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Result of Monitoring and Evaluation of Effort to Improve Family Prosperity Income in Mekarjaya Village

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ABSTRACT	ARTICLE INFO
<p>This study aims to evaluate the results of monitoring and evaluation of efforts to increase family income in order to strengthen the welfare of the community in Mekarjaya Village through the UPPKS (Prosperous Family Income Improvement Effort) program. Using a qualitative approach, data was obtained through in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation studies on the implementation of the program and the experiences of the participants. The results of the study show that this program has succeeded in increasing members' awareness of the importance of collaboration and has a positive impact on family income. However, there are still various obstacles that need to be overcome, such as lack of skills training, limited access to capital, and lack of product diversification. This study recommends the importance of increasing member capacity, strengthening business networks, and more comprehensive policy support to ensure the sustainability of UPPKS programs at the village level.</p>	<p>Article History: <i>Submitted/Received 25 July 2024</i> <i>First Revised 30 July 2024</i> <i>Accepted 23 Aug 2024</i> <i>First Available online 30 Aug 2024</i> <i>Publication Date 30 Aug 2024</i></p> <p>Keyword: Monitoring and Evaluation, Family Prosperity, Income Improvement</p>
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1. INTRODUCTION

Empowerment is an important concept in community development, especially in the context of improving family welfare (Rahim, W. (2024). Etymologically, empowerment comes from the root word "power" which means strength or ability. In social terminology, empowerment is defined as the process of giving strength, authority, and ability to weak individuals or groups of people so that they are able to live independently and empowered in meeting their life needs (Pamuji, I. A. (2013). Empowerment not only includes economic aspects, but also includes social, cultural, and political dimensions that synergistically contribute to improving the quality of life (Achmad, W, 2024). Empowerment is one of the strategic approaches in community development that aims to improve the quality of life of individuals and groups as a whole (Kamuli, 2022). In the context of sustainable development, empowerment is often identified with efforts to encourage active participation of the community so that they can make decisions independently and responsibly for their own lives (Margayaningsih, D. I. 2018). Etymologically, the term "empowerment" comes from the word "power," which means a power or potential that can be developed. In modern social discourse, empowerment is interpreted as a systematic process that gives access, control, and authority to vulnerable groups to manage resources and determine the direction of their lives (Zimmerman, 2022).

Empowerment cannot be understood only as an economic concept, but as a multidimensional phenomenon involving social, cultural, political, and psychological aspects (Huraerah, A. 2013). Empowerment includes increasing individual capacity through education, training, access to information, and strengthening social values and norms that support behavior change (Narayan et al. (2021). In the context of family development, empowerment plays a role in creating family resilience through strengthening gender roles, distributing domestic economic roles, and fulfilling basic rights (Alfiah, et al., 2020). Thus, the empowerment approach must be holistic and integrated between sectors.

The implementation of the empowerment concept has a significant impact on improving family welfare, both in material and non-material aspects. Families involved in community-based empowerment programs experienced increased income, access to education, and health (Permana and Yuliani (2023). In addition, there is an increase in confidence and decision-making ability in the household. This proves that empowerment is not only a tool for economic development, but also a social transformation mechanism that strengthens the internal structure of the family.

Theoretically, empowerment refers to a participatory approach in alternative development theory, which emphasizes the importance of local actors in creating change (Sen, 1999). However, in practice, the empowerment process often faces structural challenges such as inequality of access to resources, dominance of local elites, and weak institutional capacity. Therefore, there is a need for policy design that is responsive to the local context as well as multi-sectoral collaboration to ensure that the empowerment process takes place in a fair and sustainable manner. Evaluation of empirical evidence-based empowerment programs is key to ensuring the success of interventions designed to improve family well-being in a real and measurable manner (UNDP, 2024).

One of the strategic programs in community empowerment efforts is *the Prosperous Family Income Increase Business* (UPPKS), which is designed to support family economic empowerment, especially families with lower middle economic conditions. This program is one of the family-based development instruments that aims to increase household income, expand

access to economic resources, and encourage family independence (Hatimah & Lutfiansyah, 2022).

In Mekarjaya Village, Sumedang Regency, the implementation of the UPPKS program is an important part of the village government's strategy in reducing poverty and improving people's living standards. Through the formation of productive business groups, such as the steamed bread program that is being run, the community is directed to be actively involved in economic activities based on local potential. The program not only creates jobs but also strengthens social solidarity and local economic networks.

UPPKS as a forum for the development of family economic functions provides a means for the emergence of entrepreneurial interests, productive business coordination, and the formation of community-based small business groups. The success of this program is largely determined by how effective its implementation is, i.e. the compatibility between program planning and the results achieved on the ground. In this context, monitoring and evaluation (monev) is an essential component to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the program.

Monitoring and evaluation are not only a means to measure program performance, but also serve as a diagnostic tool in identifying obstacles, opportunities, and improvements needed in program implementation. The success of the empowerment program is highly determined by a systematic, participatory, and data-based monitoring mechanism (Sari et al. 2021). In Mekarjaya Village, the development of an integrated UPPKS monitoring and evaluation system is expected to increase the program's capacity in responding to real challenges in the field, such as limited training, lack of access to capital, and lack of product diversification.

2. METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore in depth the implementation of the Prosperous Family Income Increase Business Program (UPPKS) in Mekarjaya Village (Sulistiyo, U. 2023). This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand social phenomena in a natural context and capture the subjective meaning of the participants' experiences. The data collection technique was carried out through triangulation, namely in-depth interviews, direct observations, and questionnaire dissemination, which together strengthened the validity of the findings. In-depth interviews aim to explore the perceptions and challenges of program implementers and participants, while observation allows researchers to observe program practices directly in the field. The questionnaire is used as a complement to obtain basic quantitative data on the effectiveness and public perception of the program. Data analysis is carried out inductively by reducing, presenting, and drawing conclusions from the data obtained to formulate a complete picture of the implementation of UPPKS. Thus, this approach not only describes factual conditions, but also analyzes the meaning behind social actions that occur in the context of community empowerment (Sugiyono & Setiyawami, 2022; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2018).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Community Empowerment is a process of developing human resources by forming and exploring human capabilities, creativity, abilities and thinking power, as well as better actions (Margayaningsih, 2018). Community Empowerment is important to do because considering the economic growth and increasingly sophisticated technology affects the ability of each individual to fulfill their life needs. Community Economic Empowerment is an effort to

strengthen an economy so that it can compete properly, this empowerment has the goal of making the community independent and avoiding problems in the economy (Yuniarsih & Risdayah, 2023). One of the efforts in Community Economic Empowerment, namely the Family Welfare Income Improvement Effort (UPPKS) is an economic activity that indirectly empowers the community in providing employment for the empowered community.

Based on the findings in the field, especially the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business Group (KUPPKS), that society can make changes to itself and also free itself from helplessness, this is supported by the Actors Theory by Sarah Cook and Steve Macaulay who argue that society is a subject that can make changes by freeing itself from rigid control and giving the person the freedom to be responsible for their ideas, decisions or actions. The framework in empowerment can be seen from the acronym ACTORS, namely A means authority/authority with the aim of changing the stance or spirit into something of their own with the aim of producing better changes, C means confidence/self-confidence by seeing the ability of the community to change the situation, T trust means the belief that the community believes in the potential they have that they can change and they can change it, O opportunities means opportunities for the community to choose what they want so that the community can develop their potential more confidently, R responsibilities means responsibility in management so that the community has a sense of responsibility in changing for the better, and S support means support from various parties or what we know as the pentahelix concept, support not only in terms of economics but also social and cultural by producing positive stimulants in the community. It is hoped that by applying the ACTORS theory it can produce planned changes because the input that will be used in the change has been anticipated early on so that the output produced is optimally useful (Maami, 2011)

A. Capacity and Skills Enhancement

The Family Welfare Income Improvement Effort (UPPKS) of Mekarjaya Village has never implemented capacity and skill improvement for members, either in the form of workshops, training, and the like. This is because the strategy for establishing the Family Welfare Income Improvement Effort (UPPKS) which is said to be quite fast and rushed resulted in many missed and unimplemented steps. Member training needs to be provided from the start with the aim of improving the technical skills of members in managing small businesses, especially in the field of food production. However, the scope of training must also be considered, the training provided must be evenly distributed to all members, so that there are no significant differences in skill levels. In addition, further training is needed, such as business management, digital marketing, and product innovation.

This advanced training is expected to help members be more independent in managing their businesses so that they can compete in a wider market (Sugiyanto, 2020). The impact of not implementing capacity and skills improvement in the Family Welfare Income Improvement Effort (UPPKS) in Mekarjaya Village has caused the program to be inactive or the program to be unsustainable because other members depend on one professional who cannot survive in the Institution so that all members cannot continue the steamed bread program

B. Participation in Decision Making

Members of the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business (UPPKS) of Mekarjaya Village have been involved in the decision-making process, especially in business strategy planning and operational management. This is so that all members can participate and voice their opinions so that there is transparency between the chairman and members. This involvement provides an opportunity for members to understand the dynamics of group

business management. However, active participation still needs to be improved, especially in contributing innovative ideas and supervising program implementation. A higher level of involvement is expected to strengthen members' sense of ownership and responsibility for the sustainability of the program (Rahayu & Pratama, 2021). In addition, members can freely, without any restrictions from any party, continue to contribute to advancing the steamed bread program and the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business Group (UPPKS). With this, it is hoped that the program can continue to run and continue to help improve the community's economy.

C. Increase Access to Resources

Initial capital support provided by Mekarjaya Village amounting to Rp. 10,000,000.00 has been used for the procurement of production support equipment such as Ovens and other supporting equipment. However, in its implementation, the equipment has not been felt to be sufficient in supporting effectiveness, members still have difficulty in producing large-scale and sustainable bread because not all equipment supports production such as the absence of a mixer so that the bread dough is still made traditionally.

In addition, in marketing this bread product, it is still sold around the village using traditional offline trading methods by word of mouth and going around using motorbikes, this is because the product has not been mass-produced and the limited knowledge of members regarding online marketing, or related to modern markets. Lack of knowledge about digital marketing and lack of access to a wider distribution network are major obstacles in expanding the reach of the business. This shows the importance of additional support, both from the government and external partners, to strengthen access to technological resources and markets (Santoso, 2022).

