

## Revitalizing the Role of the Mosque in Local Potential-Based Community Economic Empowerment

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**Keywords:** Community empowerment; Local excellence; Entrepreneurship.

**Abstract.** This study aims to identify and develop the community's economic potential around the mosque in Suboh District, Situbondo, based on local excellence. The method used in this study is the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which focuses on utilizing local resources through entrepreneurship training and local product processing. This study uses a qualitative method with data collection techniques through interviews, observations, and documentation. The study results indicate that the community has basic skills in processing local agricultural and craft products but faces marketing, packaging, and business management obstacles. The entrepreneurship training improved the community's skills and confidence in developing products based on local potential. However, challenges related to business sustainability and business management still exist. The implications of this study are the importance of ongoing mentoring programs and business management training to ensure long-term success. This study contributes to the development of the local economy and community empowerment based on local resources and is a reference for community empowerment programs in other areas.

**Katakunci:**  
Pemberdayaan masyarakat;  
Keunggulan Lokal;  
Kewirausahaan.

**Abstrak.** Pengabdian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengembangkan potensi ekonomi masyarakat sekitar masjid di Kecamatan Suboh, Situbondo, berbasis keunggulan lokal. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) yang berfokus pada pemanfaatan sumber daya lokal melalui pelatihan kewirausahaan dan pengolahan produk lokal. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat memiliki keterampilan dasar dalam mengolah produk pertanian dan kerajinan lokal namun menghadapi kendala pemasaran, pengemasan, dan pengelolaan usaha. Pelatihan kewirausahaan meningkatkan keterampilan dan kepercayaan diri masyarakat dalam mengembangkan produk berbasis potensi lokal. Namun, tantangan terkait keberlanjutan usaha dan pengelolaan usaha masih ada. Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah pentingnya program pendampingan dan pelatihan manajemen usaha yang berkelanjutan untuk memastikan keberhasilan jangka panjang. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan ekonomi lokal dan pemberdayaan masyarakat berbasis sumber daya lokal dan

menjadi rujukan bagi program pemberdayaan masyarakat di daerah lain.

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## 1 Introduction

Communities around mosques have enormous economic potential but are often not utilized optimally. Despite abundant natural resources in Suboh District, Situbondo, many residents still rely on the informal sector and face challenges in managing businesses based on local potential (Nicholls et al., 2020; da Silva et al., 2020). Natural resources such as cassava, coconut, corn, and local wisdom around the mosque should be valuable resources if managed properly. However, the lack of entrepreneurship training, understanding of managing businesses based on local potential, and minimal access to capital and markets mean this potential has not been managed effectively (Bouncken & Kraus, 2022). This results in low family income and limited employment opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary to empower the economy based on local potential, involving the community around the mosque as agents of change (Fatma et al., 2020).

Various studies show that mosques function as places of worship and as centers of social and economic activities that can empower the community. El-Zein et al (2021) stated that mosques can be centers of financial empowerment that support the development of small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) based on local potential. Algarni et al (2023) also stated that communities in rural areas often face obstacles in developing their local potential due to a lack of mentoring and technical support. Meanwhile, Elaouzy & El Fadar (2022) emphasized the importance of practical skills training, such as business management and digital marketing, to improve the competitiveness of businesses in rural areas. Therefore, communities around mosques need to be empowered with the right approach to optimize existing local potential and build a sustainable economy.

This study aims to explore how the economic empowerment of communities around mosques can be achieved by utilizing local potential in Suboh District, Situbondo. The study focuses on mentoring programs

that involve mosques as centers of economic and social activities. The formulation of the research problem is: (1) How can local potential around mosques be utilized for community economic empowerment? (2) How many challenges does the community face in developing businesses based on local potential? (3) How can mosque-based mentoring programs increase community capacity in managing businesses based on local potential?

This study assumes that community economic empowerment, utilizing local potential based on mosques, can improve community welfare and reduce poverty. Mentoring programs involving entrepreneurship training and management of local natural resource-based businesses can strengthen the capacity of communities to manage their businesses sustainably. Based on existing literature, empowerment through entrepreneurship training and access to a broader market through the mosque network is believed to increase the competitiveness of local products and expand business opportunities. Thus, it is hoped that this study's results can positively contribute to community economic empowerment and the development of MSMEs based on local potential around the mosque.

## 2 Method

The unit of analysis in this study is the community around the mosque in Suboh District, Situbondo. This study adopts the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, which aims to empower the community by utilizing local potential around the mosque. This research design uses a qualitative approach with a participatory method, where the community is actively involved in every stage of program planning and implementation. The empowerment process begins with mapping local potential. It is continued with mentoring activities in entrepreneurship training, business management, and product development based on natural resources and local wisdom. This program also pays attention to the role of the mosque as a center for social and economic activities that can be a catalyst in strengthening the surrounding community's economy.

