

Enhancing Salted Fish Product Value to Empower Producer Groups in Kertajaya Village, a Coastal Community of Sumur, Pandeglang, Banten Province

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ABSTRACT

The community service program implemented in Kertajaya Village, Sumur Subdistrict, Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province, aims to enhance the market value and competitiveness of salted fish products, which constitute one of the primary economic commodities of this coastal community. The majority of residents depend on fisheries and seafood processing for their livelihoods; however, production activities still rely heavily on traditional sun drying techniques that are vulnerable to weather variability. This condition leads to inconsistent product quality, unstable production capacity, and limited access to broader markets. To address these challenges, the program introduces a series of structured capacity building activities targeted at youth organizations (*karang taruna*) and local salted fish processors. The training focuses on processing innovations, improved hygiene practices, modern packaging design, branding strategies, microenterprise management, and the utilization of digital marketing platforms. A participatory and inclusive approach is adopted to ensure that community members are actively involved in planning, implementing, and sustaining the activities, thereby shifting their role from passive beneficiaries to empowered local entrepreneurs. The initiative is expected to stimulate the growth of creative and competitive coastal business actors, increase household income, and strengthen the village's identity as a center for value added salted fish production. Furthermore, the program provides a replicable model for community empowerment rooted in local potential, economic resilience, and environmental sustainability in coastal regions.

Keywords: *Community Service, Salted Fish, Kertajaya, Processing Innovation, Microenterprise Development*

1. INTRODUCTION

Kertajaya Village is a coastal community located in Sumur Subdistrict, Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province, at the southwestern tip of Java Island. (*Website Resmi Desa Kertajaya Kecamatan Sumur Kabupaten Pandeglang*, n.d.). The village directly borders the Indian Ocean and features beautiful sandy beaches as well as well preserved mangrove forests. Most of the residents earn their livelihoods as fishermen and seafood processors, with salted fish serving as both the main commodity and a source of local pride. This traditional product reflects the community's strong maritime culture and plays an important role in the village economy. However, despite the abundance of marine resources, the economic value of salted fish products remains relatively low due to limitations in production management, marketing, and product diversification.

Fish processing activities in Kertajaya Village are mostly traditional and small scale. Most producers rely on manual techniques that have been passed down through generations. While these methods embody valuable local wisdom, producers often face challenges in maintaining consistency in product quality, hygiene, and appearance (Kurniawan et al., 2023). Dependence on traditional

processes without modern management standards leads to uneven product quality, especially in terms of appearance, taste, and shelf life. In addition, limited knowledge of market dynamics, branding strategies, and digital marketing constrains local producers from expanding their markets beyond the local area (Sugiyanti et al., 2022). Consequently, the economic benefits of salted fish production have not yet significantly improved the community's overall welfare.

Another challenge lies in the limited access to packaging technology and market networks. Many salted fish products from Kertajaya are still sold in bulk without distinctive labels or modern packaging. The absence of branding makes it difficult for consumers to distinguish Kertajaya's products from similar ones from other regions. Moreover, connections with distributors and retailers outside the area remain weak. Without a structured marketing strategy, local producers are heavily dependent on middlemen, resulting in low profit margins and limited bargaining power (Utami Hasna Nadhifah et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, the younger generation in Kertajaya Village possesses great potential for innovation and development. Many of them are interested in

entrepreneurship and open to adopting new approaches that combine traditional skills with modern marketing practices. The community service program introduced in this context seeks to leverage that potential by strengthening local capacity, improving product management, and enhancing marketing effectiveness. The ultimate goal is to increase the economic value of salted fish products while fostering sustainable community development.

This community service program is structured around three main areas: product quality improvement, branding and marketing development, and youth and institutional empowerment. These three components are designed to reinforce one another, ensuring that every intervention contributes to long term sustainability and community ownership.

