



From Farmers to World: Local Coffee Go to Global Stage

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Abstract

This Community Service Program conducted in Talang Babatan Village, Kepahiang District, Bengkulu, aims to empower the local community through the enhancement of human resources in coffee production. The project focuses on developing Talang Babatan as a competitive and sustainable coffee-producing village. Despite its potential, the community faces challenges including limited knowledge of modern coffee processing, weak production management, and inadequate access to broader markets. Activities conducted include field visits, community discussions, problem identification, and training sessions focused on improving the knowledge and skills of coffee farmers in post-harvest processing, diversification, and product branding. Preliminary outcomes indicate improved awareness and readiness among local farmers and women's groups to adopt innovative methods in coffee processing and marketing. Through these initiatives, the program contributes to enhancing the village's economic resilience and positioning local coffee on the global stage.

Keywords: Coffee; Coffee Farmers; Capacity Building; Community Empowerment; Community Service

Abstrak

Kegiatan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat (PkM) di Desa Talang Babatan, Kecamatan Kepahiang, Bengkulu, bertujuan untuk mengembangkan potensi desa sebagai penghasil kopi berkualitas dan berdaya saing tinggi. Desa ini memiliki karakteristik sosial dan budaya yang kaya, dengan mayoritas penduduknya berprofesi sebagai petani kopi. Meskipun memiliki potensi besar, masyarakat desa menghadapi berbagai tantangan, termasuk keterbatasan pengetahuan dan keterampilan dalam pengolahan kopi, manajemen produksi yang lemah, serta akses pasar yang terbatas. Dalam progresnya, kegiatan yang telah dilakukan adalah peninjauan permasalahan, brainstorming, dan sharing session terkait dengan peningkatan kapasitas petani kopi Desa Talang Babatan dalam pengolahan dan diversifikasi produk kopi. Aktivitas ini bertujuan untuk memberikan pemahaman yang lebih baik mengenai teknik pengolahan kopi yang dapat meningkatkan kualitas dan nilai jual produk. Saat ini, aktivitas terus berlanjut dengan persiapan untuk sharing session kedua yang akan membahas branding

dan pemanfaatan media sosial. Diharapkan melalui sesi ini, masyarakat dapat meningkatkan kapasitasnya dalam memasarkan produk kopi mereka secara lebih efektif, sehingga dapat mewujudkan peningkatan nilai biji kopi dan memperluas akses pasar. Dengan demikian, program ini diharapkan dapat memberikan dampak positif bagi kesejahteraan ekonomi masyarakat desa dan meningkatkan daya saing produk kopi Talang Babatan di pasar yang lebih luas.

Kata kunci: Kopi, Petani Kopi, Peningkatan Kapasitas, Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat

Introduction

Talang Babatan Village, located in the Kepahiang Regency of Bengkulu, is a prominent area for coffee production. It is especially known for its high-quality coffee variety called 'Pucuk Merah.' This coffee is highly valued because of its special taste and aroma, which is popular with coffee drinkers both in Indonesia and abroad. The village's rich soil and perfect climate for coffee plants, combined with a community where coffee farming is a central part of life and culture, create a strong foundation for success (Winarno, 2024). The local government and community leaders, including women's groups involved in farming, are fully supportive of efforts to develop the village's coffee potential.

Located approximately 65 kilometers from the University of Bengkulu, Talang Babatan benefits from fertile soil and a favorable climate, making it ideal for coffee cultivation. Coffee farming is deeply rooted in the community's socio-cultural identity, serving as both an economic livelihood and a cultural hallmark. The Pucuk Merah coffee variety, known for its bright red cherries and unique aroma, has significant potential to reach global markets. Empowering the community to maximize this potential can substantially improve local livelihoods and strengthen the village's reputation as a high-quality coffee hub (Rengganis et al, 2025).

