

## Literacy-Based Community Empowerment Through Local Wisdom in Kasepuhan Cirompang, Banten

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### ABSTRACT

Community Service (PKM) carried out by Biology Education students at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta from July 13 to August 29, 2024, in Kasepuhan Cirompang, Sobang District, Lebak Regency, is an effort to preserve local wisdom and improve the quality of education in the area. For 47 days, the student team has been active in various activities focused on literacy development and the Biodiversity School initiative. Kasepuhan Cirompang possesses unique cultural richness, reflected in various traditions such as asup leuweung, nibakeun, mapag, bubaran, and mipit. Using the action research method, this PKM aims to leverage the potential of local wisdom as a foundation for designing innovative and engaging literacy programs for children. This activity involved initial observation, program planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up. A total of 25 children and community members of Kasepuhan Cirompang actively participated in various activities. Implementation included the renovation of the Community Reading Park, the development of the Biodiversity School, implementation of Indonesian Language Time activities, as well as various other creative literacy initiatives. Furthermore, the literacy team also successfully created scientific boards, developed the Qiraati method, and compiled guidebooks on medicinal plants that are now used by the community. As a result, this activity not only increased reading interest but also fostered environmental awareness and empowered the community through the synergy of education and local wisdom.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is held to realize literate students so that they are able to face future challenges for themselves, their parents and the future of this nation. One of the efforts to build a reading culture among children is through proper and consistent management so that it becomes a sustainable cultural development with a fun atmosphere. The implementation of education is still not optimal in preparing 21st century skills about literacy with problems such as: low interest in reading, lack of assistance by teachers, non-optimal appreciation and assessment of teachers when in school in improving skill competencies to build a reading culture and lack of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of reading culture development activity programs for better management.

Literacy is an important skill that every student must have. Much of the educational process depends on literacy skills and awareness. Literacy skills include language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The definition of literacy according to Simorangkir et al. (2023) is education in the millennial era that includes the ability to find, work, evaluate, make and use it wisely, intelligently and carefully.

The importance of education as the basis for state development is not commensurate with the quality of education in Indonesia, especially for disadvantaged or remote areas. Teachers and educators have an important role to play in ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to access quality education. The conditions of the underdeveloped areas make children face very complex challenges compared to their urban counterparts, but in doing so their dedication can be a key to overcoming the problems that are left behind in education. According to Tyas et al. (2024), remote geographical conditions and inadequate facilities and infrastructure are one of the factors causing educational problems in Indonesia. Education is the life of the nation. However, not all regions in the country have equal access to quality education.

Disadvantaged villages like this often experience difficulties in obtaining qualified educational personnel and having adequate knowledge in carrying out educational tasks. Ki Hajar Dewantara stated that education is a necessity in the lives of children, and the purpose of education is to nurture all the qualities that exist within these children so that they can achieve safety and happiness (Erica et al., 2019). The actual quality of education is not solely measured by the grandeur of the educational facilities available, but rather by the extent to which the output produced from an education can develop a well-rounded generation, because the fundamental purpose of education is to guide children towards a goal of high value as mandated by Law Number 20 of 2003.

According to the Ministry of State for the Development of Disadvantaged Regions of the Republic of Indonesia (2004), disadvantaged areas are districts that are relatively underdeveloped compared to other regions in terms of nationality and have relatively underdeveloped populations. Disadvantaged areas are generally characterized by their geographical location that looks small, or areas that are quite lacking in natural resources, even prone to natural disasters. A disadvantaged area is an area within an area whose physically, socially, and economically the community reflects a slower growth compared to other areas. This program aims to increase the knowledge of children in Cirompang village about the diversity of local plants through Literacy.

## METHOD

This Community Service (PKM) is an integral part of the routine Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN) program at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. This program facilitates students and accompanying lecturers to apply

theory into a real form of Community Service, in line with the PKM's objective of improving human resource quality through expanding insights, increasing knowledge, and developing skills (Nuridin, 2023).

