

EMPOWERMENT OF THE MAJU MILLENNIAL FARMERS GROUP OF KEDIRI REGENCY THROUGH LOCAL SHEEP BREEDING BUSINESS

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ABSTRACT Community empowerment through increasing the capacity of agribusiness businesses aims to increase income and community welfare through developing regional potential. The Maju Millennial Farmers Group in Tiru Lor Village, Gurah District, Kediri Regency, consists of young millennials who are expected to play a broad role in developing local potential, namely sheep breeding. This development requires supporting activities from various aspects ranging from making animal feed, sanitation and biosecurity of pens, fattening, and reproductive management in sheep breeding. This activities begin with a survey of partner groups, socialization and training according to group needs to activity evaluation. The results of the activity evaluation show that partner skills in making complete feed have increased so that partners are more optimal in utilizing existing agricultural waste to meet the nutritional needs of sheep according to their physiological status, including nutritional needs during puberty, pregnancy, breastfeeding, and mating. The overall increase in partner understanding has increased and 92.50 percent of participants are satisfied with this community service activity.

KEYWORDS: *Empowerment, Farmer Group, Millenials, Sheep*

1. INTRODUCTION

Community empowerment through increasing the capacity of agribusiness businesses aims to increase community income and welfare through the development of regional potential. The agribusiness businesses that are encouraged are competitive, people-based, sustainable businesses and have full support from policy makers. The development of sheep and goat farming in Indonesia is mainly driven by official policies aimed at increasing productivity, adding value and the strategic importance of the sector in meeting animal protein needs and improving the welfare of livestock farmers (Nilamcaya et al., 2024).

Sheep farming has a wide open market opportunity along with the high consumer demand for culinary dishes made from lamb. One of the sheep farming businesses that can be pursued is the breeding business. The potential of the sheep breeding business provides encouragement for farmers in developing their business. Sheep breeding is an activity of breeding sheep with the aim of producing quality sheep seeds for various purposes, both for self-maintenance and for sale. Sheep breeding also includes sheep cultivation activities, including breeding to produce lambs, prospective mothers, and fattening to produce sheep ready for slaughter.

The Maju Millennial Farmers Group in Tiru Lor Village, Gurah District, Kediri Regency as a group formed with members from the young millennial generation is expected to play a broad role in realizing these goals. The socio-economic impact of the community-based or group-based sheep farming program has been proven to increase income and other business opportunities (Iis et al., 2024; Muladno & Agatha, 2023). Group involvement of farmers results in higher incomes (Rusdiana et al., 2022). Nevertheless, The Maju Millennial Farmers Group has several problems, including: lack of member knowledge regarding the manufacture of animal feed (complete feed) for sheep breeding and lack of member knowledge regarding the importance of biosecurity sanitation of pens, recording and reproductive management. Therefore, community service activities are aimed at increasing the knowledge of group members in answering these problems.

2. METHOD

This Community Partnership Empowerment activity was carried out from June 14 to August 31, 2024, at the Maju Milenial Farmers Group located in Tiru Lor Village, Gurah District, Kediri Regency. The group members have their main livelihood as farmers, while raising livestock is a side business. The total number of group members is 20 people with a total number of sheep owned of 160. The sample of ewes used in the implementation of estrus synchronization was 20; with an age range of 1-3 years. The group's business field is sheep breeding by utilizing agricultural waste as a source of animal feed. Participants have a business in the livestock sector with the following details:

Table 1. Types of Business Run by Activity Participants

Type of business	Amount
Sheep Farmer	12
Goat Farmer	2
Integrated Farming/Livestock*	6
Total	20

*Note: Integrated farming/livestock includes the management of more than 1 type of business.