Despite these favorable conditions, the village has not yet fully capitalized on its potential. Local farmers confront a range of challenges that hinder business growth and limit income. Key constraints include a limited grasp of modern coffee processing techniques, underdeveloped business management skills, and a lack of effective marketing strategies. The prevalent reliance on traditional methods and basic tools further restricts both the quality and quantity of their coffee output. Without access to new skills and technologies, product improvement remains a significant obstacle (Afriansyah et al, 2025). Acknowledging these issues, the local government, represented by the village head, has expressed strong support for initiatives aimed at community development. Furthermore, a collaboration with the head of the Dharma Wanita association, who personally manages a coffee plantation, has created a valuable opportunity to engage women's groups in developing value-added coffee products.

The problems continue beyond the farms. The farmers often find it hard to get the necessary information about new market opportunities or better farming techniques. Official processes and paperwork can also be complex and time-consuming, making it challenging to get business permits or government support (Muttaqin et al, 2024). Furthermore, because the

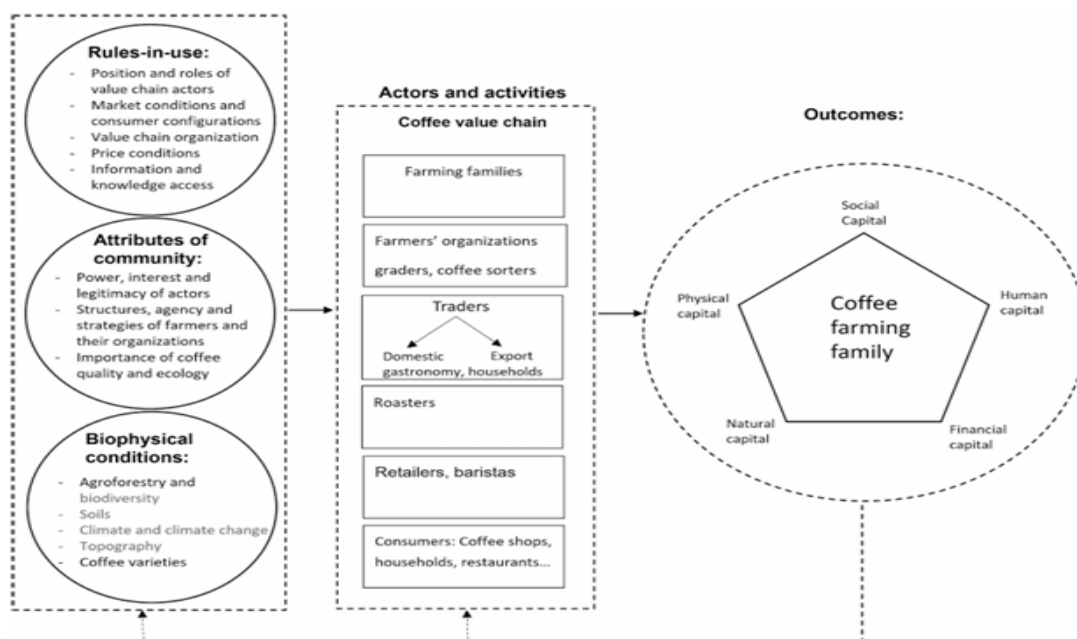
local economy relies so heavily on coffee, a drop in the market price can immediately affect everyone's income. Currently, farmers often sell their coffee to middlemen at a low price, as they need more direct access to larger markets. Other significant challenges come from the environment. Changes in climate patterns, such as unpredictable rain, can threaten the coffee harvests. Some farming practices may also not be sustainable in the long term, potentially leading to soil damage or water pollution. Adopting environmentally friendly farming methods is essential to protect the land that the community depends on for its survival (Wirde et al, 2025; Sirappa et al, 2024; Aprini et al, 2021).

Therefore, a focused and well-supported community service initiative is crucial for Talang Babatan Village. By addressing these interconnected issues—through training in modern techniques, improving business management, and developing better marketing (Syah et al, 2024) the village can overcome its challenges. Empowering the farmers to produce more and better coffee will help them earn a higher and more stable income. Ultimately, this support will help Talang Babatan Village strengthen its reputation as a producer of world-class coffee and ensure a more prosperous future for its community.