This community service program uses the Action research method which consists of several series or stages, namely observation, planning, implementation, evaluation and follow-up plans. According to Pujiyanto, (2021), observation is a form of observing an object or a problem. The observation stage (July 13–20, 2024) was the initial step where the team conducted direct observations of village conditions, particularly in the education sector in Kasepuhan Cirompang. Basic data was collected through participatory observation and informal interviews with community leaders and students, aiming to identify specific challenges and design a relevant Biodiversity School program. Following observation, the planning stage (July 21–27, 2024) involved preparing strategic and detailed program steps. Every aspect of the program in Kasepuhan Cirompang was meticulously designed as a primary guide, in line with the definition of planning as a systematic preparation activity for achieving a goal (Jamrizal, 2022). This mature plan was crucial for the sustainability of the Biodiversity School program. Subsequently, the implementation stage (July 28–August 20, 2024) involved executing various planned program activities. In this stage, the program was carried out with the participation of approximately 25 children and community members of Kasepuhan Cirompang, consistent with the concept of implementation as a process involving a series of program activities and policies (Maru'ao, 2023). Finally, evaluation and follow-up (August 21–29, 2024) were conducted to assess program success and identify areas for improvement. Success measurement was based on children's participation rates, direct observation of increased reading interest and environmental awareness, and input from the children through focused group discussions.

The results of this evaluation were then used to formulate follow-up plans to ensure the program's continuous positive impact. Evaluation is an important and inseparable element in measuring the achievement of goals that are planned and implemented in a structured manner within the context of learning (Sutrisno et al., 2022). The follow-up plan is carried out after the program implementation's evaluation process. The results of the program evaluation serve as a reference in designing the next steps. The suite of follow-up plans includes program improvements and strategies needed to ensure the program continues to succeed and thrive going forward.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The community Reading Park (TBM) in Cirompang village is a non-formal learning resource for improving the quality of children's education in Cirompang village which has become a new opportunity, and the improvement of daily problems in the lives of the people of Cirompang village. The knowledge of the community and children will continue to increase if the experience and collections that exist in applying the knowledge gained to develop creativity increase. This is in accordance with the purpose of building the Community Reading Park that its presence serves to grow and develop reading cultural skills, and realizing village communities to have knowledge and skills that direct independence and responsibility. The construction of the Community Reading Park is an improvement and creates various kinds of potentials and skills which is one of the missions that the community wants to achieve. The quality of community literacy in the village supports various kinds of activities and activities in the Community Reading Park (Slamet, 2020).

The process of implementing community empowerment in Cirompang village aims to increase awareness within the community of the importance of literacy, provide tools and installations, and educate to renovate the Reading Park. It involves implementing every program from the literacy sector located in TBM for school-age children, providing guidance and assisting intensively in the TBM renovation process, and developing the Reading Park system. Community service programs through the design of programs that partner with the community have helped improve community literacy (Ayu et al., 2018). In addition to

its spacious location, the Community Reading Park will be much more attractive if it coincides with a strategic location and is equipped with complete facilities and infrastructure.

### 1. Renovation of the Community

Reading Park This program activity is carried out to provide feasibility for community reading gardens as a medium to increase children's interest in reading. Before renovating the TBM, we carried out cleaning and rearranging the dusty books which resulted in the TMB looking unsuitable for use. The obstacles we face are such as book collections that are mixed with other books so that many book collections become dusty.



**FIGURE 1.** (a) Book Cleaning Activities at TBM, (b) Making a plan, (c) the implementation of the renovation project, (d) TBM after renovation

TBM renovation in Cirompang village needs to be carried out with the aim of improving literacy culture for the community. The first step in this TMB renovation business is to seek information from the head of the community to find more data or information, then document the parts of the TBM that need to be renovated, the next step is to arrange the necessary materials and tools, then carry out TBM renovation activities. The stages of the renovation of the Community Reading Park program include:

1. Observation Stage, Observing the condition of TBM and identifying the necessary needs.
2. Planning Stage, Preparing action plans, budgets, and necessary permits.
3. Realization Stage: Carry out a collection of books that are still feasible, physical renovation (painting), and repair facilities.
4. Assistance: providing assistance to TBM renovation managers so that the program can run well,
5. Evaluation: Assess the success of the program and identify obstacles in improvement.

The activities are visually documented, showing book cleaning (Figure 1a), planning (Figure 1b), renovation implementation (Figure 1c), and the TBM after renovation (Figure 1d). A TBM is more attractive when located strategically and equipped with complete facilities and infrastructure.

## 2. Biodiversity School Programme

The biodiversity school program activities consist of two major programmes, namely a plant herbarium and a Save the World poster, which involve children in the village of Cirompang. The aim is to enhance the children's knowledge in Cirompang about herbarium learning, taught by older volunteers, so that in the future the children in the village can apply it in their biology lessons at school. This activity continues with an opening followed by the main activity of the herbarium programme, which involves a simple process of making herbariums with the participation of the village children. The volunteers will distribute plants to the village children that have been prepared by the volunteers. The village children are very eager to benefit from participating in this herbarium programme. After the processes of creating a herbarium were explained, the children involved in this programme immediately began or practised making herbariums with the assistance of the service members. Since this herbarium concept is a simple one, we only used the available tools and materials, but we still endeavoured to ensure that the programme was successfully implemented.

