



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT OF SENGONKEREK HAMLET GUNUNG KIDUL THROUGH TRAINING ON KUNIR ASEM CANDY AND SOAP PRODUCTION

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ABSTRACT

Community service activities in Sengonkerep Hamlet, Gunung Kidul, aim to improve residents' skills and economic independence through training in making tamarind candy and dish soap. The training involved a participatory approach, introducing ingredients, production practices, and mentoring. As a result, participants' level of understanding increased from 20% to 80%, and small business income rose from 20% to 75%. In addition, customer satisfaction with the products reached 85%, while participation and cooperation among community members increased to 80%. The program succeeded in improving technical skills and opened up new business opportunities based on local and environmentally friendly materials. For sustainability, further training and strengthening partnerships with various parties to support the marketing and innovation of local products are recommended.

Keywords: *Community Empowerment, Local Innovation, Local Production, Training, Economic Independence*

INTRODUCTION

Sengonkerep hamlet is a village located in the rural area of Gunung Kidul Regency, Yogyakarta, specifically in the Gedangsari District, one of the districts in the northern part of Gunung Kidul Regency. Sengonkerep has 6 RT (neighborhood units) with 150 KK (households). (Gunungkidulkab.go.id 2024). Geographically, the village of Sengonkerep is located in a karst hill area known for its limestone rock formations, which shape the typical landscape of the Gunung Kidul region. This geographical location gives Sengonkerep beautiful natural scenery with high hills, valleys, and natural caves scattered around the area.

Sengonkerep hamlet is located at a latitude of approximately 8° 0' S and a longitude of roughly 110° 36' E, with its northern boundary bordering higher mountainous and hilly areas. To the east, it borders other rural regions of the Gedangsari District, also situated in the mountains. It faces lower areas to the south, heading towards regions closer to the center of Gunung Kidul Regency. The location map of Sengonkerep hamlet can be seen in Figure 1 below.

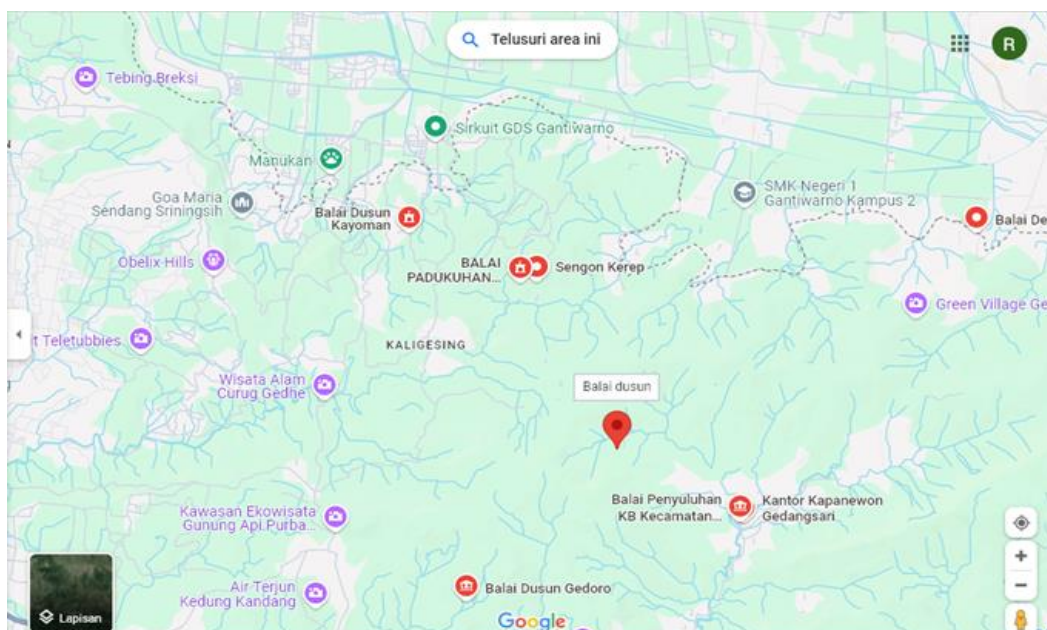


Figure 1. Map of the location of Sengonkerep hamlet

One of the main challenges the Sengonkerep community faces, which often hinders their progress, is the need for more skills in processing the natural resources they possess. One of the natural products of the Sengonkerep community is the tamarind fruit; so far, the community has yet to develop this natural resource fully. Tamarind fruit can be explored as a product with high market value, long shelf life, and the ability to compete in local and regional markets (Wihartanti et al. 2021). It is expected to enhance the economic growth of the Sengonkerep community. Moreover, the need to better understand environmentally friendly and innovative production processes also hinders the creation of new business opportunities. (Sunyoto, Kalijaga, dan Hadi 2023). Optimal management of local resources can be a solution for improving family economic welfare and community independence (Fadhilah et al., 2023).

Based on identifying the problem, this community service activity is designed to train homemakers in Sengonkerep hamlet. This activity focuses on making dish soap and sour candy as an initial step in community empowerment. This training aims to enhance individual skills while encouraging the establishment of community-based micro-enterprises. With this training, the community is expected to be able to create high-quality local products that are competitive in the market.

