



Enhancing the Creative Potential of Micro and Small Enterprises in Cianjur Regency

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of the 2024 Community Service Program by Suryakencana University, aligned with government initiatives, serves as a crucial effort in supporting national development by accelerating improvements in the Human Development Index (HDI). This community service, conducted in Girimukti Village, aims to enhance community welfare through the development of micro and small enterprises. Activities included assistance in product creation, packaging, and marketing. The program employed a descriptive method with a focus on building competitive advantages, specifically targeting the optimization of skills in processing cassava-based natural products. The results of the program demonstrated an increase in understanding among micro and small business actors, contributing positively to business development and promoting economic independence within the community. Additionally, a new cassava-based product—crispy tape balls—was successfully developed, complete with improved packaging and a simple yet elegant logo, thereby enhancing the product's market value.

Keywords: tape balls, fermented cassava products, MSMEs.



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1. Introduction

The Community Service Program (KKN) for the 2024 Academic Year represents the XXIII batch of mandatory KKN, required for undergraduate students, organized by Suryakencana University and aligned with national government programs (Keputusan KKN UNSUR 2024, 2024). This KKN activity embodies the *Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi* by implementing community service initiatives (Apriadi et al., 2022). The main objective of this community service is to advance and empower the local community through systematically designed, planned, and deliberate work programs (Nurhadi et al., 2024).

The 2024 KKN program involved students from various faculties, namely the Faculty of Law, FKIP, FASTER, Faculty of Engineering, and FEBI, and was conducted from July 2 to August 2, 2024. This program provided students with valuable experiences to enhance their maturity and professionalism in applying the knowledge and analytical skills acquired during campus learning into real-world community practices. Additionally, KKN serves as a medium to foster community welfare and potential development through empowerment initiatives. It is expected that these activities can serve as a "role model" for achieving a balance between soft skills and hard skills, ultimately cultivating qualified leadership attitudes, ethics, and governance practices (Fauzi et al., 2023), through collaboration with local village authorities to strengthen community development.

At Suryakencana University, KKN is a compulsory extracurricular course that students must complete each academic year. The theme for the 2024 KKN program is "Through KKN Activities, We Enhance Students' Abilities in Empowering Independent Communities."

This year's KKN activities focused on addressing village-level issues, particularly economic challenges faced by micro and small businesses. Economic development is a critical factor for enhancing the standard of living and ensuring community sustainability (Jayati et al., 2021). Micro and small enterprises play a vital role in supporting Indonesia's economy, given their large numbers, significant employment absorption capacity, simple management structures, and limited capital requirements, especially among lower-income groups. The KKN activities were implemented in Girimukti Village, located in Campaka District, Cianjur Regency, West Java.

Girimukti Village comprises 12 neighborhood units (RW) and 33 community units (RT). Initial activities included conducting surveys and analyses in the village. Observations revealed that the majority of residents work as farmers or agricultural laborers, with cassava as the primary plantation product. Typically, cassava in Girimukti is processed into tape (fermented cassava), managed by four main processors and collectors, and distributed mainly to Jakarta and its surrounding areas. However, the tape production industry is predominantly controlled by individuals with relatively higher economic status, limiting the participation of economically disadvantaged community members. Thus, an alternative strategy was proposed to empower these



lower-income groups by diversifying processed tape products and marketing them within the local community.

Recognizing the strategic role of the Village Government in fostering micro and small enterprises, the KKN program included a counseling session themed "Optimizing Micro and Small Enterprises in Girimukti Village." This initiative aimed to raise community awareness about the importance of managing natural resources to improve economic conditions. Additionally, it sought to enhance the community's understanding of the significant role micro and small enterprises play in local economic development. The targeted outcome was to boost the sales of cassava-based MSME (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise) products by identifying alternative products beyond traditional tape and developing effective sales strategies. As a result, the community agreed to develop crispy tape balls as a new, value-added cassava product to increase market competitiveness.

2. Materials and Methods

The method used is descriptive research, which is a method used to solve current problems, with stages of primary data collection, classification, and analysis (Hanyfah et al., 2022). This method is also a research method that clearly describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon being studied. So, this one research method focuses more on explaining the object of research. So that it answers what events or phenomena occur (Salmaa, 2023).

The main purpose of this method is to explain and describe a phenomenon or event carefully, with various criteria, one of which is the goal is not too broad and, the place, and time are clear.

The second method, with a qualitative approach to see sales conditions related to marketing strategies, is carried out in natural conditions and is of a discovery nature. In qualitative research, researchers are the main instruments that are required to be able to adapt to the research environment of methods that focus on in-depth observation. Therefore, the use of qualitative methods in research can produce a study of a more comprehensive phenomenon (Priadana & Sunarsi, 2021).

