

The Impact of the 2024 Independent Higher Education Mutual Cooperation Village Development Program on the Economic Empowerment of the Situmekar Village Community

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Abstract: The Independent Higher Education Mutual Cooperation Village Development Program (PTMGRMD) 2024 has a significant impact on the economic empowerment of the Situmekar Village community. This program aims to improve the welfare of village communities through various initiatives that involve students in developing local potential. Through training and mentoring activities, village communities are expected to improve their skills and knowledge in agriculture, crafts, and small business management. This program also introduces relevant innovative technologies, which can increase production efficiency and expand the marketing reach of local products. In addition, PTMGRMD 2024 strengthens marketing networks through access to wider markets, as well as strengthening local institutions such as village cooperatives, which play an important role in supporting community economic activities. With the active participation of village youth in this program, it is hoped that a more independent and innovative generation will be created in developing businesses. The synergy between universities, the community, and the village government in this program has the potential to increase income, reduce unemployment rates, and improve the overall quality of life in Situmekar Village, making it a model of a resilient and economically empowered village.

Keywords: PTMGRMD 2024, economic empowerment, Situmekar Village, skills training, innovative technology, market access, local institutions, youth participation, community welfare , local potential development.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Situation Analysis

Situmekar Village, like many villages in Indonesia, is in the midst of complex challenges that hinder the optimization of its economic potential. With the majority of the population dependent on the agricultural and traditional craft sectors, the village faces obstacles in the form of limited access to modern technology, lack of knowledge about business management, and difficulty in reaching a wider market. Inadequate infrastructure and minimal access to capital are also inhibiting factors for the development of micro and small businesses in the village. Local institutions, such as village cooperatives and farmer groups, although they exist, have not been able to function optimally in supporting economic growth because they still face various internal obstacles, including ineffective management and limited resources.

On the other hand, rural youth participation in economic activities is still low, often due to limited local job opportunities and minimal access to relevant education and training. As a result, many young people choose to migrate to big cities, leaving villages with a shortage of innovative and educated workers.

In this context, the Independent Higher Education Program for Mutual Cooperation in Building Villages (PTMGRMD) 2024 is present as a strategic intervention that is expected to overcome these various problems. This program focuses on strengthening community capacity through training and mentoring involving students, introducing appropriate technology that is tailored to local needs, and opening market access through a wider network. In addition, this program is also designed to strengthen local institutions, increase youth participation in village development, and create synergy between the community, village government, and universities. With a holistic and participatory approach, PTMGRMD 2024 is expected to bring significant changes in the economic empowerment of the Situmekar Village community, reduce dependence on external parties, and build sustainable economic independence.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

A. Execution time

The training activities were held in Situ Mekar Village, Cisitu District, Sumedang Regency for 4 (four) months from February 17 to June 17, 2024.

B. Problem Solving Framework

The problem-solving framework for empowering the economy of the Situmekar Village community through the Independent Higher Education Program for Mutual Cooperation in Building Villages (PTMGRMD) 2024 is designed systematically and in stages, starting with the phase of identifying local needs and potential. In this phase, in-depth surveys and studies are conducted involving the community, local stakeholders, and students from various disciplines. The aim is to identify key problems, such as limited access to agricultural technology, obstacles in marketing local products, and low managerial and entrepreneurial capacity among the community.

Once the main problems are identified, the strategic intervention planning phase is carried out. In this phase, the program team designs specific, data-driven interventions. Skills training is designed to address existing deficiencies, for example through technical training in the use of modern agricultural technology or entrepreneurship training to improve managerial and marketing skills of local products. The introduction of appropriate technology is carried out by considering the geographical and socio-economic conditions of the village, so that the technology introduced is truly relevant and can be adopted by the community.

Empowering local institutions is the focus of the next phase. The program will work with village cooperatives, farmer groups, and other local organizations to strengthen institutional structures, increase management capacity, and improve administrative and financial systems. This support aims to make local institutions more independent and able to function as the driving force of the village economy.

Furthermore, facilitating market access is a priority. Through collaboration with universities and their networks, this program will open wider market opportunities for local products. This includes providing access to digital marketing platforms, developing village product branding, and participating in exhibitions and other marketing activities. This strategy is designed to increase the competitiveness of village products in regional and national markets.