The primary source of information in this study is the community around the mosque, which consists of various social groups, such as mosque administrators, farmer groups, MSME actors, and other community members. The respondents in this study were around 100 people actively involved in empowerment activities, with roles divided based on the expertise and needs of each group. The farmer group focuses on processing agricultural products, while the craft group develops products based on recycled materials. In addition, information was also obtained from community leaders, mosque administrators, academics, and business actors as parties involved in assistance and mentoring. Data from various sources provide a comprehensive picture of the community's social conditions and economic potential around the mosque.

Data collection in this study was carried out through interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with mosque administrators, community leaders, MSME actors, and groups involved in empowerment activities. Observations were conducted to understand the social and economic dynamics around the mosque and the interaction between the community and the empowerment program. Documentation was used to record each training activity, discussion, and product development results. Data analysis was carried out qualitatively through three stages: data reduction to filter relevant information, data display to organize data in a more organized form, and verification to test the suitability of the data with the research objectives (Kyvelou & Ierapetritis, 2020; Yin et al., 2021). This process aims to understand empowerment's impact on the community's economy around the mosque.

### **3 Results**

#### **a. Service Location Survey**

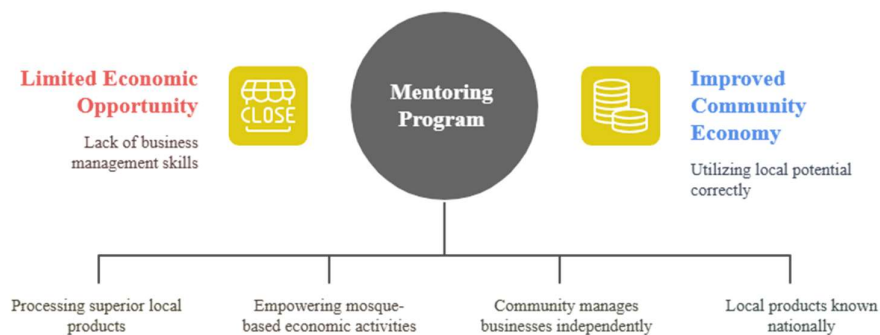
A survey conducted by the Community Service Team (PKM) on December 10, 2024, showed that the majority of the community works in the agriculture, livestock, and traditional crafts sectors, with several mosques playing an active role as centers for social and religious activities. Most of the community has basic skills that can be

developed, such as making products from local agricultural materials and crafts. Still, they face obstacles in marketing, packaging, and business management. Although several mosques have tried to empower the community through mosque-based economic activities, the program has not been optimal due to the lack of ongoing training and mentoring.

Interviews with mosque administrators and community leaders revealed an urgent need for local potential-based entrepreneurship training to improve the community's economic level. The community is beginning to realize that if local potential is utilized correctly, it can significantly change their economy. Based on these findings, the PKM Team designed a mentoring program focusing on processing superior local products and strengthening the mosque-based economy in Suboh District.

This program also brought about significant changes in community awareness of local potential. Previously, the community focused on limitations such as lack of capital and market access. After attending the training, they began to understand the potential of local raw materials and their skills to produce high-value products, which changed their perspective from dependence on odd jobs to empowerment based on local potential.

Figure 1. Empowering Community Through Local Potential



The quantitative evaluation showed significant results, with around 70% of local products being marketed well after mentoring, increasing from 30% before the program. The program also

succeeded in creating more than 50 new jobs around the mosque. The program's sustainability is the primary focus, with the community trained to manage businesses independently and forming a wider marketing network so local products can be known regionally and nationally. Photos of activities and products produced also show community involvement and the program's success.

#### **b. Planning and Making Products Based on Local Excellence**

As a continuation of the location survey, planning and making products based on local excellence was carried out on December 18, 2024, to empower the community around the mosque in developing their economic potential. The Community Service Team (PKM) selected the primary raw materials from local agricultural products such as cassava, coconut, corn, and other supporting materials easily found in the surrounding environment. Based on identifying regional potential and community preferences, the superior products designed include traditional snacks, coconut-based drinks, and crafts from natural fibers that are functionally and aesthetically attractive. Product prototypes, such as cassava chips in various flavors, instant coconut candy, and decorations from organic waste, were made as examples of products that can be mass-produced.

The prototype-making process involves the local community as a form of direct training to understand the production steps, from processing raw materials to attractive packaging. The materials needed to make crafts from used plastic bags (such as glass lid bracelets) include plastic bracelets, colorful ribbons, nylon threads, magnetic buttons, decorations from leftover fabric or ribbon, bag hooks, chains, glue guns, and small hoses. This activity aims to enable the community to develop products based on local potential with high economic value and can be widely marketed.

Figure. 2

Local Excellence Based Product  
Manufacturing Process



Local Excellence Based  
Product Manufacturing Process

Local Excellence Based  
Product Manufacturing  
Process Assistance Materials



Local Excellence Based  
Product Manufacturing Process  
Assistance Materials

The technique used in making bags from aqua lid bracelets is multi-technique. This means variations between the sticking, connecting, weaving, and wrapping techniques. Wrapping it with colorful ribbons, then weaving it and attaching it with nylon thread with the help of a mattress needle tool. The stages in making it can be done in the following ways.