Based on the priority issues of the Maju Millennial Farmers Group as a partner, several stages or steps taken in relation to the solution offered are as follows:

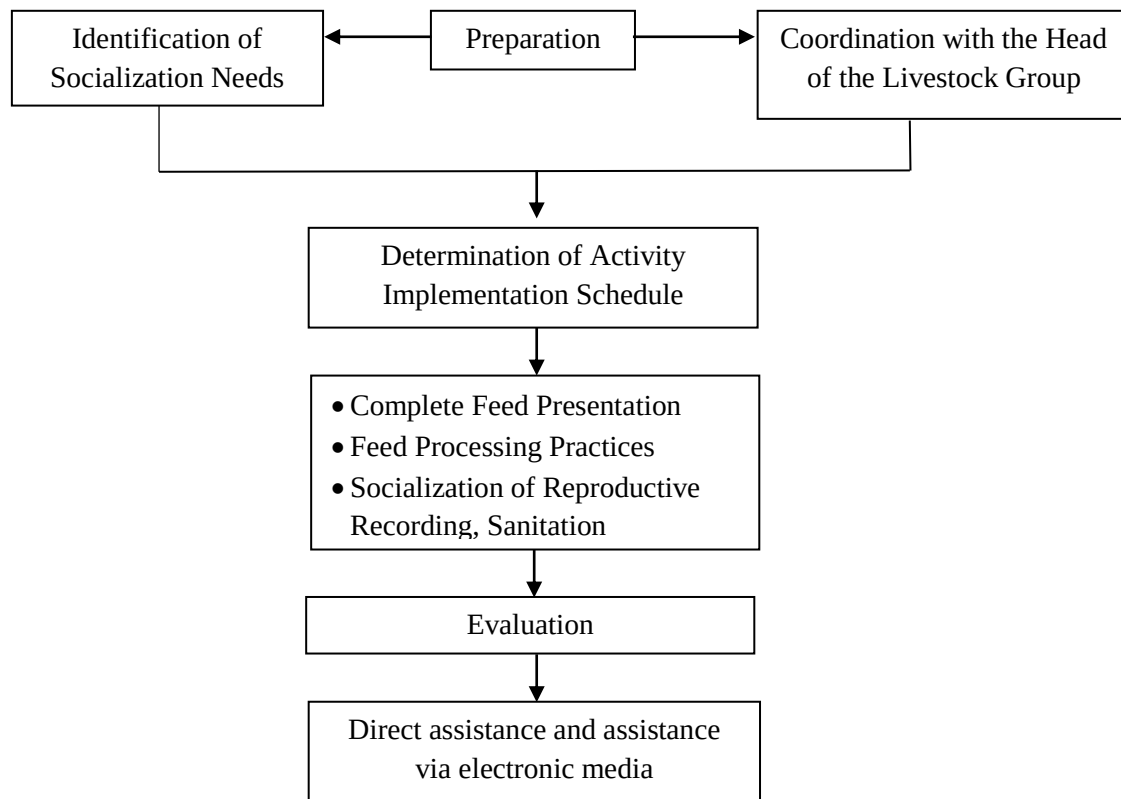


Figure 1. Flow of Activity Implementation Procedures

1. **Step I.** Socialization, training and mentoring are held to improve partner skills related to the preparation of complete feed rations that are in accordance with the needs of pregnant, lactating, growth phase and tup.
2. **Step II.** Socialization was conducted to partners regarding reproductive disorders in sheep, factors that influence the reproduction of tup and ewes, as well as the importance of sanitation and biosecurity issues in sheep pens and farms, and how to overcome reproductive disorders in sheep.
3. **Step III.** Provided socialization, training and assistance to partners related to estrus synchronization and pregnancy checks in sheep to improve sheep reproduction efficiency. Conducted socialization, training and assistance related to recording physical characteristics and pedigree of sheep seeds routinely and systematically as a valid data source.
4. **Step IV.** An evaluation was conducted on the ongoing socialization. Evaluation of community service was conducted to determine changes in the level of knowledge and satisfaction with the material provided in the activity "Empowerment of the Maju Millennial Farmer Group in

Kediri Regency through Local Sheep Breeding Business". The evaluation was obtained using a questionnaire tool for participants, especially goat and sheep breeders in Kediri Regency.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

Community service activities began with the implementation of recording of sheep owned by group members. Livestock recording is very helpful in reproductive management in breeding businesses. Through recording, important information related to reproductive events can be obtained which is needed to make objective decisions, so that farmers can make the best decisions (Rokana et al., 2024). Recording contains information about individual livestock per individual, or as a whole. The ideal recording is in the form of simple, complete, thorough and easy to understand notes. After recording is completed and knowing the problems in the field, socialization is carried out to strengthen the knowledge of farmers from each sheep they have.

