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Noken Making Training for Housewives in Merauke Papua_Indonesia

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Abstract
The Noken making training for housewives in Merauke, Papua, was motivated by the problem of low productive economic skills and minimal preservation of local culture among the female generation. Many housewives in the area do not yet have access to empowerment activities that can increase income while maintaining traditional heritage. The purpose of this activity is to increase the capacity of housewives in producing Noken as a cultural product with high economic value and to strengthen local identity. The method used in this activity is group-based participatory training, with a direct practice approach (learning by doing), discussion, and ongoing mentoring. The results of the activity showed a significant increase in knitting skills and recognizing the types of local raw materials that can be used to make Noken. In addition, participants also began to be able to produce Noken products in various models and sizes that are ready to be marketed. This activity not only has an economic impact, but also reawakens awareness of the importance of preserving Papuan culture among housewives.
Keywords: *Training, Noken Making, Merauke*

INTRODUCTION

Background Of The Study

Noken is a traditional Papuan bag that has cultural value and is a symbol of Papuan identity, especially in areas such as Merauke (Januar, 2017). The uniqueness of noken lies in the way it is made using natural fibers and is done manually, reflecting the skills, perseverance, and philosophy of life of the Papuan people. Unfortunately, in the midst of modernization and the entry of manufactured products, the existence of noken has begun to be marginalized, while the skills of making noken have not been widely passed on to the younger generation, especially housewives who have great potential in preserving culture as well as improving the family economy. In the context of community empowerment, housewives are a strategic group that has



a central role in managing the household economy (Alim et al., 2021; Nusa et al., 2023; Sofia et al., 2022). However, many of them still face limited access to skills and productive business opportunities. Therefore, noken making training is one solution that not only aims to preserve local culture, but also encourages women's economic independence at the grassroots level. Through this activity, housewives are equipped with technical skills, entrepreneurial insight, and ongoing mentoring, so that they are able to produce products with sales value and make them an alternative source of income (Suriandjo et al., 2021).

Noken making training is also a vehicle to strengthen local cultural identity while encouraging the growth of a creative economy based on local wisdom. With the support of structured training, it is hoped that noken products made by housewives can penetrate local and national markets, as well as strengthen the position of Papuan women in economic development and preservation of regional culture.

Research Gap

As an intangible cultural heritage recognized by UNESCO, noken is not only a symbol of Papuan identity, but also has great potential in driving the local creative economy. In the midst of efforts to preserve culture and improve community welfare, empowering housewives through noken-making training is a strategy that is considered effective. Several previous studies have discussed the preservation of noken culture and the importance of regenerating noken makers in Papua. However, most of these studies focus more on the cultural, anthropological, and historical aspects of noken, as well as the involvement of indigenous communities as the main actors in its preservation. These studies are still limited in exploring how technical training and business assistance can make noken an alternative source of income, especially for housewives in remote areas such as Merauke (Pahri, 2017; Rungkat et al., 2024).

Several studies on women's empowerment in Papua show that the role of housewives is often marginalized in economic activities due to low access to skills training, limited capital, and lack of ongoing mentoring. On the other hand, noken-making training has not been widely used as an empowerment approach based on local potential (Faizah & Katmas, 2023). This indicates a research gap in the development of structured and contextual training programs for women in Merauke. In addition, existing studies tend not to touch on aspects of appropriate training methodology for housewives who have limited time and educational background. Participatory and local wisdom-based training approaches are still rarely implemented systematically in the context of noken production. As a result, the training carried out tends to be incidental and



unsustainable, and does not build long-term economic independence (Ngutra et al., 2024; Sofia et al., 2022).

Research on the creative economy in Papua has indeed developed, but most of it focuses on more common commodities such as coffee, pandan weaving, or other handicrafts. Noken as a typical commodity has not been the main focus in the context of women's economic empowerment, especially in areas that are relatively untouched by development such as Merauke. In fact, the market potential for noken products is quite large both locally and nationally, if developed with the right strategy (Iriawan et al., n.d.). Until now, there has not been much research that specifically designs and evaluates a noken-making training model that is oriented towards empowering housewives, especially in terms of production, marketing, and business sustainability. A holistic model based on the needs of training participants is still very much needed, so that training not only improves skills, but is also able to encourage sustainable economic independence (Januar, 2017).