The first focus is on improving fish processing management and product quality. Community members receive training on good processing practices, quality control, and simple hygiene management suitable for small scale operations. Through participatory workshops, fish processors learn to maintain quality standards, enhance flavor and texture, and handle post production storage to minimize spoilage. The program also promotes the use of local materials for better packaging such as eco friendly wrapping and appealing labeling to increase aesthetic and market value (Suwandi, 2023).

The second focus is on strengthening branding, packaging, and marketing capacities. Branding is not only about creating a visual identity but also about communicating the story and authenticity behind the product. The program assists the community in developing a brand identity that reflects Kertajaya's rich cultural and natural heritage. This process includes designing product labels, creating attractive packaging, and developing promotional materials that highlight the village's coastal heritage. To reach a wider audience, the program includes digital marketing training, where participants learn to promote their products through social media and e-commerce platforms. This component of digital literacy is expected to connect local producers with urban consumers and broader regional markets, thereby increasing sales and product recognition.

The third component focuses on human resource development and community empowerment, particularly targeting youth organizations such as *Karang Taruna*, women's groups, and local cooperatives. These groups play a vital role in ensuring program sustainability through intergenerational knowledge transfer and the strengthening of local leadership. Entrepreneurship training, basic financial management, and cooperative business models help community members learn how to manage their enterprises effectively and reinvest profits for collective benefit. Together with the village government, these efforts are integrated into the local economic development agenda to ensure institutional support and policy alignment.

Beyond economic benefits, the program also emphasizes environmental awareness and sustainability. Fishermen and fish processors are encouraged to adopt waste management practices and utilize fish by products as additional sources of income, such as organic fertilizers or fish based animal feed. This approach helps reduce environmental pollution and maximizes the use of marine resources. The program also fosters collaboration among stakeholders academics, local government, and the community to build a sustainable framework for fisheries based livelihoods that balance productivity and ecological preservation.

More broadly, this program contributes to developing a self reliant coastal community by integrating innovation with local wisdom. It demonstrates that enhancing the value of local products depends not only on technological intervention but also on empowering communities to manage their resources and enterprises more effectively. The participatory approach strengthens social cohesion, encourages knowledge sharing, and fosters confidence among local producers to take an active role in market competition.

2. SCOPE AND LIMITATION

This community service program focuses on empowering groups of fishermen and salted fish producers in Kertajaya Village, with a strong emphasis on the involvement of *Karang Taruna* (youth organization) as a key partner in implementation. The program aims to enhance local capabilities in managing and improving salted fish products through training, mentoring, and participatory workshops. The scope of the program includes:

1. Capacity building for fishermen and salted fish producers, particularly in product management, quality improvement, and production efficiency.
2. Enhancement of packaging and branding, enabling local products to achieve higher market appeal and competitiveness.
3. Development of digital marketing skills, including the use of social media and online platforms to widen market reach.
4. Entrepreneurship mentoring and establishment of business institutions to foster economic independence and strengthen producer group structures.
5. Empowerment of *Karang Taruna* members as change agents, responsible for driving innovation, sustainability, and continuity in salted fish processing activities.

However, the program operates within several limitations: it is still limited to small scale fishermen and home based producers, the program duration restricts intensive mentoring and long term monitoring, and the overall success strongly depends on the level of participation and commitment from community members. Despite these constraints, the program represents a strategic initial effort toward enhancing economic value

and sustainability within the salted fish processing sector in Kertajaya Village.

3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

The implementation of the Community Service program in Kertajaya Village was carried out systematically and participatively through three main stages: the initiation stage, the identification stage, and the development stage. These stages were designed to ensure that the program runs effectively, sustainably, and in alignment with the needs of the local community.

3.1 Initiation Stage

The initiation stage represents the first step in building communication and partnerships between the community service team and the people of Kertajaya Village. During this stage, coordination was conducted with village officials, fishermen groups, and salted fish processors to gain support and establish shared commitment. Activities included initial site visits, collection of general socioeconomic data, and mapping of the village's natural resource potential.

