

**DARI DAUN KE PASAR GLOBAL: MBKM WUJUDKAN DUSUN ECOPRINT
UNGGULAN EKSPOR MELALUI PEMBERDAYAAN PEREMPUAN DI DESA
PEMATANG JOHAR.**

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Abstract: This Community Service Program aims to broaden the knowledge and awareness of women from PKK groups and the local community of Pematang Johar Village regarding ecoprint as an environmentally friendly creative product based on local resources with economic potential. Pematang Johar Village is an agrarian area with 18 existing flagship products from various hamlets, yet ecoprint has never been introduced or developed. The activity was conducted through several stages, including preparation, socialization, and educational sessions using video presentations to demonstrate the ecoprint production process and digital marketplace platforms for product marketing. This program was implemented as an international community service activity involving collaboration between STIE Eka Prasetya and partner universities from Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam. Approximately 30 participants consisting of PKK members and village residents attended the activity. The results indicate that participants gained new cognitive skills, developed a new perspective on utilizing local leaves as creative resources, and showed strong interest in further developing ecoprint as a village-based economic activity. The evaluation results show a participant satisfaction rate of 98 percent. This program represents an initial step toward women empowerment and the development of ecoprint as a potential new flagship product oriented toward the global market.

Keywords: ecoprint; community service; global marketing; village creative economy; women empowerment

Abstrak: Kegiatan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk membuka wawasan dan meningkatkan pengetahuan ibu-ibu PKK serta masyarakat Desa Pematang Johar mengenai ecoprint sebagai produk kreatif berbasis potensi lokal yang ramah lingkungan dan bernilai ekonomi. Desa Pematang Johar merupakan desa agraris dengan 18 produk unggulan dari berbagai dusun, namun ecoprint belum pernah diperkenalkan maupun dikembangkan sebelumnya. Metode kegiatan dilaksanakan secara bertahap, dimulai dari persiapan, sosialisasi, dan edukasi melalui pemutaran video proses pembuatan ecoprint serta pengenalan pemasaran produk melalui marketplace digital. Kegiatan ini merupakan PKM internasional yang melibatkan kolaborasi antara STIE Eka Prasetya dengan mitra perguruan tinggi luar negeri dari Thailand, Malaysia, dan Vietnam. Kegiatan diikuti oleh sekitar 30 peserta yang terdiri dari ibu-ibu PKK dan masyarakat desa. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan bahwa peserta memperoleh keterampilan baru secara kognitif, perubahan cara pandang terhadap pemanfaatan dedaunan lokal, serta meningkatnya minat untuk mengembangkan ecoprint sebagai potensi ekonomi desa. Hasil evaluasi menunjukkan tingkat kepuasan peserta sebesar 98 persen. Kegiatan ini menjadi tahap awal dalam upaya pemberdayaan perempuan dan pengembangan ecoprint sebagai produk unggulan baru yang berorientasi pada pasar global.

Kata kunci: ecoprint; ekonomi kreatif desa; pemasaran global; pemberdayaan perempuan; pengabdian kepada masyarakat

PENDAHULUAN

Pematang Johar Village is one of the villages in Deli Serdang Regency characterized by an agrarian area with abundant natural resource potential. Based on village profile data, the total area of Pematang Johar Village reaches 2,217.84 hectares, of which approximately 81 percent consists of productive rice fields that serve as the main foundation of the community's economic activities. The village population is recorded at 15,191 people distributed across 4,105 households. Of this number, 1,607 women are housewives who do not have a fixed income and largely depend on family income from the agricultural sector (Pematang Johar, 2019).

These conditions indicate that Pematang Johar Village possesses two important characteristics, namely the availability of abundant natural resources and the presence of female human resources that have not yet been fully productive economically. On the other hand, the village has also developed several flagship potentials based on the creative economy and tourism, such as the Rice Field Tourism Village, batik handicrafts using natural dyes, and various local processed food products. However, these potentials have not been evenly developed across all hamlets and remain limited to certain groups, thus they have not been able to absorb female labor on a broad and sustainable scale.

