lama District has 15 villages, while Langsa Barat District comprises 13 villages. Additionally, Langsa Baro District has 12 villages, and Langsa Kota District consists of 10 villages.

Gampong Meurandeh Dayah was one of the villages formed as a result of the regional expansion within Langsa Lama District. Based on Article 2 Paragraph (1) of Qanun No. 4 of 2010 concerning Amendments to Qanun of Langsa City No. 10 of 2008 on the Establishment of Villages in Langsa City, the following villages were established: Gampong Sukajadi Kebun Ireng, Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Gampong Meurandeh Aceh, Gampong Bate Puteh, and Gampong Seulalah Baru in Langsa Lama District; Gampong Lengkong, Gampong Sukajadi Makmur, and Gampong Alue Dua Bakaran Batee in Langsa Baro District; Gampong Alue Pineung Timue and Gampong Kapa in Langsa Timur District; and Gampong Sungai Pauh Pusaka, Gampong Sungai Pauh Tanjong, Gampong Sungai Pauh Firdaus, and Gampong Serambi Indah in Langsa Barat District.

The aforementioned regional expansion was an effort by the government to expand and facilitate the management of administrative areas while also improving public services and community empowerment. However, this expansion has had several negative impacts, particularly on Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Gampong Meurandeh Aceh, and Gampong Meurandeh Tengah, due to uncertainty in determining their respective territorial boundaries. This has led to tensions between neighboring gampongs, as differences in opinions regarding territorial borders have emerged.

Based on an interview with Asep Ikhwan, Acting Keuchik of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, Langsa City, in 2024, the boundary between Gampong Meurandeh Dayah and Gampong Meurandeh Aceh is marked by a river located to the east of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah (west of Gampong Meurandeh Aceh) (A. Ikhwan, personal interview, 2024). However, this information differs from that of the Secretary of Gampong Meurandeh Aceh, who stated that the boundary of Gampong Meurandeh Aceh extends 50 meters beyond the river.

Additionally, the regional expansion has posed new challenges, as the government of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah faces difficulties in determining the residency status of its inhabitants. This issue arises due to shifts in residential land boundaries, where an area that previously belonged to Gampong Meurandeh Dayah in the southern part, directly adjacent to Gampong Meurandeh Tengah, has since shifted and become part of Gampong Meurandeh Tengah. This change has created complications for Gampong Meurandeh Dayah in carrying out governance activities, particularly in resource allocation, administration, and public services, which have been disrupted. The shift has sparked ongoing disputes between the two gampongs, which remain unresolved to this day.

In response to this issue, the government of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah has undertaken various efforts to resolve the conflict. These efforts include establishing a temporary boundary by considering natural borders between gampongs, conducting field surveys based on the expansion results, and creating a territorial map for Gampong Meurandeh Dayah. While these initiatives have significantly reduced tensions, however, they have not yet fully resolved the issue of territorial certainty. The absence of a final agreement between the three gampongs involved means that the boundary dispute remains an ongoing issue that

requires further dialogue and a clearer mutual agreement to ensure territorial certainty and resolution.

The boundary dispute between Gampong Meurandeh Dayah and Gampong Meurandeh Tengah arose due to the shifting of territorial boundaries following the village expansion. This shift has caused uncertainty in population administration, resource distribution, and public services. Differences in perceptions regarding the boundary lines have also fueled debates between the gampongs, which have yet to reach a final resolution.

The government of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah has implemented several strategic steps to resolve the boundary dispute, including the establishment of a temporary border based on existing natural boundaries, field assessments to identify the area according to the expansion results, and the creation of a territorial map to clarify Gampong Meurandeh Dayah's administrative boundaries. These measures have had a positive impact in reducing tensions between the gampongs. However, they have not yet resulted in a final legal certainty regarding the territorial boundaries.

Several major obstacles in resolving this issue include the absence of a final agreement between the involved gampongs, absence of binding regulations regarding post-expansion territorial boundaries, the absence of a legal decision from the relevant authorities, and the uncertainty of historical and administrative documents that could serve as primary references.

To achieve a more comprehensive and final solution, the following steps can be considered. First, facilitate mediation between the gampongs by the local government to reach a mutually beneficial agreement. Second, involving the National Land Agency (BPN) to conduct a re-measurement and legally determine the boundaries. Third, drafting village regulations or joint agreements between the gampongs that are legally binding. Fourth, adopting a traditional deliberation approach if there are customary mechanisms available for dispute resolution. Lastly, documenting and legalizing territorial boundaries so they can serve as references for future village governance policies.

Resolving the boundary dispute between Gampong Meurandeh Dayah and Gampong Meurandeh Tengah requires a multi-faceted approach encompassing administrative, legal, and social aspects. Although the efforts made so far have reduced tensions, further dialogue and intervention from the relevant authorities are still necessary to produce a legally binding decision. With effective mediation and clear regulatory support, it is hoped that this territorial dispute can be resolved peacefully and fairly for all parties involved.