This stage also involved the dissemination of program objectives, scope of activities, and expected benefits for the community. A participatory approach was used to foster a sense of ownership so that the community would not merely be recipients but active participants in the program. Through discussions and village meetings, agreements were reached regarding the primary target groups such as salted fish producers, youth organizations (*Karang Taruna*), and housewives involved in production. This initiation stage served as a crucial foundation for establishing collaborative relationships between the community service team and the villagers.

3.2 Identification Stage

The identification stage aimed to obtain a deeper understanding of the issues, potential, and opportunities for developing salted fish products in Kertajaya Village. Activities at this stage included field observations, interviews with business actors, and surveys to collect data on production processes, distribution patterns, selling prices, and marketing challenges. Findings revealed that most producers still relied on traditional processing methods, resulting in inconsistent product quality and limited capacity in packaging and promotion.

Beyond technical aspects, this stage also assessed the community's institutional capacity, organizational structure, and the roles of youth and women in the local economy. The results were used to determine priority needs and develop suitable intervention strategies such as training in business management, packaging design, and digital marketing. Thus, the identification stage served as the foundation for designing relevant, measurable, and community driven activities.

3.3 Development Stage

The development stage represented the implementation phase of the needs analysis results. At this

stage, the community service team carried out a series of activities aimed at enhancing the community's capacity and self reliance. These included training to improve salted fish quality, technical guidance on hygienic and appealing packaging, and workshops on branding and social media based marketing strategies.

Additionally, assistance was provided in forming joint business groups and offering basic entrepreneurship training to help the community manage production collectively and become market oriented. The program also encouraged youth participation in product innovation, including diversification of salted fish products and development of local brands. Throughout the process, participatory methods were maintained through joint monitoring and evaluation, ensuring active community involvement in assessing program success and determining future actions.

This development stage focused not only on improving technical skills but also on cultivating independent, creative, and sustainability oriented mindsets. As a result, the outcomes of the community service activities are expected to go beyond short term interventions and generate lasting social and economic change for the coastal community of Kertajaya Village.

4. DISCUSSION

The initiation phase involved village officials, *Karang Taruna*, and local residents to identify the socioeconomic problems present in the community and determine practical steps to address them. Through discussions with Kertajaya residents, several key issues were discovered and further elaborated.

The initiation stage thus played a vital role in establishing communication, commitment, and collaboration between the community service team and the residents of Kertajaya Village. Coordination with local government, fishermen groups, and salted fish producers helped the team gain an overview of the community's socioeconomic conditions and the potential of its coastal resources. Activities began with field visits, focus group discussions, and observations of the salted fish production process, which serves as the villagers' main source of livelihood.



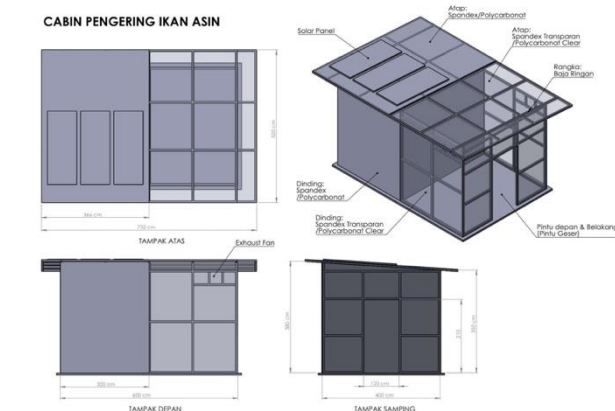
Figure 1. Discussion with Village Officials

Figure 1. Initial findings revealed that salted fish production in Kertajaya Village is still highly dependent on weather conditions. During the rainy season or full moon periods, production drops drastically because fish cannot be naturally dried (Suhery et al., 2023). This situation leads to fluctuations in income and economic uncertainty for fishermen and fish processors. Therefore, interventions such as the introduction of simple drying and storage technologies are considered potential solutions to help maintain production stability throughout the year.