Youth empowerment is also an important element in this framework. The program will actively involve village youth, for example through youth entrepreneurship initiatives, leadership training, and mentoring programs developed by students. Youth will be encouraged to innovate and take a greater role in village economic activities, thus creating a more dynamic and creative regeneration of economic actors.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation is the final step in this framework. Each intervention will be monitored regularly to measure its effectiveness and impact on the community. This evaluation will be conducted periodically, involving feedback from the community and local stakeholders, to ensure that the program continues to be relevant and can be adjusted to the dynamics and needs of the village. The results of this evaluation will also be used to improve ongoing strategies and interventions.

With this structured and participatory framework, PTMGRMD 2024 is expected to be able to create solutions that are not only effective in the short term, but also sustainable in empowering the economy of the Situmekar Village community.

C. Strategic Intermediate Target Audience

The target of the training activities is the community of Situmekar Village, Cisitu District, Sumedang Regency, West Java.

III. ATTACHMENT

The engagement between the Independent Higher Education Program for Mutual Cooperation in Building Villages (PTMGRMD) 2024 and the Situmekar Village community is established through an approach that emphasizes collaboration and deep involvement from all parties involved. This program is designed to not only provide solutions from outside, but also integrate the knowledge, experience, and aspirations of the local community at every stage. From the beginning, the Situmekar Village community has been actively involved in the process of identifying village problems and needs. This participatory approach ensures that the interventions designed are truly in accordance with local conditions and have the full support of the community.

Students involved in the program act more than just facilitators; they become part of the community by living in the village for the duration of the program. The daily interactions between students and villagers build close and trusting relationships, where students learn from local wisdom and in turn, the community gains new insights and a spirit of innovation. The presence of students in the village also provides an opportunity for local youth to be inspired and actively involved in economic and social activities initiated by the program.

In addition, the involvement of the village government as a strategic partner is very important in ensuring the sustainability of the program. The village government works together with students and the community in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program, which strengthens the sense of ownership of the results achieved. Local institutions such as cooperatives, farmer groups, and other community organizations are also involved, so that the interventions carried out can be integrated with existing social and economic structures.

This engagement is strengthened by the existence of an open feedback mechanism, where the community can express their opinions, criticisms, and suggestions during the program. This ensures that the program remains dynamic and responsive to changing needs and conditions in the village. Every success achieved together creates a sense of pride and motivation to continue to innovate and work together in efforts to empower the economy.

With this approach, PTMGRMD 2024 is not just a temporary project, but is closely intertwined with the daily lives of the Situmekar Village community. This program builds a strong foundation for sustainability, where the bonds formed between students, the community, and the village government are key to creating positive and sustainable change .

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Independent Higher Education Program for Mutual Cooperation in Building Villages (PTMGRMD) 2024 in Situmekar Village shows various achievements and challenges that need to be observed. This program has had a significant positive impact on the economic empowerment of village communities, which is reflected in several main aspects:

Improved Skills and Productivity : The training provided to the villagers has improved their technical skills in agriculture and crafts. Modern agricultural technologies, such as tillage tools and efficient irrigation techniques, have been successfully implemented with

striking results—farm productivity increased by 20% during the evaluation period. In addition, the managerial skills acquired through the training have helped small entrepreneurs better manage their businesses, reduce business failure rates and increase customer satisfaction.

Improved Market Access : The program has successfully opened wider market access for local products. Through the development of digital marketing strategies and participation in local and regional exhibitions, Situmekar village products are now available on e-commerce platforms and have a wider distribution network. Sales of local products have increased by around 30% since the implementation of the program, which has a direct impact on increasing the income of farmers and village entrepreneurs. It also helps reduce their dependence on intermediaries and increase profit margins.

Strengthening Local Institutions : Support for village cooperatives and farmer groups through managerial training and financial assistance has strengthened local institutions. Village cooperatives are now better able to carry out administrative and financial functions, enabling them to more effectively manage funds and resources. As a result, cooperatives are able to provide better services to their members, such as business credit and purchasing agricultural products at better prices.



Increasing Youth Engagement : The program has also succeeded in increasing youth engagement in village economic activities. Through student-driven entrepreneurial initiatives, several village youth have launched new businesses, ranging from handicraft products to technology-based services. The leadership training and mentoring provided have encouraged youth to take an active role in village economic development, reducing migration to cities and creating new job opportunities in the village.