The resolution of the boundary dispute between Gampong Meurandeh Dayah and Gampong Meurandeh Tengah necessitates a multi-aspect approach, namely administrative, legal, and social. Administratively, re-mapping needs to be conducted with the involvement of the National Land Agency (BPN) and the local government to officially determine the territorial boundaries. Additionally, accurate documentation must be prepared to serve as a legal basis in village governance administration.

From a legal perspective, clear and binding regulations for all involved parties are necessary (Imanda, 2020). An official decision in the form of village regulations or a legal agreement between the gampongs must be formulated with the involvement of relevant authorities, such as the local government and legal institutions. This step aims to provide legal certainty and prevent similar disputes in the future.

From a social perspective, the resolution of the dispute must consider an approach based on customary deliberation and community participation (Lay et al., 2025). The communities of both gampongs need to be involved in discussions and mediation to reach an agreement that is acceptable to all parties. This effort not only helps resolve conflicts peacefully but also strengthens social relations and cooperation between villages.

Although the efforts made so far have reduced tensions, further dialogue and intervention from the relevant authorities are still needed to produce a legally binding

decision (Wagiman et al., 2024). With effective mediation and clear regulatory support, it is hoped that this territorial dispute can be resolved peacefully and fairly for all parties involved.

To ensure sustainable and equitable resolution of village boundary disputes, particularly in areas affected by regional expansion such as Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, several practical policy recommendations can be proposed. First, it is crucial for the municipal government of Langsa, in coordination with the Langsa Lama District administration, to develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for boundary dispute resolution that includes participatory mapping, historical validation, and legal documentation. Second, the integration of spatial data and GIS technology should be prioritized to create accurate and publicly accessible maps that reflect officially agreed-upon boundaries.

Third, the formation of a Village Boundary Dispute Mediation Forum involving village leaders, customary elders, and community representatives could facilitate more inclusive decision-making and foster long-term inter-village cooperation. Fourth, the Aceh Provincial Government, in coordination with the National Land Agency (BPN), should institutionalize boundary verification processes post-expansion as a part of regional planning policy. Lastly, implementing Village Regulation (Qanun Gampong) that codify boundary agreements and administrative responsibilities is vital to ensure enforceability and avoid future disputes.

These policy recommendations are intended not only to resolve the current boundary issue but also to serve as a replicable model for other regions in Aceh or Indonesia facing similar territorial ambiguities after regional expansion.

This study offers a valuable contribution to both legal and social literature in Indonesia by addressing a complex and often underexplored dimension of village governance—territorial boundary demarcation following regional expansion. Legally, the study emphasizes the need for harmonization between national laws, regional autonomy frameworks, and local customary practices, thereby enriching discourses on legal pluralism and multi-level governance in Indonesia. It highlights the role of local regulations, such as Qanun Langsa, as instruments that bridge the gap between state authority and grassroots legal practices.

Socially, the research deepens the understanding of how community perceptions, historical narratives, and socio-cultural affiliations influence administrative disputes. It underscores the importance of community-based conflict resolution mechanisms and participatory governance in promoting social cohesion, particularly in multi-ethnic and pluralistic societies like Aceh.

Furthermore, by focusing on the case of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah, this study not only contributes empirical insights to academic discussions on spatial justice and rural autonomy but also serves as a foundational reference for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners engaged in rural development, land governance, and decentralization in post-conflict or autonomously governed regions.

4. CONCLUSION

The determination of village boundaries in Indonesia is regulated by various laws, including Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages and Minister of Home Affairs Regulation (Permendagri) No. 45 of 2016. These regulations emphasize that village boundaries must be established based on natural or artificial boundaries to ensure legal certainty, maintain orderly administration, and prevent conflicts between villages. However, in practice, boundary determination often faces challenges due to the lack of clear procedural standards and limited community involvement in the process. The boundary dispute between Gampong Meurandeh Dayah and the surrounding villages arose as a result of territorial expansion, leading to administrative boundary uncertainties. Differing perceptions regarding village boundaries have caused tensions between gampongs, particularly in relation to resource allocation and population administration. Efforts to establish temporary boundaries have been made, but they have not yet resulted in final legal certainty.

The government of Gampong Meurandeh Dayah has undertaken various resolution efforts, such as field assessments, the creation of village maps, and the use of natural boundaries as references. However, the absence of a final agreement between the gampongs and the lack of legally binding decisions remain major obstacles to resolving the dispute. The resolution of this conflict requires a multi-faceted approach: Administrative: Conducting boundary remapping with the involvement of the National Land Agency (BPN) and local government. Legal: Establishing village regulations or legally binding agreements. Social: Engaging in mediation through customary deliberations and community involvement to reach a mutually acceptable agreement. With effective mediation, clear regulatory support, and the involvement of all stakeholders, it is hoped that the boundary dispute will be resolved fairly and sustainably.

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