Efforts to improve partners' understanding and skills in terms of sanitation, biosecurity of pens and feeding in accordance with the physiological status of sheep livestock, socialization and training on sanitation, biosecurity of pens and reformulation of complete feed were carried out for members of the Maju Millennial Farmers Group. Adequate ration nutrition is needed for sheep breeding, both pregnant ewes, lactating ewes, and young ewes. The Maju Millennial Farmers Group has applied silage and complete feed technology. Rations are prepared using materials available around the farm location, but complete feed rations are still rarely applied. The feed given is often in the form of fresh greens or silage with the addition of manufactured concentrate. Never give supplementary feed especially for pregnant, lactating, or tup.



Figure 2. Socialization of Sanitation, Biosecurity and Making Complete Feed

Socialization and training on making complete feed were carried out by partners related to the preparation of complete feed rations that are in accordance with the needs of pregnant, lactating, growth phase, and tup. Participants were also introduced to feed ingredients as supplements that can be added to complete feed to reduce the incidence of miscarriage in sheep fetuses and to maintain the reproductive performance of tup livestock. The use of agricultural waste as a material for making complete feed supports the achievement of the concept of zero waste agriculture and the availability of quality feed throughout the year (Ariyanto & Firmansyah, 2016; Suryani et al., 2025).

Socialization of ewes reproduction needs to be done because cases of fetal miscarriage in pregnant ewes are often found. This of course causes economic losses, because the ewes that are expected to be able to give birth to young lambs and increase the sheep population are not achieved. If the production of young lambs can be sustainable, then farmers will not be dependent on the supply of seeds from outside the region (Marisa et al., 2024). The emergence of problems related to reproduction in the Maju Millennial Farmers Group is thought to be due to the inadequate nutritional needs of pregnant ewes, the age of the first mother giving birth, the weight of the mother during pregnancy, and health problems of the sheep.

Reproductive disorders in ewes can be caused by several factors including hormonal imbalance, environmental conditions, genetic factors (heredity), and infection factors. Efforts to maintain the health and cleanliness of livestock can reduce physical and psychological disorders in sheep (Muljono et al., 2022). Therefore, socialization to improve partners' understanding of reproductive disorders in sheep, factors that affect the reproduction of tup and ewes, as well as sanitation and biosecurity issues in sheep pens and farms was carried out.



Figure 3. Barn visit for sanitation inspection, record keeping, and reproductive management.

Increasing the knowledge of group members is supported by the application of reproductive technology, especially the application of estrus synchronization and pregnancy checks with accurate results. Estrus detection is done by visual observation, and not all group members understand the signs of estrus. So far, pregnancy checks have also been carried out simply by observing the behavior of ewes and the absence of estrus in the next cycle. The pregnancy rate of sheep belonging to the Maju Millennial Farmers Group is quite good, namely 65%.

After the socialization and training activities, an evaluation was carried out by distributing questionnaires to members of the Maju Millennial Farmers Group to measure the level of understanding and skills of partners in absorbing the material presented by the resource person. The evaluation was carried out for several materials presented including making animal feed (complete feed) from agricultural/agro-industrial waste, sanitation and biosecurity of livestock pens, livestock fattening and livestock reproduction management. Participants in the activity gave a score from 1-10 to indicate the level of knowledge before and after the material was presented. The closer to 10, the higher the participant's knowledge. The evaluation was attended by all 20 participants.



Figure 4. Evaluation of community service activities by filling out a questionnaire

3.2. Discussion

Based on the evaluation results, the largest increase of 43 percent of participants' knowledge before (41 percent) and after (84 percent) activities was in the material on making animal feed (complete feed) from agricultural/agro-industrial waste and sanitation and biosecurity of livestock pens (before the activity 39 percent to 82 percent). The material on making feed (complete feed) includes types of waste that can be used as feed ingredients, feed making practices, nutritional

needs for breeding, and the benefits of making processed feed in saving costs and increasing livestock income.