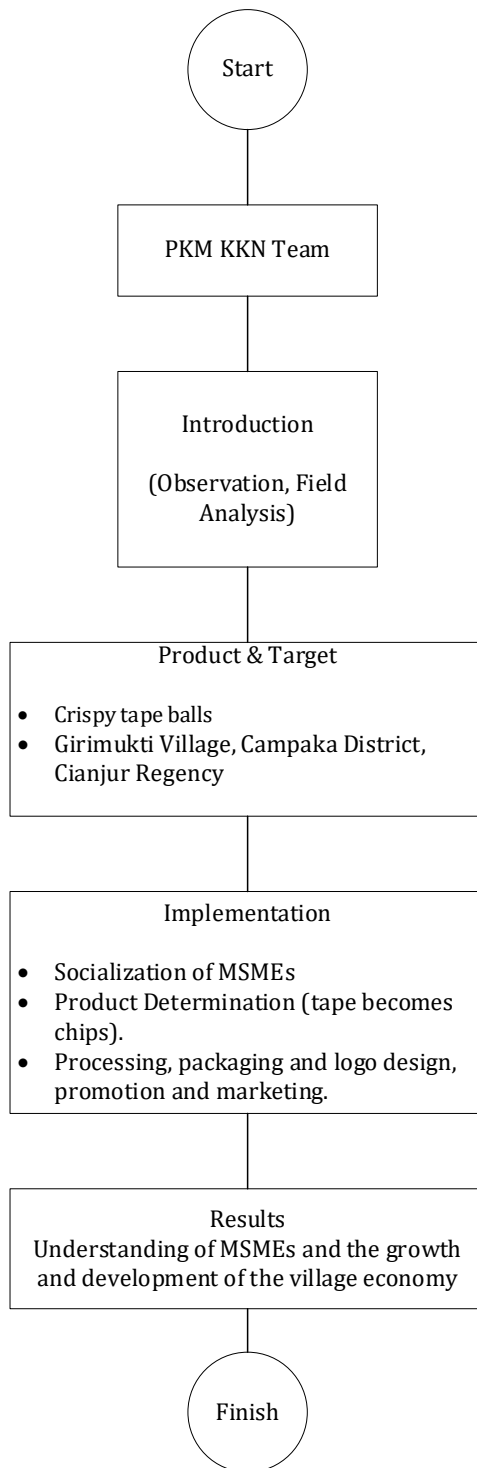


Figure 1 Village economic development process flow

From the stages carried out, it is hoped that the Girimukti Village Community can understand the basics of Micro and small businesses as the foundation of economic progress from micro or village houses to improve welfare and alternative income from farmers or farm laborers.

3. Results and Discussion

This program was implemented using an Extension Action Research approach, centered at the Girimukti Village Hall.



Figure 2 Micro and small business counseling activities

As part of the fieldwork, the KKN team assigned to Girimukti Village conducted a series of observations and identified an opportunity to develop a processed product derived from tape (fermented cassava). Based on these observations, the team introduced a product innovation in the form of crispy tape balls. Prior to product development, a counseling session on micro and small businesses was conducted for the local community. The counseling covered fundamental knowledge of micro and small enterprises, including their definition, functions, objectives, and benefits for village-level economic development. Additionally, the session outlined the planning process, implementation stages, and strategies for product development that the community could replicate.

During the implementation phase, the KKN team facilitated the creation of product packaging and logo designs, aiming to enhance the product's image and increase its added value in the market. The final products were designed to appear more professional and appealing to potential consumers.



Figure 3 Crispy tape ball products and logo



The detailed implementation timeline is summarized in the following table 1.

Table 1. Implementation of Activities

No	Activity	Description
1	July 4–6, 2024	Field observation and community survey
2	July 7–9, 2024	Preparation and delivery of micro and small business counseling; determination of the guided product (Crispy Tape Balls)
3	July 14, 2024	Logo design and product packaging development
4	July 22, 2024	Conducting the Village Workshop

Marketing activities were initiated through various channels, including e-commerce platforms, particularly Facebook and Instagram. In addition, product introductions and promotions were carried out directly through local shops around Girmukti Village. By leveraging digital technology in the marketing strategy, it is anticipated that the newly developed product will quickly gain recognition beyond the local area, thereby expanding its market reach across wider regions. Such an expansion is expected to significantly enhance the economic value of the product compared to previous marketing efforts, which were limited to traditional offline venues.

The operational costs for these activities were financed through a collective KKN group fund, totaling Rp 850,000, with additional in-kind support in the form of access to the Girmukti Village Hall facilities. The budget breakdown is presented in the table 2.

Table 2 Cost of budget

No	Expenditure	Amount (Rp)
1	Village-level workshop activities	450,000
2	Counseling and development of micro and small businesses	400,000
	Total	850,000

The budget covered all necessary expenses, including facilities, equipment, consumables, and documentation, and was fully supported by the students participating in the KKN program in Girmukti Village.

4. Conclusion

Based on the work program of the Suryakencana University Student Community Service activities, several results have been achieved in developing the potential of micro and small businesses, namely the importance of developing a creative economy in the self-sufficiency of Village Communities and one of them in increasing the Human Development Index in terms of the economy, the selection of micro and small businesses products, in this case, crispy tape balls with added selling value in making brand logos, packaging.



In terms of marketing, it has been achieved through social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook, E-commerce, and shops.

For suggestions based on the results of Community Service activities, the Suryakencana University Team provides suggestions including the following:

- 1) Continue to continue improving the village economy, to build a better Human Development Index, especially in the creative economy of the Village community.
- 2) Good awareness of the use of technology in marketing media, to better understand the openness of digitalization as one way to develop a good economy.

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