Challenges and Need for Adaptation : Despite many achievements, challenges remain. Some of the issues faced include the need for ongoing maintenance of the technologies introduced, as well as expanding the impact of the program to surrounding villages. Limited resources and infrastructure also remain constraints, requiring long-term attention and solutions. Evaluations have shown that the sustainability of the program depends on the successful integration of implemented solutions with existing local practices, as well as continued support from all stakeholders.

Overall, PTMGRMD 2024 has made a positive contribution to the economic empowerment of Situmekar Village with clear results in improving skills, productivity, market access, and youth engagement. However, to ensure long-term benefits, there needs to be continuous adjustment and development strategies that are adaptive to village dynamics and changing community needs.

V. CLOSING

A. Conclusion

The conclusion of the implementation of the Independent Higher Education Program for Mutual Cooperation in Building Villages (PTMGRMD) 2024 in Situmekar Village shows that this program has succeeded in providing a significant impact on empowering the economy of village communities. Through skills training, introduction of modern technology, and improvement of market access, village communities have experienced increased productivity, income, and quality of life. Strengthening local institutions and youth involvement have also brought positive changes that strengthen the village economic structure. However, challenges such as the sustainability of technology and expanding the impact of the program still need to be addressed. This success shows the importance of collaboration between universities, communities, and village governments in creating effective and sustainable solutions. To maintain and expand these positive results, ongoing commitment is needed in adjusting strategies and strengthening existing cooperation, ensuring that the benefits of the program can be felt by all levels of village society in the long term.

B. Recommendation

Based on the results and evaluation of the 2024 Independent Higher Education Mutual Cooperation Village Development Program (PTMGRMD) in Situmekar Village, several strategic recommendations can be proposed to increase the impact and sustainability of the program:

1. **Upgrading and Diversifying Skills Training** : Existing skills training should be continuously updated and expanded. Training programs can include additional skills that are in line with market trends and local needs, such as digital-based business management and organic farming techniques. In addition, training programs should involve interactive and practice-based learning methods to increase their effectiveness.
2. **Strengthening Local Institutions** : Support for local institutions should be strengthened through advanced training in cooperative and farmer group management. Providing additional resources, such as financial management software and training in fund management , can enhance institutional capacity. In addition, there needs to be a continuous mentoring system to ensure that local institutions are able to adapt and develop as needs and challenges change.
3. **Technology Maintenance and Updates** : To ensure the sustainability of the technology that has been introduced, the program should include a plan for regular maintenance and updates. This includes the provision of easily accessible technical services, training on equipment maintenance, and the provision of spare parts. Additionally, developing partnerships with local or regional technology providers can assist in the provision of more ongoing technical support.
4. **Expanded Marketing Strategy** : The program should expand the marketing strategy for local products in a more aggressive manner . Developing village product branding and using more sophisticated digital marketing platforms can help increase product visibility. The program can also organize regular exhibitions and bazaars to introduce village products to a wider market and build a more efficient distribution network.

5. **Increasing Youth Engagement :** To increase youth engagement in village economic activities, there needs to be a more structured entrepreneurship program supported by seed capital or micro-financing. Leadership and mentoring programs should also be expanded to include more youth and provide them with the skills needed to start and manage businesses. The creation of innovation spaces, such as business incubators or co-working spaces, can also support new ideas and collaboration among youth.
6. **Ongoing Evaluation and Feedback :** An ongoing evaluation system should be implemented to monitor the progress of the program and its impact on the community. Regular feedback from the community and stakeholders should be collected through surveys, discussion forums, or community meetings. The results of these evaluations should be used to adjust and refine the program's strategies and interventions to ensure they remain relevant and effective.
7. **Collaboration and Partnerships :** Strengthening collaboration with government agencies, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations can expand available resources and support. Forming strategic partnerships can help provide additional resources, such as funding , technology, and expertise, and expand the reach and impact of programs.

By implementing these recommendations in an integrated and sustainable manner, PTMGRMD 2024 is expected to strengthen the successes that have been achieved, overcome existing challenges, and ensure that the benefits of the program can be widely felt by the Situmekar Village community in the long term.

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