



Natural Soap Making Training with Business-Economic Value for Communities in Kembangan District

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ABSTRACT

The need for environmentally friendly products that are safe for health is increasing, including natural soaps that are free of harmful chemicals. Kembangan sub-district has abundant potential resources such as palm or coconut oil as the basis for making soap, but has not been optimally utilized. This community service activity aims to empower the community through training in making natural soap with business-economic value. The implementation method starts from a needs survey, preparation of training modules, soap making practices, to marketing strategies. The training participants consisted of micro and small-scale home-based businesses. The evaluation results showed active participation reaching 90%, with 80% of participants successfully making quality soap and 70% interested in developing a natural soap business. The main obstacles are limited tools, materials, and mentoring time. However, through collaboration with business partners and the government, this training can support economic independence based on MSMEs and environmental conservation. This program also encourages the formation of new business communities and increases community capacity in digital production and marketing. In conclusion, this training is effective in improving skills and opening up business opportunities based on local potential in a sustainable manner in Kembangan District.

Keywords: Community Training, Natural Soap Making, Business-Economic.

1. Introduction

In this modern era, the need for environmentally friendly and natural-based products is increasing. Public awareness of the importance of maintaining health and the environment drives demand for products that are more natural and do not contain harmful chemicals. One product with great business potential is natural soap. This soap is popular because it is free from harmful chemicals, safe for the skin, and environmentally friendly. In the Kembangan District area, many people have potential resources, both natural and human, but have not optimally processed them into economically valuable products (Kristiana & Aqmal, 2023).

Based on data from the West Jakarta Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2023, around 42% of Kembangan District residents only completed education up to junior high school level, while around 28% have not completed basic education. This directly impacts the low level of skills and community understanding of business opportunities based on environmentally friendly products. Kembangan District has abundant raw material potential such as coconut oil and palm oil, and other materials for soap making. This potential has not been utilized optimally to become high-value products.

Most residents in Kembangan District work as housewives, small business operators, and informal workers. The level of education and skills of the community in processing local materials into value-added products is relatively low. Therefore, community empowerment efforts are needed through natural soap making training. This training aims to provide new skills that can be used as business opportunities and improve the economic welfare of the community (Bakhri, 2020).

The potential of domestic raw materials, such as coconut oil, olive oil, and other herbal ingredients (Bhujbal et al., 2023), provides great opportunities to develop natural soap businesses in this region. With proper guidance, the community can understand soap-making techniques, from the production stage to marketing. In addition, this training supports the reduction of household waste through recycling used materials that can be utilized as additional soap ingredients (Junaenah et al., 2024).

This community service activity also supports government programs in improving community welfare through the development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). This training is expected to be the first step toward economic independence for the Kembangan District community by integrating local potential, knowledge, and simple technology-based innovation (Dawis et al., 2024).



Figure 1. MSME Activities in Kembangan District

Thus, this initiative not only focuses on improving skills and knowledge but also contributes to environmental preservation and strengthening the local economy. Through collaboration between the community, government, and various related parties, it is hoped that Kembangan District can become a successful example in developing sustainable environmentally friendly products. This effort is expected to create new jobs, increase family income, and build collective awareness of the importance of sustainability and social responsibility in every aspect of life (Hamdan et al., 2024).

In addition, this natural soap making training can also serve as a means to build networks among business actors in Kembangan District. With a mutually supportive community, business actors can share experiences, marketing strategies, and product innovations. This will strengthen the competitiveness of natural soap products produced, both in local and regional markets (Sartika et al., 2021). The importance of effective marketing will also be a focus in this training (Piranda et al., 2022). The community will be taught how to utilize social media and other digital platforms to promote their products. Thus, they will not only have skills in production but also in marketing products effectively, which is the key to success in today's business world (Huwae et al., 2022).

The success of this program is also measured through the long-term impacts generated, such as increased family income, improved quality of life, and waste reduction. By optimally utilizing local resources, it is hoped that the Kembangan District community can contribute to sustainable and environmentally conscious economic development (RPJMD, 2021). Ultimately, through this training activity, it is hoped that a new generation of entrepreneurs will emerge who are not only profit-oriented but also have high social and environmental awareness. With a spirit of innovation and sustainability, Kembangan District can become a pioneer in developing environmentally friendly products while improving overall community welfare. This

initiative is a strategic step to create a better future where economy and environment can go hand in hand for mutual welfare.