The evaluation results showed the highest increase in knowledge in farmers understanding that making animal feed from agricultural/agro-industrial waste can save feed costs and increase income with an increase in knowledge of 45.5 percent. While in the material on sanitation and biosecurity of livestock pens, the highest increase in knowledge of 47.5 percent was in the sub-material on the use of quarantine pens for new or sick livestock. The material on sanitation and biosecurity of livestock pens includes the ideal frequency of cleaning pens, waste disposal, treatment of visitors and livestock that die due to disease. Participants were interactive in asking further questions in health management and how to handle themselves if a disease is detected. Active participation from participants showed the attention and capacity of local communities in business independence. Group business development can also apply the concept of sharia in the future (Mugiarto, 2025). Empowerment in livestock groups that function as a place of learning, a place of production, and a place for member business cooperation is expected to strengthen interest in increasing business capacity (Perwitasari et al., 2022; Ramdani, 2023). Overall, the results of the participant understanding evaluation can be seen as follows:

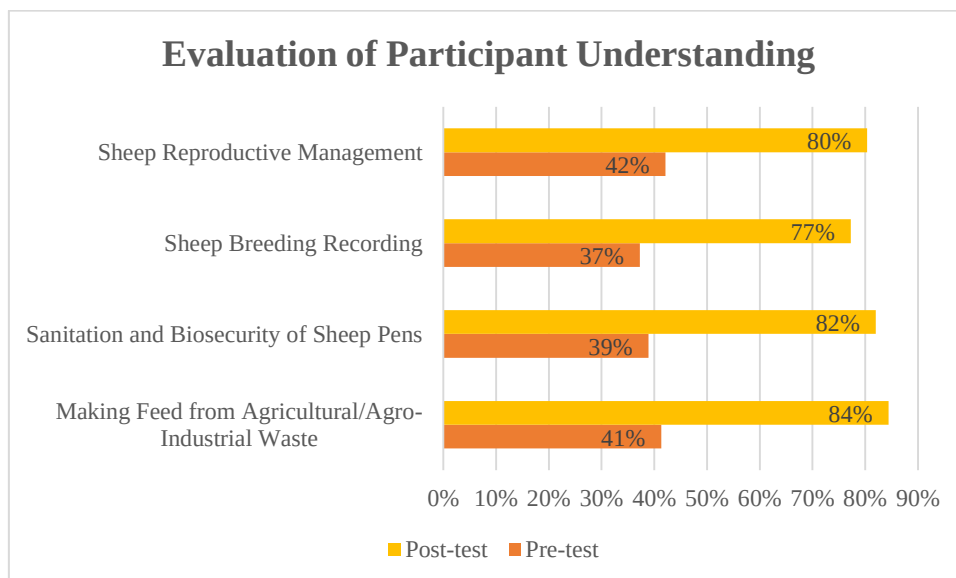


Figure 5. Results of Evaluation of Participants' Understanding Before and After the Activity

The activity continued with the material on the importance of recording breeding to find out the lines in sheep mating. The material includes the characteristics of good tup and ewes breeders, information and data that must be included in the recording process. The results of the evaluation of participants' understanding of this material showed an increase from before the activity at a score of 37 percent to 82 percent after the material was delivered. Increasing productivity and profits in sheep livestock is also supported by ideal reproductive management. Breeders must know when the

age of tup and ewes livestock is ready to be mated, know how long the estrus period is, the characteristics of being in estrus and pregnant, and know the potential for sheep to give birth 3 times in 2 years. The material was delivered with some feedback questions from participants regarding the length of the estrus period and its handling.