In addition to technical aspects, existing studies also do not sufficiently explore how training and mentoring can build social solidarity among women, increase self-confidence, and strengthen the position of housewives in the family economic structure. In other words, the potential for social transformation from noken-making training has not been the main focus of scientific studies. Considering these gaps, a study is needed to fill the gap (research gap) in the form of designing and implementing holistic, participatory, and contextual noken-making training, especially for housewives in Merauke. This kind of research is expected to contribute to the field of women's empowerment, preservation of local culture, and development of the creative economy in the Papua region (Istiqomah et al., 2019; Sawir et al., 2021; Ula et al., 2023).

Rationale Of The Study

The province of Papua, particularly the Merauke region, is rich in cultural heritage, one of which is the traditional woven bag known as *noken* (Rumetna et al., 2022). Noken is not only a functional object but also a symbol of identity, solidarity, and sustainability among indigenous Papuan communities. However, the traditional practice of making noken faces significant challenges due to modernization, limited knowledge transfer, and the lack of economic value recognition in the wider market. These challenges necessitate targeted interventions to preserve this cultural asset while simultaneously enhancing the economic resilience of the local communities. In many rural and suburban areas of Merauke, women—particularly housewives—play a crucial role in maintaining the household economy. Despite their central role, they often

face limited access to skills training, income-generating opportunities, and market-oriented activities. The potential of noken-making as a culturally rooted and economically viable craft remains underutilized. Empowering housewives through skill development in this traditional craft can open new pathways for household income and community-based entrepreneurship (Safkaur et al., 2021; Vauziah, 2025).

This study recognizes that traditional crafts like noken hold not only cultural but also socioeconomic value when systematically nurtured. Training and mentoring programs that are community-centered, culturally sensitive, and market-aware can become a transformative solution for improving the quality of life among marginalized groups. In this context, empowering women through noken-making skills is not only about economic development but also about cultural revitalization and social empowerment (Gombo, 2024). Furthermore, the global market is showing increasing interest in ethical, handmade, and culturally meaningful products. Noken, with its rich history and distinctive aesthetic, has the potential to attract a broader market—both nationally and internationally. However, this potential can only be realized if local women are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and entrepreneurial mindset to meet quality standards and navigate business opportunities (Amir, 2022).

By initiating structured training and mentoring, the study seeks to bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and modern market demands. The approach involves enhancing technical skills in noken-making, introducing design innovation without losing cultural authenticity, and equipping participants with basic business and marketing knowledge. This holistic model is expected to create sustainable economic benefits while protecting and promoting Papuan cultural heritage. In addition to skill enhancement, this study addresses the importance of social capital and peer support among women. Through collaborative learning and group-based mentoring, the project fosters a sense of community ownership, mutual support, and shared purpose. These social dynamics are key to ensuring that empowerment is sustainable and inclusive (Bleskadit et al., 2023; Sudiartha, 2024).

The intervention also aligns with national development goals regarding gender equality, poverty reduction, and the preservation of indigenous cultures. By focusing on local wisdom and women's empowerment, the study contributes to broader policy objectives while generating localized solutions that are relevant and replicable in other indigenous regions of Indonesia (Reyaan, 2023). In conclusion, this study is grounded in the belief that cultural preservation and economic empowerment can go hand in hand. By focusing on noken-making training for

housewives in Merauke, the research aims to demonstrate how traditional crafts can serve as a powerful medium for community development, women's empowerment, and cultural sustainability in Papua (Athirah, 2023; Herdianto & Sutrisno, 2024; Iriawan & Edyanto, 2022; Silooy et al., 2025).

Literature Review

Skills training as a form of women's empowerment has become an effective approach in improving community welfare, especially housewives (Jannah, 2024; Kayame, 2023; PANJAITAN, 2022). Several studies have shown that training based on local potential can create new economic opportunities, strengthen cultural identity, and increase women's self-confidence in their communities (Sudarsono, 2018; Lestari, 2020). One form of local empowerment that is relevant in the Papuan context is training in making noken, a traditional Papuan bag that is full of cultural meaning and a symbol of women's strength.