### c. Training Preparation

On November 24, 2024, the Community Service Team (PKM) visited the mosque that was the focus of the mentoring project to provide initial information about the training program that aims to strengthen economic potential based on local advantages. This program is designed to provide participants with skills to utilize local resources and create valuable products. This activity is also an essential step in building relationships with the community and preparing for the implementation of subsequent socialization and training.

The training socialization was conducted on November 27, 2024, where the PKM Team explained the training's objectives, methods,

and schedule to the community. In this socialization, participants were introduced to the local raw materials that would be used, such as coconut, cassava, and corn. They used cloth, which was chosen because they were abundant in the area and had the potential to be processed into valuable products. This socialization aims to ensure that the community understands the scope of the program and the benefits of utilizing local resources for economic empowerment.

Practical training will start on November 30, 2024, and end on December 12, 2024. In this training, the PKM Team will guide the equipment needed to process local raw materials into products, such as knives, coconut graters, frying pans, stoves, and packaging materials. At the end of the training, participants are expected to gain practical skills that will enable them to make marketable products, thereby increasing the economic potential of the community based on local advantages.

The evaluation process is carried out to measure the impact of the program on social and economic changes in the community. The evaluation begins with collecting initial data through interviews and surveys to determine the financial conditions of the community before the activity starts, followed by further data collection after the activity. Analysis is carried out to assess changes in income, the number of businesses formed, community managerial skills, and the competitiveness of local products. Focus group discussions (FGDs) collect feedback from the community regarding the successes or challenges faced during the program. This evaluation aims to provide a clearer picture of the program's success and identify areas that need improvement for future program implementation.

<b>Evaluation Aspect</b>	<b>Positive Results</b>	<b>Negative Results</b>
<b>Skill Improvement</b>	80% of participants reported an increase in their skills.	10% felt their skills were still limited.



<b>Change in Perception</b>	70% of participants felt more confident in marketing local products.	5% struggled with managing their businesses after the training.
<b>Program Success</b>	85% of participants felt the program helped them create better products.	5% felt there was insufficient capacity building in business management.
<b>Challenges Faced</b>	Limited access to capital and marketing.	Access to resources was still limited.
<b>Suggestions for Future Programs</b>	Further mentoring and access to broader markets are needed.	More training in digital marketing and business management is necessary.

#### 4 Discussion

The first finding is that the community around the mosque has great economic potential but has not been optimally utilized, which has important implications for local economic development. Existing potential, such as natural resources and community skills, can be a driving force to overcome the problem of financial dependency and create new jobs (Saputri et al., 2023; Rizan 2023). This finding implies the importance of ongoing mentoring, entrepreneurship training, and utilization of local resources to empower the community. This aligns with the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) theory, which emphasizes the importance of empowerment based on regional strengths rather than just focusing on existing problems. Why is this relevant? This finding shows that although there is abundant potential,

limitations in managing and marketing local products are a significant obstacle. By increasing the capacity of the community in terms of entrepreneurship and marketing skills, local economic potential can be maximized, thus positively impacting community welfare and reducing poverty (Murdayanti, 2020; Herliana et al., 2021).

The second finding related to training and improving community skills shows that with the proper training, the community can transform local potential into high-value products. This finding implies that training programs based on local resources can accelerate community economic empowerment. Why is this important? This finding strongly correlates skills training and community success in developing local products. The training provides practical skills and increases the community's confidence in marketing their products (Shokri & Sanavi Fard, 2022; Ma et al., 2022). Therefore, this training activity can be a helpful first step in transforming local potential into real economic opportunities. This creates more business opportunities, increases family incomes, and strengthens the local economy (Olounlade et al., 2020).

The third finding that focuses on evaluating the program's impact shows that despite the increase in income and skills, business sustainability and management challenges remain. This finding implies that a successful mentoring program must include aspects of long-term business sustainability and governance (Moret, 2020). Why is this relevant? This finding shows a correlation between less intensive mentoring in the managerial aspect and difficulties in maintaining newly formed businesses. Effective economic empowerment is not only about technical skills but also about managing a business independently and sustainably (Zeller et al., 2020). Therefore, additional training is needed regarding business management and access to broader markets to ensure that the program has a long-term impact. A more sustainable program will strengthen the capacity of communities to manage their businesses independently and reduce dependence on external assistance (Ihle et al., 2020; Aman et al., 2022)

## 5 Conclusion

Berisi The housewife empowerment program through budikdamber is expected to make a real contribution to improving the community's welfare, especially for women in the village, and to monitor the relay of the Tegalsari Village Government, Plered District, and Cirebon Regency. The experience offered by students after seeing the dreams of mothers in the village realized through budikdamber makes one of the alternative livelihoods of rural women.

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