The implementation of this programme is considered necessary because the Cirompang village environment is beautiful. All the children here thoroughly enjoy the entire processes carried out, from the guidance by the volunteers, which is orderly and not noisy, working in groups, to the direct question and answer sessions if there is something they do not understand in the herbarium creation process. In addition, this programme greatly aids the children in their science studies, particularly in Biology. The involvement of the children in the herbarium creation process is positive as it allows them to directly engage, making learning interesting. Furthermore, the children also gain knowledge about environmentally friendly learning methods that are relatively inexpensive and easy to implement. Often when we, the volunteers, meet with the children in the village, they ask whether there are any insects or small animals that might land on their work and damage their herbarium. This behaviour instills a sense of responsibility and discipline in the helpers because all the children in the village want to show us that they have created a good herbarium.



**FIGURE 2.** (a) Herbarium Making Activities and (b) Documentation of the results of herbarium preparation with children

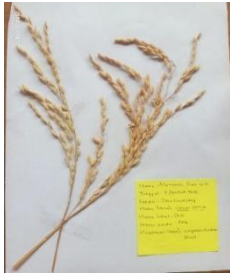

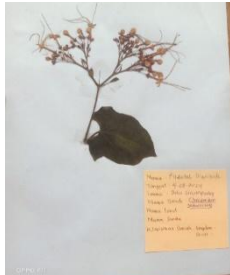

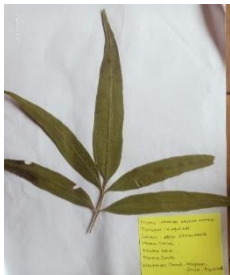

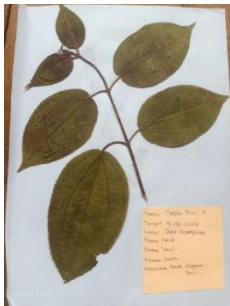


The simple creation of a herbarium provides children in the village with the opportunity to choose the types of plants they like, which will then be dried, while also honing their creativity in creating a good and attractive herbarium. The community workers in the village mentioned that those whose herbarium is successful and good will be given recognition and displayed to raise awareness of biodiversity. All community members hope that this program will be successful and provide an interesting experience for



all the children in the village. A herbarium can be defined as a place or institution that functions to store collections or specimens of plants and serves as a centre for studies on flora. Additionally, a herbarium also refers to materials consisting of dried plant collections that have been labelled and prepared in the form of dried specimens (Muswita et al., 2024).

This community service activity, we also introduce the diversity of plants around and also provide knowledge on how plants are beneficial to humans so that children in the village as the next generation can utilize and preserve plants.

**TABLE 1.** List of Plant Names in Dry Herbarium in Cirompang Village

The documentation includes images and species names from the herbarium results		
		
<i>Oriza Sativa</i>	<i>Pleocnemia Irregularis</i>	<i>Clerodendrum Paniculatum</i>
		
<i>Orthosiphon Aristatus</i>	<i>Lygodium Scandens</i>	<i>Gleichenia Bifida</i>
		
<i>Clidemia Hirta</i>	<i>Dicranoptelis Linearis</i>	<i>Hippobroma Longiflora</i>

### 3. Save the Word Poster Activities

In addition to the Herbarium programme, there is also the Save the World poster programme, which serves as a platform for competition as well as a freedom for children to express themselves through their poster creations. The Save the World poster programme is implemented to attract the attention of children in the village through appropriate visuals and simple messages about the importance of

protecting our environment. The designs feature water characters, trees, and various types of waste recycling, all of which are natural illustrations that effectively convey advice without instilling fear in children, making it easier for them to ask questions and even discuss ways to help the earth. This programme demonstrates that the potential of posters as a powerful educational tool can foster environmental awareness from an early age. The Save the World poster programme can support children in enhancing their literacy interest, developing creativity, as these activities are aimed at developing children's potential, since this is the time when their creative potential is at the peak of development, specifically in creating posters.



**FIGURE 3.** Save the World Poster Activity

#### **4. Indonesian Language Time Programme**

In the context of the Indonesian language programme, it serves as a small introduction for the children in the village of Cirompang, falling within the realm of religious education and even language skills introduction. The purpose of this programme is to assess vocabulary skills in Arabic and English, which present the main challenges in learning. Language is one of the sign systems used by all groups in society to interact. Through language, humans can think and express their ideas. In our lives, we often encounter foreign languages apart from Indonesian, examples being Arabic and English. Arabic and English hold special significance for the Indonesian community, each possessing distinctive characteristics that differentiate them from other languages.

