Budikdamber Training to Enhace Women's Quality of Life through ABCD in Tegalsari Cirebon

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| <i>Keywords:</i> Budikdamber Training; Women Empowerment; Asset- Based Community Development (ABCD) | Abstract. This service focuses on empowering housewives in Tegalsari Village, Plered District, Cirebon Regency, through the 2024 Community Service Lecture program of Universitas Islam Bunga Bangsa Cirebon (UIBBC). This program optimizes the Asset- Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to increase the economic independence of housewives through catfish cultivation and plants in buckets (budikdamber). The purpose of this service is to identify the potential and assets of housewives in improving their quality of life and creating sustainable business opportunities. The methodology used includes observation, interviews, and direct implementation of the budikdamber program in the field. The results of this service showed that most of the participants managed to maintain the survival of their fish, although there were some technical constraints such as the quality of the cultivation container and the frequency of feeding that affected the harvest. The program succeeded in improving the knowledge and skills of housewives in fish and plant farming, although there is a need for continuous improvement and monitoring to achieve more optimal results. |
|---|---|
| Katakunci: Pelatihan Budikdamber; Pemberdayaan Perempuan; Asset- Based Community Development (ABCD) | Abstrak. Pengabdian ini berfokus pada pemberdayaan ibu rumah tangga di Desa Tegalsari, Kecamatan Plered, Kabupaten Cirebon, melalui program Kuliah Pengabdian Masyarakat (KPM) Universitas Islam Bunga Bangsa Cirebon (UIBBC) tahun 2024. Program ini mengoptimalkan pendekatan Assets-Based Community Development (ABCD) untuk meningkatkan kemandirian ekonomi ibu rumah tangga melalui budidaya lele dan tanaman dalam ember (budikdamber). Tujuan dari pengabdian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi potensi dan aset ibu rumah tangga dalam meningkatkan kualitas hidup mereka serta menciptakan peluang bisnis yang berkelanjutan. Metodologi yang digunakan mencakup observasi, wawancara, dan implementasi langsung program budikdamber di lapangan. Hasil dari pengabdian ini menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar peserta berhasil mempertahankan kelangsungan hidup ikan mereka, meskipun terdapat beberapa |

kendala teknis seperti kualitas wadah budidaya dan frekuensi pemberian pakan yang memengaruhi hasil panen. Program ini berhasil meningkatkan pengetahuan dan keterampilan ibu rumah tangga dalam bidang budidaya ikan dan tanaman, meskipun perlu adanya perbaikan dan pemantauan berkelanjutan untuk mencapai hasil yang lebih optimal.

1. Introduction

The shift of economic activity from cities to villages is an interesting phenomenon in this day and age (Li et al., 2019). Activities can be maximized from the village due to the massiveness of information technology in business (Paul et al., 2024). So, that all potential is very capable of being optimized in sustainable business. In addition to the cityto-village shift in business activities, collaborative business highlights collaboration. This can lead to the sustainability of the business's age (Graça & Camarinha-Matos, 2021).

HR optimization in sustainable business requires skills that spark innovation (Geradts & Bocken, 2019) in its business development. So businesses now no longer discuss gender if the skills possessed by HR are equal (Ainsworth & Pekarek, 2022; Hong, 2016). This equality also reflects justice for all Indonesian people (Siscawati et al., 2020). Although the country still faces inequalities, substantial efforts are being made to address them.

Women, as housewives, have always been a marginalized group in the smallest structure of the village Government but they have the potential to contribute to the family's economic system, as household operational managers who control and maintain the home (Hamilton, 2010). With appropriate mentoring and training, women can acquire skills to better organize their lives and enhance their creativity in professional or domestic endeavors (Fahimah & Alfiyah, 2023). The survey mentioned that 77% of Indonesian women can work and take care of the household well (Lidwina, 2020).

There is a stereotype that states that working women are nobler than housewives or housewives are often labeled as uneducated (Sojak et al., 2020). BPS data shows that a percentage of the female population aged 15 years and over has a college certificate than the male population (BPS, 2024, pp. 2009–2023) becomes an unavoidable reality of the potential of housewives. However, it still returns to the nature of women's noble image of housewives in Islam QS. 31:14 (Herliana & Maulida, 2024). Another prevalent perception is that rural women lag behind urban women in employment opportunities and societal roles. Many women in urban areas get jobs that count, including leadership in a company (Munajim et al., 2022). Cultural engagement according to Lawanda (2017) will form a gap between women in different locations. In this context, it is necessary to experience the economy and improve the life skills of rural women so that they can continue to contribute to their families, even the family economy.