Participant feedback was supplemented with an overall activity satisfaction questionnaire. The results of the satisfaction evaluation showed that 92.50 percent of participants were satisfied with this community service activity. The diagram of participant satisfaction results can be seen in the following figure:

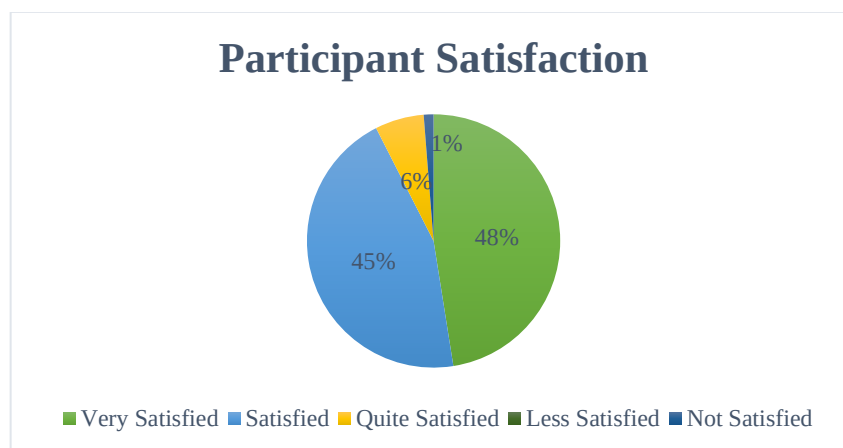


Figure 6. Participant Satisfaction Results

Evaluation for the improvement of community service activities, participants' responses to the material presented were also measured. Participants' responses to the material were measured by aspects of the material presented according to needs, increasing knowledge/insight, useful, and easy to understand. Participants gave a range of values from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) according to the indicators asked. The participant response diagram can be seen in the following image:

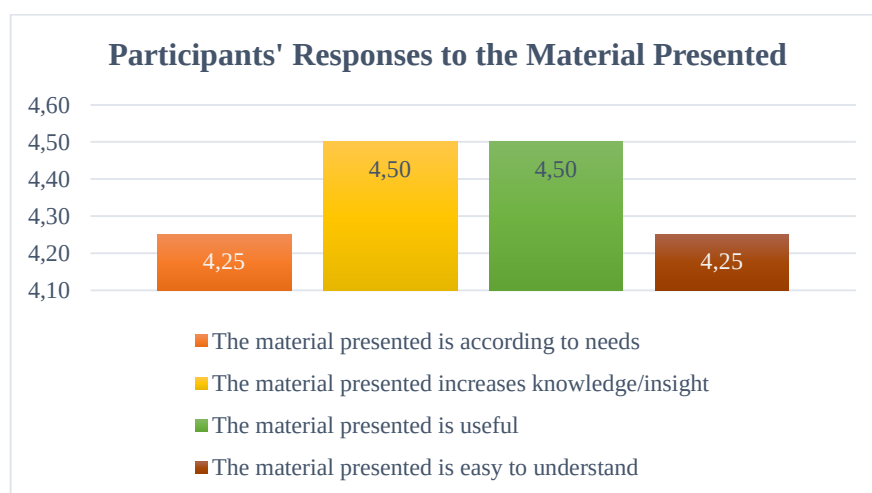


Figure 7. Participant responses to the material presented

Increasing productivity and business profits through sheep farming management in Kediri Regency can run sustainably. The evaluation results can provide material points that need to be deepened or are interesting to discuss further, such as strengthening the practice of making complete feed, handling diseases, seed recording practices, and the length of the estrus period. Another program that can be implemented if sheep farming continues to develop is the use of renewable energy from livestock waste into biogas and other basic knowledge about the use of technology and information (Darmawan & Sophia, 2016; Sary, 2015). Satisfaction feedback also includes suggestions from participants and interested participants if there is counseling or mentoring related to the business group again. Hopefully this evaluation report is useful for all parties involved and provides motivation for the development of livestock breeder capabilities in the future.

4. CONCLUSION

Socialization and practice activities in the farmer group empowerment program provide additional knowledge for participants in managing sheep breeding businesses. Socialization illustrates that good production management can increase farmer income. Increasing farmer knowledge allows businesses to be managed better than before. The results of community service activities show an increase in knowledge from reproductive management materials, breeding recording, sanitation and biosecurity of pens, and making feed from agricultural waste. The greatest increase in knowledge is in the material on making feed (complete feed) which is useful in fulfilling nutrition during sheep pregnancy. Overall, 92.50 percent of participants expressed satisfaction with community service activities.

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