One natural potential that has not been optimally utilized is the abundance of leaves and local plants found around agricultural land, residential areas, and home gardens. So far, these leaves have generally been regarded as agricultural waste with no economic value. In fact, various studies indicate that local leaves and flowers have significant potential to

be used as raw materials for ecoprint, a technique of printing natural motifs on fabric that is environmentally friendly and has high market value (Saptutyingsih & Wardani, 2019). The ecoprint technique has gained increasing interest in line with growing global awareness of sustainable and eco friendly textile products.

Empirical findings from community service activities show that the utilization of local plants through ecoprint education is able to transform community perceptions of previously undervalued leaves and plants into sources of creative economic value. Community service activities conducted in Air Joman District demonstrate that ecoprint training based on local plant resources significantly improves participants' skills, broadens their understanding of natural resource utilization, and fosters creativity in producing environmentally friendly textile products (Sinaga et al., 2022). These findings strengthen the argument that local leaves in Pematang Johar Village have similar potential to be developed into creative products with economic value.

Ecoprint not only offers aesthetic value but also provides economic benefits and environmental sustainability. Ecoprint products fall within the category of creative industries based on local wisdom that support the principles of sustainable consumption and production. Research by Herlina et al. (Herlina et al., 2018), shows that ecoprint products have strong appeal in the sustainable fashion market due to their unique motifs and the use of natural materials that are safe for the environment. Moreover, ecoprint enables household scale production with relatively low capital, making it highly suitable for development by rural women.

In the context of Pematang Johar Village, ecoprint serves as a strategic alternative to address the economic challenges faced by women who do not yet have stable incomes. Ecoprint activities can be carried out flexibly at home without abandoning domestic roles, making them compatible with the social conditions of rural women. Mubarat et al. (2021), emphasize that ecoprint training is capable of enhancing skills, creativity, and business opportunities for women's groups in rural areas. This finding is consistent with results from community service research published in the Journal of IPTEK Bagi Masyarakat by Sinaga et al. (2021) which demonstrates that hands on ecoprint activities are effective in developing women's creativity, increasing self confidence, and enhancing participants' ability to produce marketable handicraft products.

Nevertheless, the community of Pematang Johar Village still faces limitations in knowledge and skills related to ecoprint techniques, selection of raw materials, product quality standards, and market access. Without systematic assistance, the potential of local leaves cannot be transformed into high value economic products. This condition reinforces the urgency of implementing structured, practical, and capacity building oriented community service programs, particularly for women.

The implementation of community service programs with an international approach becomes increasingly relevant in addressing the challenges of creative product marketing in the global era. The ecoprint market is not only developing at local and national levels but also has significant opportunities in international markets, especially in countries with high concern for environmentally friendly products. Sustainable textile products

from developing countries have considerable export potential when supported by adequate product quality and appropriate marketing strategies (Saptutyningsih & Wardani, 2019).

Sinaga et al. (2022) emphasize that the success of ecoprint education based on local potential must be accompanied by strengthening production capacity and market understanding so that the products generated do not remain at the training stage alone but develop into sustainable economic activities. Therefore, international collaboration with universities from Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines becomes highly strategic as a medium for cross cultural knowledge exchange, understanding quality standards, and global consumer preferences. This collaboration serves as an important foundation in realizing an Export Oriented Ecoprint Flagship Hamlet in Pematang Johar Village.

The Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program also plays a strategic role in this activity. Through MBKM, students are directly involved in community empowerment, ranging from training and production assistance to digital marketing. Student involvement not only supports the achievement of higher education Key Performance Indicators but also strengthens program sustainability through continuous knowledge transfer between academics and the community.

Based on the analysis of situational conditions, existing problems, and empirical evidence from previous studies and community service activities, the implementation of a community service program entitled *From Leaves to the Global Market: MBKM Realizing an Export Oriented Ecoprint Flagship Hamlet through Women Empowerment in Pematang Johar Village* is highly relevant. This title reflects the transformation of

simple local resources into high value products, emphasizes the role of MBKM in building a creative economy based village, and strengthens the dimension of women empowerment as key actors in globally oriented local economic development.

Thus, this community service program not only addresses the need for improving community skills but also supports the achievement of sustainable development, strengthening the village economy, and enhancing the role of women in local economic development based on natural potential and global networks.