Women's involvement in the household economy is as evident as being a farmer (Villano et al., 2024) or trading (Hendratmi et al., 2022), with skills that are sometimes passed down from their parents. Limited business experience without any assistance makes rural women feel adequate with the economic life they get per day. Feeling enough in Islam is a form of qonaah that makes women grateful for their economic life. But life is sometimes not always according to human plans, in conditions like this, women who have more skills can survive and even can contribute to their household economy and have bargaining value for their households. And more broadly able to minimize the exploitation of women in the family economy.

A real reflection can be seen in the observations made of housewives in Tegalsari Village, Plered District, Cirebon Regency, which is an HR asset in the 2024 Community Service Lecture of Universitas Islam Bunga Bangsa Cirebon (UIBBC). Adopting transect activities according to Mikkelsen (2011) by making direct observations of the environment and community resources, which are carried out by tracing the village area, until a program for housewives is agreed upon by optimizing time and household management for economically productive activities by creating business opportunities as well as improving the quality of life of housewives by raising catfish and plants in buckets (Suryana et al., 2021). Local potential, if maximally utilized, can contribute significantly to increasing national income and people's welfare (Fathony, 2022). The hope is to further strengthen the independence and sustainability of the quality of village housewives.

We concentrate on strengths and assets, not on problems and needs. The program is designed to stimulate community organizing, linking and leveraging assistance from external agencies such as Community Service Lecture of UIBBC students, using the *Asset-Based Community Development* approach where behaviors, attitudes, and tools are used to identify assets, strengths, and opportunities then organize so that real action on the ground is drawn (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996). The ABCD model of empowering women housewives through catfish and plant cultivation (budikdamber) is an innovative and relevant idea implemented in housewives of Tegalsari Village, Plered District, Cirebon Regency, combining social, economic, and environmental aspects in one program. And it is not impossible, if the housewife's dream is realized gradually it can become an income to create a halal ecosystem in it, even potentially becoming a village tour (Vidiati et al., 2022).

2 Method

The Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach is highly suitable for empowering women in rural areas to enhance their economic value (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996). This approach leverages the existing strengths and resources within a community to create sustainable development. The activities were conducted in Tegalsari Village, Plered District, Cirebon Regency, from July 15 to August 25, 2024. The target of the initiative was a group of housewives from Wadas Ilir Block, Tegalsari Village. Various tools and equipment were utilized during this program, including village demographic data, stationery, a camera, interview forms, buckets, catfish seedlings, kale seedlings, and pellet feed.

One of the key strengths of this method is its ability to initiate activities even before direct field implementation. This allows the ABCD approach to be optimized to foster independence among housewives and ensure the sustainability of the businesses developed. Several systematic steps were carried out during this initiative to ensure its success.

The first stage of the process focused on identifying the strengths of the women's community as a valuable human resource asset within Tegalsari Village. To accomplish this, students conducted interviews with groups of housewives to explore their specific needs, interests, and desires regarding productive activities. These activities were designed to not only make use of their spare time but also generate additional income. The interviews revealed that housewives were particularly interested in business opportunities that were simple to implement yet offered significant economic value. Examples of such opportunities included fish farming in buckets, also known as budikdamber, and planting kale in containers.

Following the completion of community asset mapping, the program was narrowed down to one sample block to focus on developing the fish

farming in buckets initiative. This program was selected based on its prior success in other regions and its suitability for improving productivity among housewives. Students played a pivotal role in guiding the participants through every stage of the program, starting from the preparation phase and continuing through to implementation. This hands-on guidance ensured that the participants understood each step of the process and could replicate it independently in the future.

The next stage involved conducting a family economic analysis to assess the potential of various business opportunities that could be implemented with limited time and resources. Through group discussions facilitated by the students, the housewives were introduced to potential business ideas and were guided in calculating the profits that could be generated from the cultivation process. This analysis helped identify the fish farming program as the most feasible and promising business model for quickly improving household income. The structured approach ensured that the program aligned with the participants' capabilities and resources, increasing its chances of long-term success.

After selecting the program, students collaborated with participants to develop an action plan. This plan included preparing the necessary tools and materials, arranging a schedule for socialization and training, and providing literacy programs related to aquaculture and cultivation. Students emphasized the importance of understanding both the technical and economic aspects of the business, ensuring that participants were equipped with the knowledge needed to operate independently. Furthermore, participants were guided step by step in implementing the program, reinforcing the skills required to manage and sustain the business on their own.

