

Waste Transformation Becomes A Blessing: Training of Lightweight Brick-Based Handicrafts as An Effort to Empower the Community

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Abstract

Purpose: This service activity aims to improve the skills and economic independence of the community through training in handicrafts based on lightweight brick waste. This activity was carried out in Krajan Hamlet, Ngrayung Village, Gandusari District, Trenggalek Regency, as an effort to utilize local potential that has not been exploited optimally and encourage the birth of household -based creative businesses.

Method: Service uses a Community-based Research (CBR) approach with five main stages: Identification of problems, joint planning, participatory training, business assistance, and evaluation. Training is focused on the direct practice of manufacturing handicraft products such as bags and serving hoods from lightweight used brick ropes, which are guided by experienced local speakers.

Practical Applications: This training has a real impact in equipping residents - especially housewives and youth - with new skills that can be applied independently at home. The products produced began to be marketed locally and through social media. This program also opens up opportunities for the formation of environmental -based small business groups and strengthens the spirit of mutual cooperation in developing the village economy.

Conclusion: The results of the activity show that local potential-based training and environmentally friendly waste can be an effective strategy in empowering the economic community. In addition to improving the skills of residents, this activity also fosters awareness of the importance of productive plastic waste management. With continuous support, this training has the potential to develop into a sustainable micro business and reaches a wider market.

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Introduction

Village development as a productive economy center not only depends on the availability of natural resources, but also on the ability of the community to manage and empower local potentials that are creative and sustainable (Maula et al., 2022). In this context, community empowerment is the main key to creating social and economic changes, especially in rural areas (Umar et al., 2023). Community empowerment is a process that allows people to gain greater control of decisions and actions that influence their lives (Ardani, 2022; Latif et al., 2020). Thus, empowerment is not only a matter of technical training, but also about building self-confidence, creativity, and the ability to manage their potential and environment (Darwis et al., 2022; Ulfah & Arifudin, 2021).

Ngrayung Village, Gandusari District, Trenggalek Regency is one of the villages that stores various local potentials both in terms of natural and human resources. This region consists of four hamlets, namely Plagen Hamlet, Pojok Hamlet, Kacangan Hamlet, and Krajan Hamlet. The majority of the population in this village has a livelihood as a farmer and a household industry player. One of the creative economy potentials that is quite prominent but has not yet been developed optimally is the handicraft of the material of the former lightweight brick rope. Light brick rope is a plastic waste from the building construction process which is generally discarded because it is considered not to have a use value.

However, in the Krajan Hamlet, there is a housewife named Ibu Sumiatin who has pioneered the use of the used rope into a variety of selling handicraft products, such as bags, serving hoods, trash bins, clothing, and so forth. This activity not only has an impact on improving the household economy, but also an inspirational example for the surrounding community in managing waste into something useful. Unfortunately, not many other people have followed in his footsteps because of the limited knowledge, skills, and facilities.

Seeing this condition, students of the Real Work Lecture (KKN) from Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung State Islamic University, through community service activities, took the initiative to organize handicraft training from used bricks. This activity is carried out with the main objective to empower the economy of the community through an educational and participatory approaches. The main target of this training is PKK mothers and Youth Youth Youth Youth who are expected to become the driving force of the creative economy at the village and village level.

This training is also designed to overcome various structural challenges faced by villagers, such as lack of employment opportunities, low economic productivity, and limited access to entrepreneurship training. By empowering the community in making recycled materials, this activity also supports environmental preservation efforts while creating new economic values (Irdiana et al., 2020). The training activity was carried out collaboratively by involving local speakers who were experienced, namely Mrs. Sumiatin, as well as support from the local village government (Zebua, 2025).

Community empowerment through this training activity is expected to be able to arouse the spirit of economic independence of citizens and foster a more productive and innovative work culture. Training is not only focused on the technical aspects of product manufacturing, but also in managerial aspects such as management of small businesses, marketing strategies, and the use of social media to expand sales networks (Tarso, 2024). Thus, the results of the training can truly have a significant and sustainable economic impact for the people of Krajan Hamlet, in particular and Ngrayung Village in general.

Method

The method used in this service activity is Community-based Research (CBR) or community-based research, which emphasizes the active involvement of the community in each stage of activities, ranging from planning, implementation, to evaluation. This approach was chosen so that the training activities were truly in accordance with the needs and potential of the local community.

Simply put, this method is carried out in five main stages as follows:

1. Identification of problems and potential

The service team conducted observations and direct interviews with residents of Krajan Hamlet, especially with handicrafts, community leaders, and village officials. From this process it is known that there is an economic potential of a lightweight brick rope waste that has not been widely utilized by the community.