METHOD

The implementation method of this community service activity was designed in stages using an educational, participatory, and cross-national collaborative approach. The activity was carried out in Pematang Johar Village as the target partner of the program, involving PKK women groups and village residents as the main participants. This program was part of an international community service initiative implemented by STIE Eka Prasetya in collaboration with overseas partner universities, namely Shinawatra University Thailand, Universiti Teknologi Mara Malaysia, and the University of Economics and Finance Ho Chi Minh Vietnam. The collaboration between higher education institutions and the village partner aimed to broaden community insights into ecoprint, its production process, and opportunities for product development in the global market.

The first stage was the preparation phase. During this stage, the community service team conducted internal

coordination and communicated with international partners to agree on the form of activities, learning materials, and the roles of each party. Coordination was also carried out with the Pematang Johar Village administration regarding the implementation schedule, activity location, and participant registration involving PKK women groups and village residents. The team prepared educational materials in the form of videos demonstrating the ecoprint production process and videos presenting marketplace displays as the main learning media, considering that the activity focused on introducing and broadening participants' knowledge.

The second stage was the implementation of socialization and educational activities. The activity was conducted by watching videos of the ecoprint production process, which illustrated the stages of leaf selection, fabric preparation, motif arrangement, steaming, and color fixation. Video media were used to facilitate participants' understanding of the ecoprint process in a visual and systematic manner. During the video playing, the community service team provided additional explanations and emphasized the potential utilization of local leaves available in the environment of Pematang Johar Village.

The next stage involved the introduction of ecoprint product marketing through digital media. Participants were shown videos presenting examples of marketplace interfaces and online marketing platforms used to promote ecoprint products, including an overview of international marketing. At this stage, international partners contributed perspectives on environmentally friendly product trends, global consumer preferences, and opportunities for ecoprint products to enter international markets. This method aimed to raise participants'

awareness that ecoprint is not only a creative activity but also offers significant economic opportunities.

Throughout the activity, interactive discussions were conducted between the community service team, international partners, and participants. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions regarding the ecoprint production process, potential business development, and marketing challenges. These discussions served as a means to explore participants' interests and readiness to engage in subsequent practice-oriented activities.

The activity was attended by approximately 30 participants consisting of PKK women and residents of Pematang Johar Village. Participants' enthusiasm was evident from their active involvement in discussions and positive responses to the materials presented. As a follow-up, the activity is planned to continue with hands-on ecoprint workshops and training on international product marketing. Thus, this method does not end at the socialization stage but serves as the initial phase of a series of women empowerment programs oriented toward the establishment of an export-oriented ecoprint flagship hamlet in Pematang Johar Village.

DISCUSSION

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Figure 1. Community Service Team

Figure 2. Participants

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CONCLUSION

The international Community Service Program implemented in Pematang Johar Village made a tangible contribution to broadening perspectives and enhancing the knowledge capacity of the community, particularly PKK women groups and rural women, regarding ecoprint as an alternative creative product based on local potential. Through socialization and visual educational methods, participants gained an initial understanding of the ecoprint production process, the utilization of leaves as raw materials, and opportunities for product marketing up to the global market.



that were previously considered to have no value began to be understood as potential raw materials that can be processed into products with aesthetic and economic value. In addition, this activity also functioned as a form of socio-cultural engineering that encouraged a shift in the role of rural women from merely supporting household economies to becoming active agents in the development of the village creative economy. The evaluation results indicated a very high level of participant satisfaction, with 98 percent of participants expressing interest and satisfaction with the materials and methods of the activity. Participants' enthusiasm and positive responses to the proposed follow-up activities demonstrate that ecoprint has the potential to be developed as a new flagship product that complements the 18 existing flagship products in Pematang Johar Village. Thus, this community service activity can be considered effective as an initial stage in building a foundation of knowledge, motivation, and community readiness toward the development of an export-oriented ecoprint flagship hamlet.

Overall, this activity demonstrates that a community service approach based on international collaboration and MBKM involvement can serve as a strategic solution for women empowerment and the strengthening of the village creative economy. The success of this initial stage provides an important foundation for the implementation of follow-up activities in the form of hands-on workshops and international marketing assistance to ensure program sustainability

and improve the welfare of the Pematang Johar Village community.

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