

Empowerment of Housewives through Activities of Processing Coconut into Flower Pots at Palakka District

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Abstract	Article Info
This community service program aims to increase community creativity in utilizing the natural resources available in the surrounding environment into useful and beneficial things, especially for the people in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District. The strategy used to achieve this goal is through a series of activities starting with field observations, conducting interviews and approaches to housewives who love ornamental plants (flowers), directing them to collect coconut husks around them so that later they can processed into useful things and reduce spending on buying flower pots that are displayed in various places, especially in the market. In addition, increasing creativity in processing coconut coir into flower pots can make local communities have space to open businesses in increasing economic income for the welfare of families and communities so that later they need continuous assistance to produce products that are of interest to various groups of people (taking into account the feasibility of being used as a business).). Marketing activities are carried out by advertising products on various social media that are needed at all home scales with various product displays (mats and coconut fiber ropes, etc.) that are friendly to the environment and good for the growth of various ornamental plants, especially orchids and open-pore plants.	<i>Article History</i> <i>Received:</i> <i>October 29, 2021</i> <i>Revised:</i> <i>February 28, 2022</i> <i>Accepted:</i> <i>May 30, 2022</i> <i>Keywords: Coconut for Pots, Flower Pots, Empowerment Housewives</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Implementation of this PKM activity is intended to enrich the use of coconut coir which is abundant in Indonesia (Bondra, Marcel, 2018). Indonesia is the largest coconut producing country in the world, this plant has benefits that are useful for life and has a fairly high economic value. Some forms of coconut products that are close to life are coconut milk, coconut oil, and coconut water (Pham, 2016; Alouw, & Wulandari, 2020; Arena, Lee, & Clift, 2016). One of the most important parts of the coconut plant is the coconut fruit. Coconut fruit consists of several parts, namely the outer skin of the coconut, coconut husk, shell, fruit flesh, and coconut water. All of these parts can be processed into several derivative products. (Maulana, 2018)

Coconut coir can be processed into fibers that can have high economic value because the potential for raw materials derived from coconuts is easy to obtain and very abundant. Coconut coir has the potential to be developed into a commercially valuable product. The potential of coco coir which is the result of processing coconut coir can actually be used as: 1) flower pots 2) flower hangers; 3) rope; 4) broom fibers;

5) brush; 6) carpet; 5) insulator; 6) clumps of tie thread; 7) water filter; and 8) batik dyes. (Indahyani, 2011; Limantara, Suyono, & Subiyanto, 2020; Maulana, 2018; Mahfud, & Purabaya, 2021). Even though Indonesia is the largest coconut producer in the world, the utilization of coco coir is still very low so that the added value of the product is low (Kurniawan, Kustiningsih, & Firdaus, 2020; Stolle, et al., 2003). This is evident from the high production of coconut, which is around 15 billion grains per year, but Indonesia is only able to supply 10% of the world's need for coconut coir with a production of 50 tons per year, while nationally the use of coconut coir is only 3.2% of the total production. Many efforts have been made by both the government and non-government institutions, such as the collaboration between the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs with the Indonesian Coconut Industry Association (AISKI) in facilitating the marketing of processed coconut coir products for cooperatives, micro, small and medium enterprises (KUMKM). coconut coir has not been processed to its full potential. Indonesia is far behind Sri Lanka and India in meeting the world's needs where both countries have been able to export 70% of coco coir. (Ciaying, 2018)

Especially in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District, Bone Regency, which is the largest coconut production center in Bone Regency and coconut is the mainstay commodity in that village. Its high coconut production is a potential and strength for the coconut coir processing industry. Coir processing industry which should be a mainstay commodity for housewives there. But in reality the coconut coir is not processed properly. Coconut coir which should be used economically for profit and added value is only damaged and wasted, only considered as waste that has no value, even though the coconut coir can be processed into unique and attractive flower pots.

Currently, the love of housewives for flowers (ornamental plants) cannot be denied. Housewives every day hunt for flowers that can be used as ornamental plants in their yards. If housewives have a hobby of planting flowers, then they definitely need a flower pot which is a place where the flowers are planted and raised. Therefore, the coconut husks they have can be used as flower pots. So far, housewives in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka Subdistrict, Bone Regency have only relied on plastic and cement pots to make their flower containers. In fact, behind their house they piled coconut husks which were only used for coals when burning fish and even threw them away.

After the researchers conducted a survey in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District by interviewing two housewives. One of the reasons why housewives there don't process coconut coir into flower pots and just pile it behind their house, because they don't understand how to process coconut coir into flower pots. They did not understand what tools and materials were used to make flower pots from coconut husks. They also do not understand how to polish it so that the flower pot made of coconut fiber looks beautiful and attractive for display in the yard of his house.

To overcome this, the researchers partnered with housewives to be given assistance on how to process coconut coir into flower pots so that the coconut coir could be put to good use. After the researchers gave views and explanations about the procedure for processing coconut coir into pots. So many housewives are interested in participating in assistance in making flower pots from coconut fiber. Because apart from being practical, the materials and tools are easy to obtain.