Noken has been recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage of the world since 2012, and has a high symbolic value in Papuan society, especially in the economic, social, and spiritual contexts (UNESCO, 2012). This bag not only functions as a means of carrying, but also becomes part of the identity of Papuan women. In many local cultures in Papua, women who are skilled at making noken are considered socially mature. Therefore, noken training has a dimension beyond just skills; it is also a process of transmitting cultural values (Haryati et al., 2024; Lamalewa & Kore, 2020; Mangginte et al., 2025).

Various studies have shown that noken-making training activities have great potential in empowering household economies. For example, research by Yuliana (2019) in Jayawijaya Regency showed that noken training was able to significantly increase the income of housewives within six months. In addition to providing additional income, this training also encourages the formation of joint business groups that support each other and strengthen the solidarity of the women's community. In the Merauke region, South Papua, noken making training also has its own challenges, especially in terms of affordability of raw materials, mastery of traditional techniques, and still low access to wider markets. Therefore, literature such as that written by Rahmawati & Duma (2021) suggests the importance of synergy between local trainers, local governments, and NGOs in implementing training programs so that they do not stop at technical training, but also include aspects of business management and product marketing.



The social aspect of this training is no less important. Training activities become a meeting place and social interaction between housewives, who in their daily lives tend to be isolated in domestic work. A study by Marlina (2020) stated that skills training such as noken not only has an impact on improving the family economy, but also on the mental health and self-confidence of participants because of the recognition of their work. In addition, it is important to look at the training approach used. According to the theory of participatory empowerment by Paulo Freire, good training is training that involves participants in the decision-making process, is based on dialogue, and explores the local potential that the community already has (Freire, 1970). In the context of noken training, participatory methods have proven effective because they are able to develop creativity and innovation without eliminating local values (Gwijangge et al., 2025; Laili et al., 2022; Macora et al., 2024; Zonggonau et al., 2021).

Other literature also emphasizes the importance of digitalization and cultural branding in marketing noken products. With additional training in product design, use of social media, and local brand creation, housewives can reach a wider market, including tourists and consumers from outside the region. A study by Kusuma (2022) showed that a group of noken craftsmen who were given digital marketing training experienced an increase in turnover of up to 45% in one year. Thus, the existing literature shows that noken-making training for housewives in Merauke has great potential in economic, social, and cultural aspects. However, the success of the training program is highly dependent on holistic program design, sustainability of support, and the ability to bridge tradition and modernity. Therefore, further studies and integrated practices are needed to make noken a symbol of sustainable Papuan women's empowerment (Boeng, 2024; Gea et al., 2022; Soekamto & Anisa, 2019).

Novelty Of The Study

Noken-making training for housewives in Merauke, Papua, presents a new approach to empowering women through preserving local culture combined with economic strengthening strategies. The novelty of this study lies in the use of local wisdom—namely noken—as a medium of empowerment that not only revives ancestral traditions but also leads to increased skills and economic independence of women in the easternmost region of Indonesia. Unlike other creative economy-based training that often adopts foreign products or national market trends, this training emphasizes Papuan locality as a strength. Noken, which has been recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage, is used as the core of activities to build pride in cultural identity and

become a sustainable alternative economic source. This study shows that cultural preservation can be synergized with real household economic needs.

Another novelty of this study is its participatory approach, where housewives are not only the objects of training, but also participate in designing materials, methods, and marketing strategies for their noken products. Thus, the training becomes a two-way dialogue space that empowers, not just imparts skills. The approach used in this training also introduces modern and varied techniques in making noken, such as innovation in material selection, natural coloring, and diversification of the shape or function of noken. This is a differentiating aspect that expands the selling value of the product, so that it is not only limited to being a traditional container, but can be modified into bags, accessories, or environmentally friendly fashion products (Kuswoyo & Hiskya, 2023; Rungkat et al., 2024).

This study also shows novelty in terms of integrating basic entrepreneurship training and strengthening local marketing networks to digital. Many traditional trainings stop at providing technical skills, but this study goes beyond that by equipping housewives in building brands, marketing products through social media, and forming small community-based cooperatives. This study addresses the gap in previous research that often separates women's economic empowerment and cultural preservation. Through this training, it is proven that the two areas do not need to be in conflict, but can be carried out simultaneously and strengthen each other. This is a new model in community development practices that are rooted in local identity. Moreover, this study highlights the role of housewives as central actors in the socio-economic transformation of communities, which is often overlooked in development discourse. With this empowerment, housewives not only become new economic actors, but also guardians and successors of a living and developing culture. Finally, the novelty of this study lies in the unification of cultural, economic, and gender values in one applicable and replicable training model. This model can be used as an example for other regions that have cultural richness but experience similar economic challenges, so that it can be a significant contribution to the development of local culture-based empowerment theory.