Method

The program employed a participatory action approach combining field observation, focus group discussions (FGDs), capacity-building workshops, and collaborative planning. The project began with problem identification involving local farmers, the village government, and women's organizations. Subsequent sessions focused on knowledge-sharing and technical training to improve coffee post-harvest practices, diversification, and digital marketing.

Figure 1. Coffee Value Chain



Source: Jacobi et al., 2024

The coffee value chain framework (Jacobi et al., 2024) guided the intervention design. Stakeholders along the chain—farmers, processors, distributors, and retailers—were engaged to identify opportunities for improving efficiency, sustainability, and value addition. The program also emphasized social inclusion by empowering women's groups through training on branding, product packaging, and entrepreneurship. Continuous mentoring and evaluation mechanisms were integrated to ensure sustainability beyond the formal project period.

This community service initiative employs an integrated methodology designed to empower coffee farmers in Talang Babatan Village. The approach is structured around five key pillars, ensuring a comprehensive intervention that addresses technical, managerial, and marketing challenges. The methodology is informed by established research on coffee farmer empowerment, quality enhancement, and digital marketing, ensuring our strategies are evidence-based and relevant.

This community service initiative is designed to empower coffee farmers in Talang Babatan Village through an integrated and multi-faceted methodology. The approach is structured around several key strategic pillars to ensure a comprehensive intervention that addresses the interconnected technical, managerial, and marketing challenges identified in the background. The program's design is firmly grounded in established research concerning coffee farmer empowerment, quality enhancement, and digital marketing, ensuring that all strategies are evidence-based and contextually relevant (Siddiq et al, 2024).

The foundational element of our intervention is a program of capacity building through skill-based training. Informed by scholars such as Supriyadi et al. (2020), who affirm that empowerment via training and modern technology is crucial for progress, these sessions are tailored to enhance both technical and managerial capabilities. The training modules will comprehensively cover quality cultivation and post-harvest processing, incorporating sustainable agricultural practices as emphasized by Astuti et al. (2021). Furthermore, the curriculum includes essential education on business and financial management, equipping farmers with the literacy needed to manage their farms as viable enterprises. A critical component will be digital marketing and branding training, which directly addresses the issue of insufficient promotion highlighted by Erin Soleha et al. (2024) by teaching farmers to leverage social media and digital platforms for wider reach, as suggested by Prasetyo et al. (2022).

To translate individual learning into collective strength, the program will focus on institutional strengthening through the formation of a Joint Business Group (KUB). This initiative is supported by research from Sari et al. (2020), which demonstrates that strong social networks among farmers enhance community well-being and resilience. This group will serve as a permanent platform for shared learning, the collective purchasing of inputs, and the coordinated marketing of outputs. By presenting a unified front, the KUB will significantly improve the farmers' bargaining power in negotiations with buyers, thereby reducing their historical dependence on middlemen and creating a more stable and equitable market structure.

Concurrently, a major focus will be placed on developing a market-driven branding and digital strategy for the distinctive "Pucuk Merah Coffee." This effort directly leverages the

potential of information technology, which Rahman et al. (2021) confirm is vital for helping farmers access information and improve competitiveness. Our activities will include the professional design of a compelling brand identity—including a narrative, logo, and packaging—that communicates the unique origin and quality of the coffee. This will be supported by active social media campaigns on dedicated channels to engage consumers and drive sales, effectively expanding the product's market reach. We will also facilitate direct market linkages by assisting the business group in building partnerships with specialty retailers, distributors, and e-commerce platforms.

To ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of our interventions, the program incorporates a phase of continuous mentoring, monitoring, and evaluation (Siddiq et al, 2024). Regular post-training mentorship will be provided to support the adoption of new practices, and systematic monitoring will track the development of the business group. A final evaluation will employ both quantitative metrics, such as changes in production yield and income, and qualitative feedback from the participants. This reflective process is crucial for measuring the program's success and informing future development cycles. Finally, to guide the farmers' commercial decisions, the program will introduce a structured framework for evaluating marketing channels, informed by the work of Christianito et al. (2023).