This training is conducted with a practical and applicative approach that involves introducing materials, production techniques, and guidance in the product creation process. In addition, this activity also emphasizes the development of the community's entrepreneurial potential by efficiently utilizing local resources. Through this training, the community gains technical skills and insights into the importance of innovation, collaboration, and sustainability in developing community-based enterprises.

With this approach, this community service activity is expected to become a solution for the people of Sengonkerep hamlet. Additionally, the success of this program is also expected to serve as a relevant model for community empowerment that can be replicated in other areas facing similar challenges. Through holistic empowerment, the community of Sengonkerep Hamlet can become more economically independent and have more significant opportunities to improve their standard of living.

METHOD

This community service activity is carried out with a participatory approach involving the community directly at every implementation stage. The method includes several stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. (Hidayat dan Mahmudi 2020). Each stage ensures active community involvement, especially among the Dasawisma mothers in Sengonkerep hamlet.

Table 1. Stages of Activity Implementation

Program	Training Materials	Time Allocation
Training	1. How to make tamarind candy 2. How to make dish soap	1 Hour
Direct Practice	Practical demonstration of making tamarind candy and dish soap	4 Hours

Program	Training Materials	Time Allocation
Assistance	Assistance from KKN students in making dish soap and tamarind candy for the mothers of RT 03 Sengonkerep until the dish soap is ready for use and the tamarind candy is prepared for consumption.	3 Hours
Evaluation	Evaluation of the activity of making dish soap and tamarind candy with KKN students.	1 Hour
Total Time		9 Hours

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The training conducted by the team to provide solutions to the problems faced by the Sengonkerep, Sampang, Gedangsari, Gunungkidul community, and Special Region of Yogyakarta can be seen in Figure 2. The implementation results are explained in the next section.