2. Joint planning

After the data was collected, the service team prepared a training plan with the residents and the village government. In this planning the implementation time is determined, the target participants (PKK and Youth Organization), the material to be delivered, and experienced local speakers.

3. Implementation of activities

The training was held at Ngrayung Village Hall by involving participants from local residents. The resource person gave a direct example of how to process a lightweight brick rope into crafts such as bags and serving hoods. Participants were also given the opportunity to practice making their own products.

4. Assistance

After the training, participants remained accompanied to develop their skills. The service team helps provide design ideas, provide input for product marketing, and facilitate the creation of social media accounts for promotion.

5. Evaluation

The activity ended with a simple evaluation in the form of discussions and questions and answers with participants. From this evaluation, it is known that training has a positive impact on participants in terms of skills and enthusiasm for entrepreneurship.

Results and Discussion

This community service activity was held on Saturday, January 13, 2024, at the Ngrayung Village Hall, Gandusari District, Trenggalek Regency. This activity is in the form of training in making handicrafts from used bricks, with the main targets of PKK mothers and Karang Taruna Krajan Hamlet members. This training aims to equip residents with new skills in utilizing plastic waste into economic value products, as well as fostering the spirit of entrepreneur based on local potential.

The target of the training activities consisted of housewives, PKK members, and village youth, as is commonly found in various community service programs that target women's groups and the village youth generation as the main actors of empowerment. Because this type of training requires skills and patience, the main targets of the training activities are housewives and PKK members in Krajan Village, while for youth because they have high enthusiasm

1. Number of participants and enthusiasm

The number of participants who attended the training reached 18 people from the target of 20 people. Participants consist of housewives, PKK members, and village youth. Although most participants have never attended similar training, they showed high enthusiasm, seen from a timely presence, active involvement during practice, and questions raised during the discussion session.

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that target women's groups and the village youth generation as the main actors of empowerment (Pramastyo et al., 2025). Because this type of training requires skills and patience, the main targets of the training activities are housewives and PKK members in Krajan Village, while for youth because they have high enthusiasm.

2. The training process

The training begins with the introduction session of a lightweight brick rope material and an example of a ready-made handicraft product. The main resource person, Ms. Sumiatin, who is a local resident as well as a handicraft business acting, practices directly how to process a used rope into products such as bags and serving hoods. The training process runs interactively: Participants are divided into small groups to practice and form patterns according to the interviewee's instructions.

From the results of the field observations, the majority of participants were able to follow the basic techniques taught, although at first some participants experienced difficulties in the curling process because they were not accustomed. However, with direct guidance and assistance by the Servant Team, participants were finally able to complete simple products in the form of small bags or serving hoods within 2-3 hours. This shows that this training is applicative and can be directly applied at home. Carvalho emphasized that applicable training (hands-on practice) increases retention and skills (Rother et al., 2010).

3. Objective achievement

The purpose of this training is to improve the skills of citizens in processing lightweight brick waste and encouraging the creation of micro businesses. Based on the evaluation results and participant responses, the majority stated that they felt the training was helpful because:

- a. They gained new skills they hadn't previously acquired. Stating that following a program according to Mehner training can develop new skills and knowledge, and this is important for career development and training outcomes (Mehner et al., 2025).
- b. The resulting products were easy to make and could be resold. Furthermore, the raw materials are readily available and have a market value. This motivates training participants to continue learning, developing, and innovating to enhance their creativity (Permatasari et al., 2021).
- c. They felt more confident about attempting larger-scale production. Self-confidence is an outcome of this training because Urban explains that

entrepreneurial self-efficacy influences an individual's decision to start a business (Engle et al., 2011).

Conclusion

This community service activity succeeded in having a positive impact for residents of Krajan Hamlet, Ngrayung Village, especially in terms of improving skills and utilizing local potential based on light brick rope waste. This participatory and community -based training is able to foster citizen awareness of the importance of innovation in waste management and economic potential if managed creatively.

Through the training, the community not only gained technical knowledge in making handicrafts, but also showed enthusiasm to develop further products. Some participants even began to market their craft results to the surrounding environment through social media and direct promotion.

This activity shows that community economic empowerment can be carried out with a simple but targeted approach, namely utilizing used materials that are around into economic value products. In addition to providing economic benefits, this activity also has a social impact, such as increasing self-confidence, togetherness, and concern for the environment.

With sustainable support and assistance, this training has great potential to develop into a broader and more sustainable micro business activity, and can be a model of community-based community empowerment practices in other villages.

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