Processing coconut coir into flower pots is actually easy and difficult because it takes perseverance to do it. The obstacles that can be faced are mainly related to 1) the quality of the product produced, 2) polishing so that the product is suitable for display in the yard of the house, and 3) if possible the marketing of the product so that it

becomes a source of income for housewives in Tanah Tengah Village, District Palakka.

Running a household business is actually easy and difficult, where perseverance is needed in running this business. Because there are many obstacles that are commonly encountered, especially those related to 1) the quality of the product produced, 2) the packaging so that the product is worthy of sale, and 3) the marketing of the product, this becomes an inseparable unit in the management of a household business.

If we look at the general manufacture of flower pots from coconut fiber, it has very good prospects for development because the raw materials used are also very simple, but must have the ability to process raw materials to produce beautiful and attractive pots and mentoring activities for making pots from coir. Coconuts for housewives in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District, Bone Regency, the center for making it will be done in one of the residents' houses.

The solution offered in this service activity is assistance for housewives in processing coconut coir into flower pots in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District, Bone Regency which is manifested in the form of:

- a. Assistance in processing coconut coir into flower pots involving housewives and Village head.
- b. Training on how to process coconut coir into flower pots in order to produce products that are used as sources of sustainable knowledge.

The external targets are;

- a. Implementation of processing coconut coir into flower pots for housewives.
- b. Involvement of housewives in preparation, organizing, processing, and evaluation/supervision activities in processing coconut coir into flower pots
- c. . The involvement of housewives in processing coconut coir pots is experience oriented.
- d. Produce flower pots with different shapes every month, namely round pots, rectangular pots, love pots, cone-shaped pots, parallelogram-shaped pots, and exhibitions at the village office.

The proposing team is the manager of the Muhammadiyah Bone University campus in Bone Regency which has succeeded in creating a coconut coir processing industry with various variants. Through the experience gained in the craft industry, the proposing team made this PKM proposal for housewives in order to have special skills in processing coconut coir raw materials into flower pots. This will be useful for the younger generation in the campus environment to form the character of creativity in processing coconut coir waste into useful products as a source of science and technology in the Muhammadiyah University Campus, Bone Regency.

METHOD

There are several stages carried out in carrying out this PKM activity, namely preparation, organization, implementation and supervision. The process can be seen through the following explanation;

Preparation (*planning*)

- a. Holding discussions with partners (3 housewives) and the Village Head in providing materials and tools used and determining product targets to be produced and setting a schedule for implementing activities.
- b. Provide materials and tools used
- c. Determine product targets to be maximized

- d. Set schedule for organizing *activities*
 - a. Form work groups
 - b. Set costs
 - c. activities

implementation :

make round pots

Month 4: make square pots

Month 5: making a love-shaped pot

Month 6: making a cone-shaped pot

Month 7: making a parallelogram-shaped pot

Month 8: making a tube-shaped pot

Month 9: holding an exhibition at the village office.

Supervision (*Controlling*); Control activities to run according to a predetermined track

Furthermore, mentoring activities for housewives in processing coconut coir into flower pots in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District, Bone Regency are realized by a participatory and collaborative approach centered on housewives to participate collaboratively in a working group to complete the coir coconut into flower pot. The use of coconut coir into pots overcomes the problems associated with the large amount of coconut coir in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District which is not utilized. They only use the coconut husk as charcoal for burning fish and even tend to throw it away. The focus of the activity is on analysis where housewives will be able to process the coconut fiber into useful things and can even be used as a source of income for them. Assistance in processing coconut coir into pots for housewives uses more active activities or *action activities* where housewives learn to process coconut coir into pots through experience because they are involved in observation, experimentation, and production activities. By experiencing firsthand the training activities provided. Housewives are expected to gain knowledge more enthusiastically, not bored, and more active. Assistance in processing coconut coir as flower pots makes housewives more skilled at processing their own coconut coir. It's not just a theory. This service activity seeks to create an atmosphere of mentoring that is fun, not stressful, and the communication between the companions who are accompanied is also warm and friendly.

The purpose of the participatory and collaborative approach is to intentionally involve housewives in teams (working groups) in all aspects of the investigation related to processing coconut coir into pots so that they are able to ask questions if they do not understand how to process coconut coir into pots, make decisions, and reflect on their knowledge to process coconut husks into beautiful and attractive pots. The aim of the participatory and collaborative approach is not only to equip housewives with theoretical knowledge, but the ability to be skilled at making products.

Partner participation (Village Head) is to facilitate activities by providing permits, policies, and support facilities to other partners (housewives). The village head also accommodates housewives to be enthusiastic about participating in mentoring activities. Then the evaluation of the program implementation was carried out to measure the benefits of processing coconut coir into flower pots, where the results of the evaluation would be obtained through distributing questionnaires to housewives.

PKM sustainability can be done through good communication with partners. The flower pot product made from coconut fiber produced by housewives is the result of learning that its use is sustainable for other housewives and even this product can

be marketed so that housewives earn income. If deemed necessary, the next program will be proposed for assistance for housewives in processing coconut coir into foot persimmons in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District, Bone Regency.