In addition to providing technical guidance, students were also responsible for monitoring the periodic implementation of the activities. This involved tracking progress, offering additional support or adjustments when necessary, and evaluating the outcomes of each phase. This continuous monitoring ensured that participants were able to overcome challenges and improve their practices over time. Reflections from the housewives, who were the primary beneficiaries of the program, were documented throughout the process. These reflections provided valuable insights into the program's direct impact, helping the students and facilitators refine their approach and ensure that the participants' needs were fully addressed.

3 Results

Applying the ABCD model in empowering women housewives with an integrated fish and plant cultivation system (Budikdamber), is very efficient because it combines two production systems in one container, namely catfish farming and hydroponic plants (such as kale). The ABCD steps implemented are as follows:

a. Discovery:

After identifying needs through group discussions, interviews, or surveys, identify the specific needs of women in the target community, such as access to income sources, knowledge about fish farming, and interest in productive activities. The initial knowledge was that housewives wanted additional income and added value to their daily activities through catfish farming, hydroponics, and small business management.

b. Dream:

Creating a short-term vision of KPM UIBBC, helping housewives visualize their goals through budikdamber. With the hope that this incubator can be an alternative reference for increasing family income, economic independence, or providing healthy food for the family. While long term, helping housewives make long-term plans to develop this startup business.

c. Design:

The next step is to design a system that suits local conditions and available resources. Tasks were divided among group members, as educators and literacy officers such as pond maintenance, feeding, and harvesting. Another activity carried out at this stage is to choose the right type of catfish for hydroponic cultivation, because it is a key factor in the success of cultivation Several factors to consider include: 1) The catfish selected must be able to adapt to the controlled environmental conditions in the hydroponic system. We buy catfish seedlings with 1 month of age to optimize growth time; 2) Fast-growing catfish will provide faster and more profitable harvests. 3) Disease-resistant catfish will reduce the risk of loss. 4) Meat quality: Catfish with good meat quality will have a high selling value.

d. Define:

Then identify the skills that housewives need to have, such as cultivation techniques, financial management, and marketing. And identify the resources needed, such as catfish seeds, catfish feed, hydroponic equipment, and business capital. Develop a mentoring schedule as shown in Table 1 below.

| Week to | Activities | Note | |
|------------|--|---|--|
| 1 | Socialization and group formation | Socialization was carried out by involving village officials and local community leaders to convey information and run the budikdamber program. | |
| | Training on basic techniques of BudikdamberFocusing on preparation of planting media, seedling selection, and initial care | The training was given by Agus Tomy from the Economic Union of Pesantren Kempek, by gathering the housewives in the yard of the post. | |
| 2 | Hands-on practice in the field | Participated by 8 housewives of Wadas Ilir block and Pesantren community (Economic Union of Pesantren Kempek). | |
| | Distribution of seeds and tools | Ensure all participants get an equal share of 10 catfish fingerlings each and those without buckets will be provided. | |
| 2-4 | Intensive mentoring | Performed once every 1 week | |
| 5 | Harvesting, evaluation, follow-up plans, and making activity reports | Performed after catfish age reaches 25 days | |

Table 1. Implementation schedule

e. Destiny:

Then implement the activities as planned. The budget required for the pilot is shown in Table 2 below:

| No. | Activities | Details | Total | |
|-----|--|-----------------------|-----------|--|
| | Socialization, mobilization, stationery, transportation | | IDR20,000 | |
| | Material | 100 Catfish Seedlings | IDR70,000 | |

Table 2. Budget

| | 500gr Catfish Feed | IDR15,000 |
|----------|---|------------|
| | 500gr Kale Seeds | IDR15,000 |
| | Growing media | IDR20,000 |
| Training | Speaker: Agus Tomy (Pesantren Economic Union-SEP) | IDR150,000 |

Source: processed by the author

Mentoring is also carried out periodically every 1 week to overcome obstacles that may arise and as a space to provide motivation. Intensive training is held to ensure all participants have the same understanding of cultivation techniques, pond maintenance, and financial management. Periodic evaluations are conducted to measure the success of the program and make improvements if needed.

4 Discussion

The The monitoring results from the first week of the budikdamber (fish farming in buckets) program showed varied outcomes among participants. Most of the housewives successfully maintained the survival of their catfish, with feeding frequency ranging from once to three times a day, depending on their schedules and understanding of feeding requirements. However, there were notable exceptions where issues arose. For instance, Mrs. Kamsiah experienced the highest fish mortality, with only three fish surviving out of the initial ten. A similar situation was observed with Mrs. Sareni, though her case was less severe, as she managed to keep nine fish alive from her initial stock.