In addition, the community generally focuses on the production process and sells their products to seafood collectors, who then distribute them to major cities. This pattern results in most of the economic value being captured by intermediaries rather than by the producers themselves (Wibowo et al., 2024). Consequently, it is necessary to enhance community awareness of how to optimize the market value of their products, thereby fostering the emergence of independent and market oriented micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Efforts to optimize product value can be achieved through attractive, hygienic, and locally branded packaging, as well as the development of ready to consume derivative products, such as seasoned salted fish ready to fry or salted fish-based snacks. The initiation stage not only introduced the program's plan but also raised community awareness that increasing market value depends not only on production volume but also on innovation, branding, and more modern business management practices.

Through the initiation and identification stages, several actions were carried out by the implementation team. The first was the construction of a fish processing cabin that includes facilities for fish drying and storage, as illustrated in the following design.



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Figure 2. Salted Fish Drying and Storage Cabin

Figure 2. Cabin 1 functions to circulate cool air at a temperature of 16°C–23°C, which is the ideal range for storing salted fish. The hot vapor generated from this cooling process is then channeled to the second chamber, which serves to dry the salted fish until it reaches about 70

percent dryness. This cabin design allows the salted fish processing groups in Kertajaya Village to continue production consistently without being entirely dependent on favorable weather conditions.

In addition to production infrastructure development, the implementation team also recognized the importance of conducting a community enrichment program. This program is an integral part of the community service activities in Kertajaya Village, Sumur Subdistrict, Pandeglang Regency. It aims to enhance the knowledge, skills, and entrepreneurial attitudes of coastal communities particularly fishermen and salted fish processors so that they can produce high value, competitive products. The activities are also directed toward developing an entrepreneurial mindset, improving product quality, and promoting sustainable utilization of local resources.

So far, the people of Kertajaya Village have tended to focus only on producing and distributing raw salted fish to local traders without considering product value addition. Furthermore, production remains highly dependent on weather conditions; during the rainy season or full moon, output decreases drastically due to the absence of alternative drying technology. Therefore, this enrichment program is designed not only to provide technical solutions but also to strengthen the community's social and economic resilience through capacity building.

The main themes developed in this enrichment program include:

1. Innovation in Marine Product Processing training in product diversification such as crispy salted fish, salted fish sambal, fish floss, and ready to eat seafood products.
2. Packaging Design and Local Product Branding – equipping participants with skills to design attractive and hygienic packaging, as well as to build a distinct product identity for Kertajaya Village.
3. Micro Business Management and Entrepreneurship – training on simple bookkeeping, production cost calculation, and efficient business management strategies.
4. Digital Marketing and Online Promotion Strategies – introducing the use of social media, marketplaces, and digital platforms as tools for promotion and direct sales to consumers.
5. Sustainability and Eco Friendliness educating the community about waste management and the use of energy efficient drying technologies that are environmentally friendly.

Through this program, coastal communities particularly youth groups and salted fish processors are expected to become drivers of the local economy who are creative, innovative, and independent. The transformation from traditional producers to micro entrepreneurs focused on sustainable welfare is the intended long term impact of this initiative.

As part of the strategy to strengthen product identity and branding, the implementation team also designed a logo for the village's flagship product (Naufal et al., 2024). The logo represents the main characteristics of the product freshness, quality, and authenticity of the local seafood. This visual identity is expected to give the product a strong market distinction while serving as a symbol of pride for local entrepreneurs, reflecting the collaboration between the implementation team and the community in developing the village's superior products sustainably.



Figure 3. Product Logo

Figure 3. Illustrates the core visual identity designed to represent the superior salted fish products of Kertajaya Village. The logo embodies elements of coastal heritage, freshness, and product authenticity, serving as a strategic tool to strengthen brand recognition. Its consistent use across promotional media is expected to enhance consumer trust and reinforce the village's positioning as a center of high-quality salted fish products.