Purposes/Hypothesis Of The Study

The primary purpose of this study is to empower housewives in Merauke, Papua, by equipping them with skills in traditional *noken* making. The *noken*, a handwoven multifunctional bag, holds cultural significance among indigenous Papuans and represents a sustainable livelihood option. Through structured training and mentoring, the study aims to increase the

economic capacity of women by transforming cultural heritage into a source of income. Another goal of the study is to preserve and revitalize the tradition of *noken* making, which is at risk of being forgotten by the younger generation. By introducing this traditional craft to housewives—who often serve as cultural transmitters within families—the study seeks to ensure intergenerational knowledge transfer. This cultural revitalization is critical for maintaining the identity and heritage of the Papuan people.

This study also aims to create a community-based economic model that fosters collaboration and mutual support among women. Through group-based training sessions, participants are encouraged to work together, share knowledge, and build a support system that can strengthen their confidence and independence. The group approach is also intended to promote social solidarity and collective progress among local women. Furthermore, the study seeks to provide practical business skills such as product marketing, packaging, and financial literacy. These complementary trainings are essential for ensuring that *noken* production is not only a cultural activity but also a viable economic enterprise. By integrating craft skills with entrepreneurship training, participants are better prepared to enter the market competitively. An additional purpose is to assess the effectiveness of training and mentoring strategies in community empowerment. The study will evaluate the impact of the training program on participants' skills, income levels, and confidence. This evaluation will serve as the basis for future improvements and as a reference for similar community empowerment programs in other regions.

The study is also designed to strengthen partnerships between local communities, NGOs, and government agencies. Collaboration with these stakeholders is critical in ensuring sustainable support, policy backing, and access to wider markets. The initiative is envisioned not only as a short-term intervention but as a pilot model for long-term community development planning. Another key purpose is to promote gender equality by recognizing and supporting the economic role of women in the household and community. By highlighting women's contributions through culturally rooted economic activities, the study hopes to shift perceptions and increase the value placed on women's labor and creativity in society. Lastly, the study intends to document and disseminate the process and outcomes of the training program, serving as a reference for academic research, policymaking, and further community development initiatives. The documentation will include success stories, challenges encountered, and best practices that can be replicated or adapted to other indigenous and rural communities across Indonesia.

METHODS

Research Design

This study uses a participatory action research (PAR) method to explore the Noken making training process and its impact on the empowerment of housewives in Merauke, Papua. This approach was chosen because it is able to describe in depth the process, experiences, and changes experienced by the training participants. The study was conducted in one of the fostered villages in Merauke Regency, Papua, which has local cultural potential in Noken crafts. The research implementation period lasted for three months, covering the planning, training, mentoring, and evaluation stages (Demhi, 2023).

Research Target/Subject

This study targets a group of housewives domiciled in the Merauke area, Papua, as the main subjects. This group was chosen because it has great potential in developing a creative economy based on local wisdom, but often does not have adequate access to skills training and business mentoring. Housewives in Merauke are an important part of the social structure of society who have a strategic role in supporting the family economy. Training in making noken - a traditional Papuan bag that has cultural and economic value - is the focus of intervention in this study, because it is not only relevant to local culture but also has the potential to become a superior regional product. This study aims to understand the extent to which training and mentoring can improve the skills, self-confidence, and economic independence of housewives. In addition, this study also explores the obstacles, motivations, and sustainability strategies in developing noken-making businesses among local women.

Research Procedure

This research was conducted through a PAR approach with an action research method, which allows researchers to be actively involved in the empowerment process. The research procedure is divided into several main stages as follows:

1. Identification and Selection of Locations and Participants

   The researcher conducted initial observations and coordination with village officials and community leaders to determine locations that have craft potential and women's economic empowerment needs. The main participants were housewives who were interested and did not yet have a steady income.