Regarding the kale plants cultivated alongside the fish in the buckets, there had been no significant growth or development within the first week. This lack of progress raised concerns about the overall integration of fish and plant cultivation, which is a key aspect of the budikdamber method. The stagnant growth of the kale plants was noted as an area requiring further evaluation and adjustment in the coming weeks.

During this week, an evaluation was also conducted on the types of containers used for fish farming, specifically for Mrs. Kamsiah and Mrs. Sareni. Both participants used transparent gallon containers for their fish, which turned out to be less suitable for ensuring the survival of the catfish. The transparency of the containers exposed the fish to excess light, negatively impacting their health. This was evidenced by signs such as pale skin in the fish, a condition informally referred to as "bule catfish" by Agus, a Sustainable Economic Program (SEP) activist assisting with the initiative. The pale appearance indicated that the fish were stressed and struggling to adapt to their environment.

As a corrective measure, it was recommended that the participants replace their transparent containers with opaque ones to create a more suitable habitat for the fish. This adjustment was expected to enhance the survival rate of the catfish in the upcoming weeks. The monitoring team emphasized the importance of using proper containers to ensure the overall success of the program. Figure 1 provides an example of Mrs. Kamsiah's fish placed in a used transparent gallon, illustrating the conditions that contributed to the survival challenges..



Figure 1. Transferring the fish tank from the used gallon to the bucket Source: Documentation of KPM Mandiri UIBBC Tegalsari Village

Monitoring in the second week of the budikdamber program revealed that the catfish had reached 17 days of age, showing significant changes in the number of fish surviving among the participants. Of the initial stock of ten fish, only Mrs. Narjo and Mrs. Aminah managed to maintain all of their fish. In contrast, Mrs. Nur experienced a total loss, with all of her fish dying. Mrs. Karsati had six fish remaining, Mrs. Sareni had nine, Mrs. Basniah had eight, and Mrs. Kamsiah, despite her previous challenges, only had three fish left. This significant fluctuation in survival rates raised concerns among the monitoring team and indicated a need for further intervention to ensure better management of the fish farming process.

Meanwhile, a positive development was observed with the kale seedlings, which had started to sprout and show new shoots. This was an encouraging sign, as it indicated that the integration of plant and fish farming was beginning to show promise. The kale plants' growth was slower than expected, but the appearance of new shoots suggested that with the right adjustments and care, the plants could eventually thrive alongside the fish.

This week's monitoring also included some additional activities to support the health of the surviving fish. Pellet feeding was carried out for all the surviving fish, providing them with the necessary nutrients to ensure their growth and development. The frequency of feeding was adjusted to ensure that the fish received enough sustenance to thrive in the budikdamber system. Proper feeding is crucial for the catfish's development, and this step was essential in promoting their overall health.

Additionally, the water in the fish buckets belonging to Mrs. Sareni and Mrs. Basniah was drained and replaced. This step was necessary to ensure that the water quality remained optimal for the fish, as stagnant water can lead to poor water conditions, which may affect the health and survival of the fish. Draining and replacing the water helped refresh the environment, providing the fish with a better habitat to continue their growth.

Figure 2 illustrates the condition of the fish buckets belonging to Mrs. Sareni and Mrs. Basniah, showing the process of water drainage. These actions were part of the ongoing effort to improve the fish farming conditions and ensure that the program would lead to a more sustainable and productive outcome for all participants. Despite some challenges, the program continued to move forward, and the monitoring team was optimistic about the future progress of the initiative.



Figure 2. Pellet feeding and draining

Source: Documentation of KPM Mandiri UIBBC Tegalsari Village

In the third week, which marked the final week of monitoring the budikdamber catfish farming initiative, the number of fish kept by the women remained unchanged compared to the second week. However, there was a noticeable difference in the condition and size of the fish between Mrs. Aminah and Mrs. Narjo. Mrs. Aminah's fish were larger and appeared healthier than those of Mrs. Narjo. This difference was attributed to the feeding habits of each participant. Mrs. Aminah had been more consistent with her feeding schedule, providing food to the fish twice a day. On the other hand, Mrs. Narjo struggled with maintaining a regular feeding routine, which led to her fish not growing as quickly or appearing as robust as Mrs. Aminah's.

In addition to the differences in the fish's condition, the kale plants also showed varying progress. Unfortunately, the kale plants did not thrive as expected. Although they had started to sprout shoots in the previous weeks, the shoots had dried up by the third week, signaling that the plants were not developing well. One of the contributing factors to this poor growth was the placement of the kale plants. The temperature and humidity conditions where the plants were placed were not ideal for their growth. Plants, especially those like kale, require a stable and favorable environment to grow, and it seemed that the conditions in the participants' setups were not conducive to healthy plant development. This issue highlighted the need for further guidance and adjustments in the placement of the plants to improve their chances of survival.