Table 1
Schedule

No	Name	Month											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Preparation of implementation												
2	Socialization Preparation of implementation												
3	Introduction of activities												
4	Implementation of activities												
5	Evaluation												
6	Compiling report writing												
7	Submission of research reports												

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Coconut coir is the outermost part of which is a package of coconut shell and coconut contents with a thickness ranging from 5-6 cm (outermost layer and innermost layer) which contains fine fibers and can be used for various kinds of needs which are the needs of housewives, as in the results of this study it is used as the basic material to process it. become a flower pot. Through this activity, several things were carried out in the field, namely; starting from the procurement of materials and tools to be used, given mentoring activities on how to soften coir and how to separate coconut fiber, there was guidance on sorting/sifting to separate fine and coarse coconut fibers. Furthermore, mentoring is carried out to design a frame that is in accordance with the desired shape of the pot, followed by guidance on processing coconut fiber into flower pots and the last is partners are also guided to polish flower pots from coconut fiber so that it looks attractive as well as related to marketing in the sense that through this activity, is expected to be able to increase the productivity of partners' work, increase product quality and build partnership networks with other entrepreneurs in various places.

Coconut coir pots have advantages over plastic and cement pots. Coconut coir pots are not only unique in shape and contain artistic value, coconut coir pots have the advantage of absorbing and storing water longer so that the soil in the pot remains wet and does not evaporate so that the flowers are not watered every day. the process of air exchange in the flowers goes well so as to allow more sunlight to enter the flowers, coconut coir pots prevent the soil from compacting quickly, coconut coir pots are more environmentally friendly than cement or plastic pots. (Syofiardi, 2022)

There are so many advantages of coconut coir pots compared to plastic or cement pots that researchers feel the need to provide assistance to housewives to process coconut coir in their homes into flower pots. In addition to the practical way of making, the materials and tools are easy to obtain and environmentally friendly. The

most important thing is that housewives can make coconut coir handicrafts into their pots and it is still possible to carry out their functions as housewives.

The results (*output*) of the implementation of this activity, (flower pots from coconut belts) can be seen through the following image variants;



Through the world of trade, this coconut coir is referred to in various ways, for example: *Coco Fiber*, *Coir FiberRugs*, *Cocoput*, etc. which are considered as a product of their processing. Traditionally, through this activity, the community is guided to make flower pots with various variants; (round shape, square shape, love shape, cone shape, parallelogram shape and tube shape). This flower pot has a function as a plant growing medium which is very suitable for various kinds of flowers in Bone Regency, moreover it has its own artistic value and is environmentally friendly because it has its own function when the time to use it has expired.

How to make flower pots from coconut belts is very easy, because the production costs can be said to be quite cheap and have many benefits for various purposes (crafts), it can also be used as a substitute for wood in cooking for housewives, especially those who live in remote villages.

Utilization of coconut fiber as flower pots, began to conduct mentoring activities for housewives in the Middle Village, Palakka District through this PKM activity with various beautiful innovations. The manufacturing process is carried out by;

1. Taking part in coconut coir waste
2. Soaking for approximately 2 days
3. After the soaking activity, drying activities are carried out
4. When the coconut coir waste is dry, then it is mashed by chopping it using any tools that can destroy
5. the wire or other tools only (adjusted to the desired pot design, eg round shape, square shape, love shape, cone shape, parallelogram shape and tube shape, etc.) whose function is to protect the coconut coir waste, especially after filling with basic ingredients that can grow flower plants.

These products, of course, have a selling value, especially in the current millennial era, various kinds of sales (marketing) strategies are very easy to do by utilizing technological developments (social media-WEB sites) that can attract people's attention to buy products that have been produced. So, through this activity, besides being able to increase the creativity of housewives in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District, it can also reduce the accumulation of coconut coir waste that disturbs the beauty of the surrounding environment. This program also certainly can increase knowledge and income of the community (housewives) in Tanah Tengah Village, Palakka District. Hopefully it can provide positive and useful value to local residents and

surrounding areas.

CONCLUSIONS

Empowerment of housewives is very important to be carried out by various women observers from various circles including academics through community activity programs (PKM). These activities must be carried out to increase the capacity of housewives and be selective in buying needs (considering priorities and not priorities), especially for the beauty of the home page. Their self-confidence should be built to pay attention to the surrounding environment about which ones can be utilized (managed in such a way) to be empowered and effective. Women (housewives) must participate and take part in all lines of development in Indonesia, including creating a beautiful, clean and comfortable household environment by utilizing the natural potential that exists in the surrounding environment, in this case including the coconut belt for used as a flower pot. In addition, the effort to empower housewives is a business that has many positive impacts on various aspects of life, such as the economy, but unfortunately, there are still various groups who are indifferent and indifferent to seeing housewives become active and innovative in their activities. create creativity, especially if there is still an understanding that seems to discriminate against women. In fact, it is possible that many housewives have *soft* and *hard skills* that are not inferior to the adam. Therefore, hopefully through this community empowerment activity (PKM) it can support government programs in empowering housewives (women) so that creative business potential opens and can improve family welfare and contribute to improving the economy of a nation/country.

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