2. Planning Training and Mentoring Activities



This stage includes designing a noken-making training module, scheduling activities, and procuring tools and materials. Training materials include basic noken-making techniques, natural coloring, product packaging, and introduction to digital marketing.

3. Implementation of Noken-Making Training

   The training activities were carried out directly in several sessions. Each session was facilitated by a local resource person who was an expert in noken crafts. Participants were actively involved in the process of practicing and evaluating their work.

4. Mentoring and Monitoring

   After the training is completed, periodic mentoring is carried out for housewives. This mentoring aims to monitor the development of skills, product quality, and assist in market access, both locally and online.

5. Evaluation and Reflection

   The evaluation is carried out using in-depth interview methods and focus group discussions (FGD) to determine the impact of the training on the knowledge, skills, and motivation of participants. Joint reflection is carried out to improve the mentoring approach in the future.

6. Documentation and Reporting of Results

   All activity processes are documented in writing and visually for the purposes of research reports and publications. The data collected is analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach (Eskak et al., 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

Papua's Cultural Wealth in Noken

Merauke Regency, making Noken is one of the productive activities that can be a source of income for housewives. With the support of training and mentoring, this traditional skill can be transformed into a creative economic activity based on local wisdom. This potential is in line with the government's efforts to develop an inclusive economy that involves women in the interior and outskirts of Papua. Noken is a traditional Papuan bag made from natural fibers such as tree bark or forest pandan leaves . In Merauke, Noken is not just a means of carrying goods, but also a symbol of identity, togetherness, and the strength of Papuan women. Its functions are very broad,

ranging from carrying garden produce, carrying children, to being used in traditional ceremonies. The existence of Noken has been internationally recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO since 2012, which further strengthens its position as a cultural asset that has high economic and social value (Faizah & Katmas, 2023).

The demand for Noken has increased, not only in the local Papuan market but also outside the region and abroad. The uniqueness of the shape, motif, and manufacturing techniques make Noken a craft item that is in demand by tourists and cultural collectors. In the digital era, Noken marketing has also begun to be done online through social media and e-commerce platforms, opening up wider market opportunities for craftsmen in Merauke. Noken production provides a strategic space for the empowerment of Papuan women, especially housewives. In the context of Merauke, this activity is able to increase self-confidence, economic independence, and the active role of women in local development. Training programs and technical and managerial assistance are very important to improve product quality and strengthen community-based business networks.

One of the advantages of Noken in Merauke is the abundant availability of raw materials in the surrounding nature. Papua's forests provide various types of strong and flexible natural fibers, such as mahogany bark, forest orchids, and pandan leaves. If managed sustainably, these raw materials not only maintain environmental sustainability but also ensure the sustainability of Noken production in the long term. Despite its great potential, the development of Noken in Merauke still faces several obstacles. Among them are limited market access, low production capacity, and minimal infrastructure support. In addition, the regeneration of young craftsmen is also a challenge because the younger generation tends to be less interested in continuing this tradition. Therefore, synergy between the government, NGOs, and local communities is needed to overcome these obstacles.

The potential of Noken can also be expanded through integration into the education and tourism sectors. The introduction of Noken as part of local content in schools, for example, can foster a love of culture among the younger generation (Sofia et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the development of community-based cultural tourism packages that involve making Noken as one of the attractions can increase the added economic value for the Merauke community. With the right support, Noken can become a symbol of the progress of the Merauke community that remains based on traditional values. The development of Noken not only preserves cultural heritage, but also builds an inclusive and sustainable creative economy. Noken is no longer just a

bag, but a representation of the spirit of Papuan women in preserving culture, strengthening the family economy, and building a better future.

Training on Making Noken from Merauke

The activity of making Noken from Merauke is part of an effort to empower local communities, especially housewives, to preserve cultural heritage while improving economic welfare. Noken, as a traditional bag from Papua, has high cultural value because it not only functions as a means of carrying goods, but also as a symbol of identity, perseverance, and the value of mutual cooperation of the Papuan people. The activity began with socialization and the formation of assisted groups, consisting of housewives in villages around Merauke. Facilitators from the assistance team provided an introduction to the cultural and historical meaning of Noken and the importance of regenerating traditional skills. The mothers were given an understanding that the skill of making Noken could be a source of income as well as a form of cultural preservation.