Despite these challenges, there were still positive actions taken to support the participants. One of the key efforts during this final week of monitoring was the distribution of groceries to the participants, as shown in Figure 3. The groceries were given as a reward to Mrs. Aminah for her excellent efforts and results in managing her catfish farming. Her consistency and dedication, especially in maintaining a proper feeding schedule, contributed to the success of her fish farming and served as an example to other participants. This reward aimed not only to acknowledge her hard work but also to motivate other participants to adopt better practices in their budikdamber systems.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of groceries to Mrs. Aminah, which was part of the broader initiative to support the sustainability of the budikdamber project. While the program faced some challenges, such as the poor growth of the kale plants and inconsistencies in feeding, the overall experience provided valuable lessons in fish farming and the integration of aquaculture and agriculture. As the program concluded, the monitoring team gathered useful insights that could be applied to future iterations of the project to improve outcomes for participants.



Figure 3. Giving a gift of groceries to Mrs. Aminah Source: Documentation of KPM Mandiri UIBBC Tegalsari Village

The program carried out by Community Service Lecture of UIBBC faced certain limitations, particularly in its marketing efforts, as the time allocated for activities in the village was not sufficient to reach the target marketing goals. However, despite this shortcoming, the program still managed to focus on educating the participants, especially the housewives, about marketing and the diversification of catfish derivative products. This education was presented as part of a long-term plan and continuation of the program, with the hope of empowering the housewives to eventually expand their businesses in the future. The emphasis on education and literacy in marketing was crucial to equip the participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the broader market for their catfish products once they were ready for distribution.

As part of the evaluation process, interviews were conducted with the participating housewives, which provided valuable insights into the challenges faced during the project. One of the main findings from these interviews was that some of the housewives experienced crop failure or were unable to successfully harvest their catfish. Several factors were identified as contributing to these failures. One of the most significant factors was the design of the hydroponic pond, which plays a crucial role in ensuring optimal catfish growth. A key issue was the color of the bucket could impact the type of catfish skin, resulting in some catfish displaying colors that were different from their natural hue. This factor, though seemingly minor, had an effect on the health and growth of the catfish.

Another important aspect was the size of the buckets used for farming. The size of the container should be tailored to the number of catfish being raised, as overcrowding could lead to insufficient space for the fish to grow and thrive. In addition to this, the program identified the need for a good filtration system to maintain water quality. This was particularly important because the feeding schedule for the fish was set for every two days, and without a proper filtration system, water quality could degrade quickly, which could negatively affect the catfish.

The program also highlighted the importance of incorporating an aeration system into the hydroponic setup. Aeration ensures that there is a constant supply of oxygen in the water, which is vital for the survival and growth of catfish. Without proper oxygen levels, the fish could become stressed and more prone to diseases or even death. Maintaining an optimal water temperature was another critical aspect of the program. Catfish, like any other aquatic species, have specific temperature ranges within which they grow best. Keeping the water temperature within this optimal range was essential for promoting healthy fish development and reducing the risk of fish mortality.

The feeding system also required further attention. An efficient feeding system was necessary to prevent water pollution. Leftover feed that settles at the bottom of the bucket could lead to bacterial growth, which decomposes the feed into ammonia. This ammonia could build up in the water, creating toxic conditions for the fish. Interestingly, the roots of the kale plants planted in the hydroponic system played a role in absorbing the nutrients from the ammonia, helping to maintain the water quality and providing a natural way to recycle nutrients. However, this system needed to be properly managed to ensure that both the fish and plants benefited from it without one negatively affecting the other.

Despite these challenges, the program continued to focus on addressing these issues and improving the system. One of the major challenges faced by participants was the failure of kale plants to grow optimally. This was another area of concern for the program, as the integration of plants and fish in a hydroponic system was meant to create a sustainable and mutually beneficial environment. However, due to various factors, the kale plants did not grow as expected. This issue, alongside the problems faced with the catfish, indicated that there was still room for improvement in the design and management of the budikdamber system.

To address these issues, the program continues to be monitored, with ongoing evaluations and improvements being made. The feedback from the housewives has been instrumental in identifying weaknesses and areas for adjustment, ensuring that future iterations of the program can be more effective. With proper adjustments to the hydroponic pond design, feeding system, aeration, and temperature control, it is hoped that future participants will experience better success rates with both the catfish and kale plants, allowing them to maximize their production and eventually explore opportunities for marketing and expanding their businesses.

5 Conclusion

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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