Figure 4. Product Logo on Packaging

Figure 4. The development phase of this program was designed not only to enhance the technical capabilities of business actors but also to cultivate a more independent, creative, and innovative mindset. This approach emphasizes the importance of fostering community awareness of sustainability values economically, socially, and environmentally. In practice, the community service activities do not merely provide training or production facilities but also encourage active participation of the community in every stage of decision making.

The coastal community of Kertajaya Village, most of whom work as fishermen and seafood processors, is expected to optimize local potential by efficiently and sustainably utilizing available resources. Through this program, residents are trained to think long term focusing not only on short term profits but also on the ecological balance of marine ecosystems and the sustainability of their businesses.

Moreover, the program instills a spirit of collaboration among residents and strengthens local institutions such as fishermen's groups, youth organizations (*Karang Taruna*) (KARANG TARUNA, n.d.), and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) (*Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs)* | *Department of Economic and Social Affairs*, n.d.). This collaboration serves as a vital foundation for creating a mutually supportive and adaptive village economic ecosystem. The facilitation conducted by the implementation team includes managerial training, marketing development, and product innovation to equip the community with the necessary skills to compete in broader markets.

Through this holistic approach, the outcomes of the community service program are expected to go beyond short term interventions and generate lasting impacts felt by all layers of society. The program's success will be reflected in the community's growing economic independence, increased awareness of sustainability principles, and the establishment of strong social networks among local entrepreneurs. Ultimately, Kertajaya Village is envisioned to become a resilient, innovative, and highly competitive coastal village capable of managing its natural resources sustainably.

5. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the community service program in Kertajaya Village has shown significant results in enhancing the capacity of coastal communities both in terms of technical skills and entrepreneurial mindset development. Through a participatory approach, the community has not only been a recipient of benefits but also an active participant in every stage of the program, from planning and implementation to evaluation. This program successfully fostered awareness of the importance of sustainable local resource management while strengthening social solidarity among residents.

Improvements in seafood processing skills, particularly in salted fish production, were supported by the introduction of simple, efficient, and environmentally friendly technologies. In addition, mentoring activities in business management and marketing have strengthened the position of local entrepreneurs, enabling them to compete in broader markets. Support for institutional strengthening such as fishermen's groups and youth organizations (*Karang Taruna*) has been a key factor in ensuring the sustainability of the program beyond its implementation period.

Overall, the program has produced not only tangible outputs, such as products or physical infrastructure, but also long term social and economic impacts on the community. The development of an independent, creative, and innovative mindset has become the main foundation for Kertajaya residents to continue progressing. Moving forward, the success of this program is expected to be replicated in other coastal villages as a model for community development based on local potential and sustainability principles.

6. SUGGESTIONS

For future development, this program is recommended to be expanded through longer term mentoring and periodic monitoring to ensure that the improvements in production techniques, entrepreneurship capacity, and digital marketing skills continue to grow sustainably. Future works should also focus on integrating more advanced and weather independent processing technologies such as hybrid dryers or improved sanitation systems to further enhance product quality and reduce production vulnerability. In addition, broader collaboration with regional stakeholders, including local government, cooperatives, and private sector partners, is necessary to strengthen market access and provide alternative sources of capital for business expansion. The program is also encouraged to develop a structured capacity building roadmap for Karang Taruna, enabling them to take on greater leadership roles as innovators and facilitators of coastal economic development. Another important future direction is the establishment of a formal business institution or cooperative that can coordinate production, maintain quality standards, and negotiate better market prices for local producers. These future efforts are expected to create stronger economic resilience, foster innovation driven coastal entrepreneurship, and generate long term socio economic impacts not only for Kertajaya Village but also as a model for empowerment in other coastal communities.

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