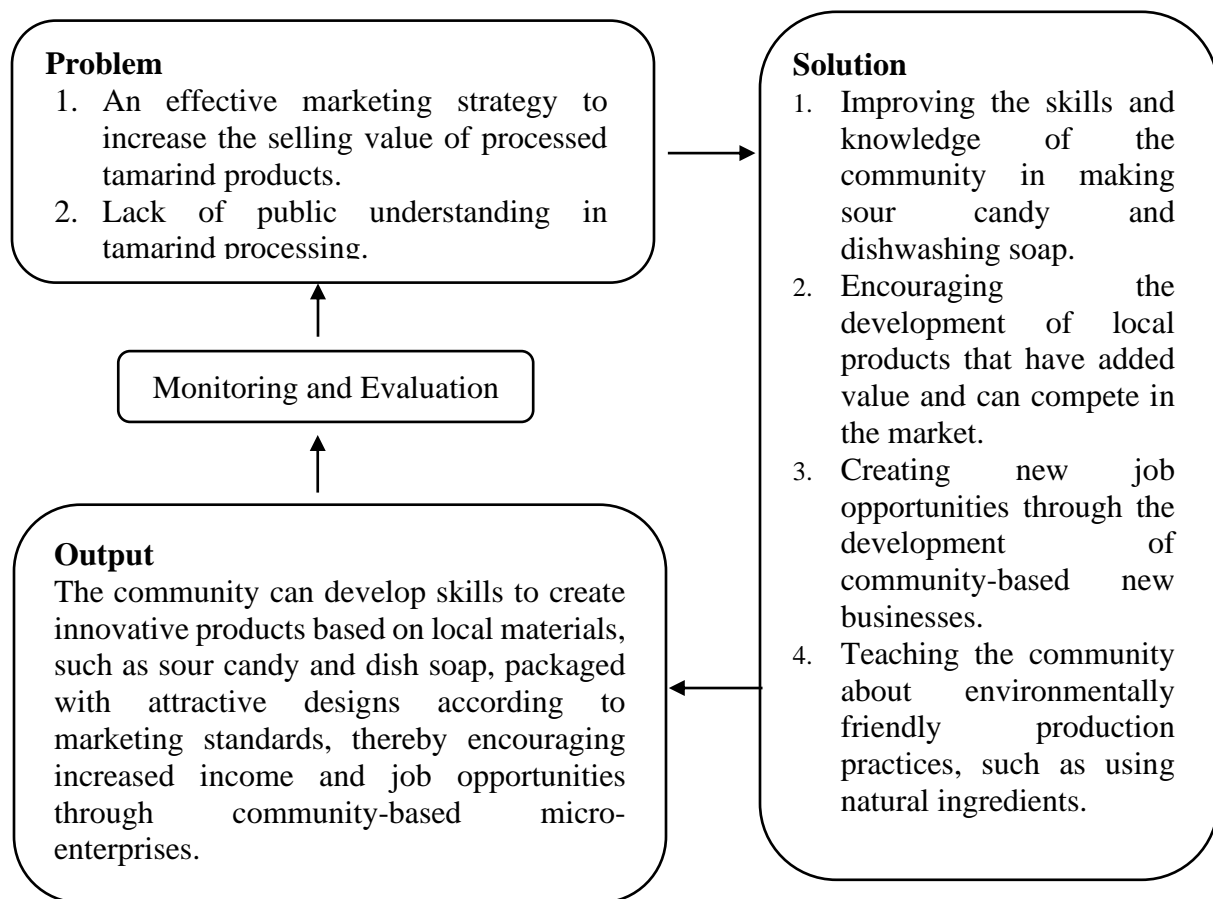


Figure 2. Stages of problem-solving

1. Preparation Stage

This stage begins with coordination between the implementing team, Field Supervising Lecturers, and the community of Sengonkerep Hamlet to identify specific needs and determine the activity schedule. The implementation team also prepared training materials, such as soap base, water, tamarind, palm sugar, breadcrumbs, and granulated sugar, which will be used to make dish soap and tamarind candy. In addition, the team also provides supporting equipment such as containers, stirring tools, and cooking utensils.



Figure 3. Documentation of activity preparation

2. Implementation Stage

This stage consists of several main activities:

a. Introduction to the Material

Participants were introduced to the basic concepts of making dish soap and sour candy, including economic and environmental benefits.



Figure 4. Presentation and introduction of the material

b. Direct Practice

Participants engage in hands-on practice with guidance from the implementation team. In this activity, participants are taught the detailed steps of making dishwashing soap, which include mixing ingredients, stirring, and packaging the product. The soap-making process involves mixing soap base, salt, and water in specific proportions, stirring for 10-15 minutes to achieve consistency before the soap is packaged in the provided bottles. To make sour candy, participants are taught to heat tamarind with palm and granulated sugar until it reaches a certain thickness. After that, the mixture is shaped into small balls using breadcrumbs as a coating and cooled for a few hours before packaging.



Figure 5. The practice of making sour candy

After implementing the activities, the implementation team evaluated to assess the program's success. The assessment is performed through interviews and questionnaires to measure the improvement in participants' skills, satisfaction with the training, and the potential sustainability of the businesses generated from this training. The evaluation results provide recommendations for improvements and necessary follow-up steps.



Figure 6. The practice of making dishwashing soap

c. Accompaniment

The implementation team guides participants to ensure each step is carried out correctly. This guidance also includes discussions about the challenges participants face during creation.



Figure 7. photo with the facilitator, implementer, and community

3. Evaluation Stage

Table 2. Evaluation results of the activity

Indicator	Pre-Program Condition	After Program Condition
Understanding the community's skill level in making tamarind candy and dish soap products.	20%	80%
Increased income from the results of running a small business.	20%	75%
The level of customer satisfaction with the products produced	30%	85%
Community members' participation level and cooperation in making tamarind candy and dish soap.	20%	80%

The results of the evaluation of this community empowerment program can be seen in Table 2, showing very positive outcomes in various aspects. Before the program, only 20% of the community understood how to make sour candy and dish soap products. However, after the program was implemented, the figure significantly increased to 80%, indicating a rapid skill improvement. In addition, the income from small businesses run by the community also experienced a significant increase, from 20% to 75%, reflecting the program's positive impact on the participants' economic well-being. From the perspective of consumer satisfaction, there has been an extraordinary increase, where the satisfaction level rose from 30% to 85%, indicating that the quality of the products produced after the program is more accepted and enjoyed by consumers. Lastly, the level of participation and cooperation among community members in product creation also drastically increased from 20% to 80%, signifying better collaboration among members in running the joint venture. This program improved skills, income, consumer satisfaction, and community cooperation.

CONCLUSION

The community empowerment program in Sengonkerep Hamlet, through training in making sour candy and dish soap, has positively impacted various aspects of community life. This training significantly improved the participants' skills, from an initial understanding level of 20% to 80% after the program. In addition, this program has also succeeded in enhancing the community's economic potential, with an increase in small business income from 20% to 75%. The level of consumer satisfaction with the produced products has also drastically increased from 30% to 85%, indicating that the market accepts the quality of the training outcomes well. Moreover, the level of participation and cooperation among community members in this activity also increased from 20% to 80%, indicating a strengthening of solidarity and collaboration in the community. Overall, this program significantly improves people's skills, income, and quality of life in Sengonkerep hamlet.

RECOMMENDATION

The community empowerment program in Sengonkerep Hamlet, through training in making sour candy and dish soap, has positively impacted various aspects of community life. This training significantly improved the participants' skills, from an initial understanding level of 20% to 80% after the program. In addition, this program has also succeeded in enhancing the community's economic potential, with an increase in small business income from 20% to 75%. The level of consumer satisfaction with the produced products has also drastically increased from 30% to 85%, indicating that the market accepts the quality of the training outcomes well. Moreover, the level of participation and cooperation among community members in this activity also increased from 20% to 80%, indicating a strengthening of solidarity and collaboration in the community. Overall, this program significantly improves people's skills, income, and quality of life in Sengonkerep hamlet.

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