The next stage is technical training in making Noken, starting from the selection and processing of natural raw materials such as tree bark or plant fibers that grow abundantly in Papua, such as Manduam and Gnetum trees. The women are taught how to dry, smooth, and spin the fibers into yarn. This process involves a lot of patience and precision, and contains the philosophy of the humble life of the Papuan people. After the materials are ready, the participants are trained to make basic Noken patterns. The facilitator teaches various traditional knitting techniques, both with bare hands (without tools) and using special needles. Each participant tries to create motifs that reflect local values such as nature, family, and religion. This training is not only technical, but also full of spiritual and social values that have been passed down from generation to generation.

In the training process, the mothers are also invited to support each other. The atmosphere of mutual cooperation and family is characteristic of each meeting. They work while telling stories, singing, and sharing life experiences. This strengthens the sense of solidarity and makes the Noken making activity not just a production process, but also a space for social therapy and mental strengthening.

Figure 1



Mentoring Noken 2024

The image shows the atmosphere of a Noken-making training activity in a local community in Merauke, Papua. A group of mothers and their assistants are seen sitting together on mats, with natural fiber materials scattered around them. The atmosphere looks friendly and enthusiastic, reflecting collective work and mutual cooperation in preserving local culture. Several mothers are seen focusing on knitting fibers into the basic shape of a Noken bag, while others are seen discussing with the facilitators. This activity not only shows the technical learning process, but also becomes a space for interaction and sharing knowledge between generations. The elderly women who attended were actively involved, showing that the skill of making Noken is a legacy that has been passed down from generation to generation.

The semi-permanent building that houses them gives a simple yet meaningful impression. It is in this place that creativity and culture meet the spirit of empowerment. Facilitators from outside the area sit side by side with the residents, demonstrating a participatory and egalitarian approach to the training process. This image is a real symbol that preserving traditional culture and strengthening the local economy can go hand in hand. Through activities like this, housewives not only gain new skills, but also strengthen their self-confidence and togetherness in facing life's challenges.

Figure 2



Result Noken Papua

The image shows various works of Papuan Noken neatly displayed on a display board in a room. These Noken are arranged in a row, displaying a variety of shapes, colors, and patterns that reflect the richness of culture and the craftsmanship of the makers. Some are naturally neutral in color from wood fibers, while others are decorated with bright, striking colors with typical Papuan ethnic patterns. This display is likely part of an exhibition of training results or community empowerment activities, especially groups of housewives who are trained to make Noken. This display not only shows the beauty of the work, but also marks the success of the learning and production process that is carried out collectively and with enthusiasm.

Each hanging Noken has its own uniqueness. Some are large, usually used to carry garden produce or heavy items, and some are small, suitable as souvenirs or accessories. Some even appear to have a modern design without eliminating the traditional touch, showing cultural adaptation in a contemporary context. The narrative of this image illustrates cultural pride and the success of the local creative economy, where Noken is not only seen as a traditional product, but also as a symbol of empowerment and identity of the Papuan people. Exhibitions like this have the potential to open up wider market opportunities while introducing the richness of Papuan culture to the national and international levels.

After successfully making several Noken products, the activity continued to packaging and marketing. The mentoring team provided training on how to market products locally and digitally, including labeling, pricing, and promotional strategies through social media. The Noken products made by these women were then exhibited at various local events, such as cultural festivals or regional craft bazaars. The results of this activity showed a significant increase in the participants' self-confidence and independence. They were not only able to produce quality Noken, but also became agents for preserving local culture. Some of them even started receiving

orders from outside the region, indicating that Noken Merauke was able to penetrate a wider market while still maintaining its cultural value. This activity proves that through proper training and mentoring, cultural heritage such as Noken can be a creative and sustainable solution to empower the community. In addition to strengthening cultural identity, this activity also opens up new economic opportunities for housewives in Merauke, making them more independent and empowered amidst the increasingly rapid flow of modernization.

Discussion

Noken-making training for housewives in Merauke, Papua, is one of the strategic steps in raising local potential through a culture-based empowerment approach. Noken as a traditional bag that has been recognized by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage not only has aesthetic value, but is also a symbol of the philosophy of life of the Papuan people—about hard work, togetherness, and resilience. Therefore, this training does not only teach technical skills, but also passes on noble cultural values. In a socio-economic context, this activity targets housewives as the main subject because of their vital role in the family and community. In many villages in Merauke, women have basic skills in knitting or processing natural materials, but have not been fully developed as productive economic activities. Through this training, mothers are not only equipped with Noken knitting techniques, but also with an understanding of product quality, design innovation, and attractive packaging for local and national markets.