Result and Discussion

Initial discussions with the village head and residents revealed strong enthusiasm and local commitment to coffee development. The team identified several critical issues: premature harvesting due to theft risk, inefficient drying methods, and dependence on middlemen that reduced farmers' profit margins. To address these challenges, a multi-faceted empowerment program is essential. The first phase of training has already provided farmers with new insights into quality enhancement through proper drying, storage, and roasting. Building on this, the program will implement a series of structured interventions. These include skill-based training in modern processing, business management, and marketing to build self-reliance. We will also facilitate the formation of a joint business group among farmers to serve as a platform for sharing knowledge and resources, thereby strengthening their collective bargaining power in the market.

Following the initial training, continuous mentoring and monitoring will be conducted to ensure the community can effectively apply their new knowledge and skills. Simultaneously, the program will focus on building networks and partnerships with distributors and retailers to ensure the coffee products can reach a wider market more easily. A key component for long-term success is the creation of a strong product identity and branding. A distinct brand will make Talang Babatan's coffee more recognizable to consumers, increase its value, and enhance its competitiveness.

The ultimate goal of this initiative is to empower the community to manage their coffee businesses independently and sustainably. The active involvement of women's groups in developing value-added products will ensure broader community participation. Finally, a thorough evaluation and feedback process will be conducted to measure the program's impact

and gather insights for future improvements. Through this comprehensive approach, Talang Babatan Village can overcome its challenges, significantly improve local livelihoods, and firmly establish its reputation as a producer of world-class coffee.



Figure 2. Brainstorming with community



Figure 3. Pucuk Merah Coffee

In addition, brainstorming sessions highlighted the need for brand identity and marketing diversification. Farmers and women's groups were introduced to social media platforms as tools for promoting local coffee products. Practical sessions on creating digital content and storytelling for branding purposes increased community engagement and awareness of the importance of market visibility. Documentation and testimonials collected indicate increased confidence among participants in managing coffee-based enterprises.



Figure 4. Group photo with the local residents

The implementation of this community service program demonstrates that capacity building and participatory engagement are effective in fostering socioeconomic transformation in rural coffee farming communities. The involvement of women's groups through the Dharma Wanita association proved particularly impactful in promoting inclusive participation and entrepreneurship. By leveraging digital platforms, the farmers of Talang Babatan can now reach broader markets and improve the economic value of their products.



Figure 5. Activities the farmer

The findings also underscore the importance of integrating local wisdom with modern agricultural practices. The collaborative approach adopted by the team not only addressed technical deficiencies but also strengthened social cohesion within the community. Such integration is crucial to ensure long-term sustainability, enabling Talang Babatan to evolve from a local coffee producer into a recognized player in the global coffee market.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the community service initiative in Talang Babatan Village presents a holistic and sustainable framework for empowering local coffee farmers. The program moves beyond one-off training by integrating skill development with the establishment of a supportive business structure. Through the formation of a joint business group, continuous mentoring, and strategic networking, the initiative is designed to build long-term self-reliance. This multi-pronged approach ensures that the transfer of knowledge is consolidated into practical, community-led enterprises, fostering resilience and collective action long after the initial program concludes.

The long-term impact of this initiative is projected to be transformative across social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Economically, by improving product quality, creating a strong brand identity, and establishing direct market partnerships, farmers can capture a greater share of the profit, leading to increased and more stable incomes. Socially, the program strengthens community bonds through the business group and actively promotes the inclusion of women in the value-added product development chain. Environmentally, the training on sustainable agricultural and processing practices will encourage the preservation of the village's natural resources, which are the very foundation of its coffee production.

Therefore, this comprehensive empowerment model does more than just solve immediate problems it lays the groundwork for Talang Babatan to solidify its status as a recognized hub for premium coffee. The lessons learned from this initiative, particularly in blending technical training with robust institutional and marketing support, offer a valuable

blueprint for similar community development projects in other agricultural regions. The success of this program will be measured not only by increased production figures but by the enhanced capacity of the community to innovate, compete, and thrive in the global market, securing a prosperous future for generations to come.

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