2. Methodology

2.1. Implementation Method

The natural soap making training in Kembangan District begins with a community needs survey, preparation of materials and tools, and compilation of training modules. This activity includes basic theory of soap making, its benefits, and safety aspects in material use. Participants gain direct experience through soap making practice using cold process or hot process methods, including coloring techniques, natural fragrance application, and curing process. In addition, the training also covers marketing strategies, branding, capital and profit calculations, and MSME-based business opportunities. Evaluation is conducted through discussions and questionnaires to measure participant understanding, accompanied by mentoring for those who want to develop their business. Activity documentation will be published through social media and reports to related parties so that the benefits of the training can be more widely felt.

2.2. Implementation Stages

- 1) Activity Preparation
- 2) Training Implementation
 - a. Material Presentation (Workshop)
 - b. Natural Soap Making Demonstration
 - c. Connection to Business and Economics
- 3) Evaluation and Mentoring
- 4) Publication and Documentation

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Partner Participation

In this community service activity, partners play an important role in supporting program success. The activity partner is Kembangan District, West Jakarta, where the partner includes assisted MSMEs as training participants. Participants consist of micro business actors, community empowerment communities, and local government representatives who contribute in various aspects. Lecturers as facilitators/training resource persons provide raw materials and training facilities. The lecturers involved also serve as resource persons in soap making sessions, sharing insights about material formulation, marketing strategies, and branding so products have high selling value.

Training facilitators/resource persons help participants understand digital marketing to reach wider markets. Partners also contribute in the form of facility provision and program sustainability support, including facilities for participants who want to start their own business. Local government and social institutions also play a role in supporting regulations, socialization, and post-training mentoring. This collaboration is expected to improve community skills, open business opportunities, and strengthen home-based business economy in Kembangan District.

3.2. Field Evaluation

After the training activity, which aims to improve community skills in making business-valuable natural soap, this program is expected to open new business opportunities for participants. The training includes material presentation, practice demonstration, independent practice, and Q&A sessions. Participant participation reached 90%, with most understanding the theory and 80% successfully making good quality soap. As many as 70% of participants are interested in developing natural soap businesses.

Several obstacles encountered include limited tools and materials, technical difficulties in mixing and molding soap by participants, and limited mentoring time. To overcome these obstacles, it is recommended to hold follow-up mentoring sessions, establish cooperation with raw material suppliers, form experience-

sharing communities, and support participant product marketing. Overall, this activity went well and received positive responses. With proper follow-up, this program has the potential to provide significant economic impact for the Kembangan District community.

3.3. SKPI Recognition Potential

This community service activity has recognition potential in SKPI covering various aspects. Students involved in this activity can gain recognition for entrepreneurial skills in developing natural soap-based products and business management, as well as technical skills in soap making and others. In addition, experience in communication and community training can also be recognized, given their involvement in the education and community empowerment process. This activity can be linked to relevant competencies for various study programs, such as entrepreneurship, engineering, pharmacy, or communication.

4. Conclusion

The natural soap making training activity provides significant contribution in improving the skills of the Kembangan District community. Through this training, participants not only understand the safe and environmentally friendly soap production process but also gain insights about marketing and business opportunities. The success rate of participants in soap making practice shows the effectiveness of the applied training methods. Partner involvement and government support become key factors in the sustainability of this program. With a participatory and sustainable approach, this training opens the way for the community to build independent businesses based on local potential, while encouraging inclusive and environmentally conscious economic growth.

In order to make sure the program has a lasting effect, ongoing mentoring is necessary to assist participants in soap manufacturing and business growth. Assistance from local government and suppliers can assist in offering cost-effective materials and tools. Teaching in branding, packaging, and online advertising will enhance the businesses of participants. Establishing business groups will allow for cooperation and knowledge exchange, while incorporating this program into educational courses can result in students receiving credit for their entrepreneurial and technical abilities.

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