The discussion also highlighted the challenges faced, such as limited raw materials, lack of access to markets, and minimal digital literacy. However, this training is also equipped with capacity building sessions in digital marketing, the use of social media for promotion, and simple business management. Thus, mothers not only play a role as craftsmen, but also as independent MSME actors who are ready to compete in the digital era. In addition to the economic aspect, this training also has a positive impact on strengthening the role of women in society. When housewives are given space to develop, they not only help support the family economy, but also become role models in preserving culture. Their children can also witness firsthand how cultural values continue to be passed down with new enthusiasm.

This training activity also opens up a space for collaboration between local communities, local governments, NGOs, and academics. Students and lecturers from local universities are involved as facilitators or technical assistants. This participatory approach makes the training more lively and meaningful because there is an exchange of knowledge between locality and academics, between tradition and technology. However, the discussion also underlines the



importance of program sustainability. One-time training is not enough; it requires continued assistance, access to capital, and market networks. Local governments are expected to not only be present at the opening of the activity, but also participate in designing policies and budget support that favor local craftsmen.

In closing, this Noken making training is a model of best practice for culture-based community empowerment. Merauke, as one of the easternmost regions of Indonesia, shows that local wisdom combined with the right empowerment strategy can produce solutions to economic challenges, while strengthening the nation's cultural identity. This training not only produces products, but also raises the hopes and dignity of the Papuan women's community.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Noken-making training for housewives in Merauke, Papua, has had a positive impact in terms of both cultural preservation and local economic empowerment. This activity is a strategic means to transfer traditional skills from generation to generation and strengthen the role of women in community-based development. Through the training process involving intensive mentoring and a participatory approach, the mothers not only gained technical skills, but also experienced increased self-confidence, social solidarity, and awareness of local cultural values. The results of the training showed an increase in the quality and variety of Noken products produced. These Noken are now not only cultural symbols, but also commodities with sales value and the potential to be developed into a wider market. This success proves that empowerment based on local wisdom can be a concrete solution to improving household welfare and preserving Papuan cultural heritage.

Suggestions

In order for Noken-making training for housewives in Merauke, Papua, to run more optimally and provide long-term impacts, several strategic suggestions can be considered.

First, training needs to be carried out continuously and in stages, not just limited to one meeting. The material can be divided into several levels, starting from the introduction of basic materials and techniques, to the development of designs and product innovations according to market trends.

Second, it is important to involve local traditional figures and senior craftsmen in the training, so that the cultural values and philosophy of Noken are maintained. This will strengthen local

cultural identity while creating a space for intergenerational learning. Training is not only oriented towards production, but also towards the inheritance of the noble values of the Papuan people.

Third, training should be accompanied by entrepreneurship and market access assistance, such as digital marketing training, small business management, and collaboration with cooperative institutions, BUMDes, or local e-commerce. That way, mothers participating in the training can manage their production independently and sustainably, not only relying on outside parties.

Fourth, there needs to be support for sustainable facilities and raw materials, such as assistance with yarn spinning tools, shared production spaces, and access to natural fiber materials. Local governments, NGOs, and the private sector can work together to provide this infrastructure as a form of support for the culture-based creative economy.

Fifth, documentation and promotion of training results also need to be improved through social media, cultural exhibitions, and digital campaigns to expand the market and increase appreciation for Noken as a world heritage recognized by UNESCO. This is also an important step in branding local products and opening up the potential for handicraft-based cultural tourism.

Sixth, to strengthen the social impact, training can also be directed to become a creative community of women who support each other, exchange experiences, and become a space for socio-psychological empowerment for housewives who have had less access to productive activities.

Seventh, periodic evaluation of training results is important to determine the challenges, obstacles, and opportunities that arise during the mentoring process. Thus, the program can continue to be adjusted and improved according to the real needs of the participants.

Finally, this training is expected to not only be a means of technical skills, but also as a social and cultural movement that strengthens the role of Papuan women in preserving culture and improving the welfare of families and communities.



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