D. Economic Independence

The income of members of the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business (UPPKS) Mekarjaya Village, especially the RW 03 community, has increased thanks to the management of the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business (UPPKS) group business, although business stability is still a challenge. Dependence on fluctuating market demand makes it difficult for businesses to develop consistently. To achieve economic independence, a product diversification strategy and expansion of target markets are needed. This step can reduce the risk of dependence on one type of product or a particular market segment (Utami, 2019).

E. Justice and Inclusivity

The Family Welfare Income Improvement Program (UPPKS) in Mekarjaya Village still faces challenges in creating inclusivity. Vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities and women from underprivileged families, have not been fully involved in this program. In fact, inclusivity is one of the important principles in community empowerment. Therefore, there needs to be a proactive effort to ensure that all levels of village society can participate and benefit from the program (Suryani, 2020).

F. Strengthening Network Work

Currently, the cooperation of the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business (UPPKS) is still limited to the local scope, for example with buyers around Mekarjaya Village. There has been no collaboration involving external parties such as private companies that have established relationships at this time, the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business (UPPKS) of Mekarjaya Village is only under the auspices of the village government and the Village Community Empowerment Service (DPMD).

This is because the formation of the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business Group (UPPKS) is part of the village development program so that it is appropriate for this group to be under the auspices of the two government institutions, behind that because there is no cooperation with external parties, the Family Welfare Income Improvement Business (UPPKS) of Mekarjaya Village often experiences difficulties related to capital or finances due to unstable financial conditions resulting in the manufacture of steamed bread products that are often hampered. Collaboration with external partners can open up opportunities for wider market access, additional technical training, and funding assistance. Strengthening the network is a strategic step to encourage the growth of group businesses (Hidayat, 2021).

G. Changes in Attitude and Awareness

The Family Welfare Income Improvement Program (UPPKS) has succeeded in increasing members' awareness of the importance of collaboration in group businesses. Members have begun to show a more positive attitude towards productive economic activities, such as sharing responsibilities in the production and marketing processes. This change shows the success of the program in building an independent and proactive mindset among members (Putri, 2021).

H. Program Sustainability

The sustainability of the Family Welfare Income Improvement Program (UPPKS) still faces obstacles, especially related to the lack of training and mentoring from external parties. The lack of continuous and in-depth training for members of the Family Welfare Income Improvement Program (UPPKS) in terms of business management, marketing, and product development is a major obstacle. Mentoring from competent external parties is also still limited, so members have difficulty in overcoming the obstacles faced in running their businesses.

Access to affordable and flexible capital remains a major challenge for the Family Welfare Income Improvement Program (UPPKS). Many groups have difficulty obtaining loans to develop their businesses, both from formal and informal financial institutions. This hinders business expansion and increased member productivity. The limited human resources with technical and managerial expertise are the main inhibiting factors. Strengthening the capacity of experts, both through intensive training and long-term mentoring, is essential to ensure that the program can continue to run independently without relying on external assistance (Arifin & Nugraha, 2022).

I. Social and Environmental Impact

The Family Welfare Income Improvement Business Program (UPPKS) has a positive impact on improving the local economy. With the existence of group businesses in the field of steamed bread programs, it is very helpful for the Community of RW 03 Mekarjaya Village, housewives who want to have income to advance their family's economy are very helped by the existence of this Family Welfare Income Improvement Business (UPPKS) and can increase the income of members.

In addition, this program encourages more sustainable use of natural resources, such as the use of environmentally friendly local raw materials. Significant social impacts are also seen from the increased solidarity between group members, which strengthens social cohesion at the community level (Rahman, 2020). However, the unemployment rate still does not decrease, this is because the members of the Family Welfare Income Improvement Program (UPPKS) only consist of the RW 03 community, not all RWs in Mekarjaya Village. This is one of the unresolved problems because participation from people outside RW 03 is also low.

4. CONCLUSION

Support from the Pentahelix Collaboration is very much needed in this empowerment, such as mentoring from the village or other stakeholders to monitor and evaluate the empowerment carried out and provide intensive technical training to all UPPKS members to improve their production and business management skills. Then the village government and related institutions are also expected to provide ongoing mentoring in every stage of the program, from planning to evaluation. In addition, it is important to establish partnerships with external parties, such as financial institutions and distribution companies, to expand market access and support business sustainability. Emphasis on the use of modern technology, including e-commerce, can also help promote products more effectively. As well as the need for more productive production support tools such as mixers and other tools that support production effectiveness.

The UPPKS program also needs to strengthen its inclusivity by involving more community groups outside the scope of RW 03, so that the benefits of the program can be felt by more people. An effective communication strategy, both internally and externally, must be implemented to ensure that all community members have equal access to program information. To support sustainability, periodic evaluations must be conducted to assess program achievements and identify areas that need improvement. With the implementation of a more targeted strategy, the UPPKS program in Mekarjaya Village has the potential to become a model for sustainable and broad-based community empowerment.

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