The implementation of the Indonesian Language Time programme aims to introduce vocabulary, which is a collection of words that a person already knows, or is part of a certain language. Mufrodat or vocabulary is a set of words arranged to form sentences in Arabic and English, so that they can be understood and comprehended by children when communicating or interacting. As part of a community empowerment programme, we are introducing the Indonesian Learning Time programme as an introduction to Arabic and English so that children can master Arabic and English vocabulary both theoretically and practically. The execution of the Indonesian Language Time programme is carried out optimally, but from our discussions, we see in the villages that many children still lack in terms of pronunciation of letters and there is much ignorance regarding Arabic mufrodat or English vocabulary. Therefore, we are very excited to teach and introduce this foreign language.

Learning Arabic and English is something that cannot be avoided in today's era. This is marked by the abundance of institutions teaching Arabic in various countries. Mastery of Arabic and English vocabulary in Cirompang village is still very lacking, as seen in their pronunciation and slowness in reading both languages. The solution we took was to guide the children so that they could follow along and enrich their vocabulary, particularly so that the children could practice it in their lives.

The method we use in implementing this WIB programme employs a non-monotonous approach that prevents children from feeling bored, so they do not view learning Arabic as unpleasant. In developing the

WIB programme, we must employ varied methods, including using songs and clearly writing on the blackboard, which will make the programme more engaging for the children. Strengthening memory through songs can facilitate memory retention, according to the theory of learning that music or songs have the power to speed up the recall process for children in the village. Songs that consist of new vocabulary in Arabic and English provide a fun experience for children in the village when remembering the words given by the volunteers. By repeating lyrics in songs, children can more easily remember and memorise vocabulary in a much more enjoyable context. Introducing new Arabic and English vocabulary in the context of songs designed by the volunteers can be easier for children to understand difficult languages while also improving their pronunciation in the village.



**FIGURE 3.** Save the World Poster Activity

## 5. Reciting Program with the Qira'ati Method

The Qiraati method is an approach to learning the Qur'an that teaches children to read the Qur'an slowly and pay attention to the rules of tajwid . Developed by Kyai Dachlan Salim Zarkasyi, this method simplifies Qur'an learning, especially for children. It is widely used in Qur'anic educational institutions and can be practiced independently at home. Its gradual structure, progressing from easy to complex materials, facilitates students' understanding of Qur'an recitation. Children were notably more enthusiastic when this method was applied, improving their reading, length, and tajwid. Broadly speaking, according to Umah et al. (2023), the qiro'ati method is a method of reading the Qur'an that directly includes and practices the reading of tartil according to the rules of tajwid.



**FIGURE 5.** Documentation of Reciting with the Qira'ati Method

## 6. Scientific Board

Scientific signage was developed to educate the public about the scientific names of plants grown in fields. This involved creating boards displaying both common and scientific names and installing them near the respective plants. According to Sonia et al. (2023), Signboards play an important role in enriching the knowledge of both visiting tourists and the local community about existing flora. Furthermore, the presence of signage enhances the visual beauty of the environment.





**FIGURE 6.** The Installation of scientific boards in the Farm

## 7. Creative Literacy

The creative literacy program is a program that aims to improve children's literacy through innovative and fun approaches. This program is carried out with the target of elementary school children in Cirompang Village. The creative literacy carried out aims to equip children with creative thinking skills. The combination of literacy and creativity is able to invite children to process their ideas and pour them into works that reflect their knowledge and imagination. According to Mahmudah et al. (2022), in his research on the development of children's creativity through crafts, it has a big impact. Therefore, it is important to produce works in each activity of this program.

The creative literacy program is carried out in two meetings with a different focus on each meeting. The first meeting of the children as the target of the program was guided in creating origami paper. Children are introduced to the art of paper folding from Japan with a variety of simple origami patterns that allow children to understand the basic techniques of folding. Subconsciously, this origami creation activity helps develop children's creativity by understanding the information received as a literacy activity to create works with the concept of flat objects into three-dimensional objects.



**FIGURE 7.** Documentation of Creative Literacy Activities with the Theme of "Origami Creation" in Cirompang Village

Unlike the first meeting, at the next meeting, the creative literacy activity used the theme of caring for the environment by doing "Recycle Plastic Waste". According to Maharaja et al. (2022), the 3R technique in waste management can be used as an alternative income through goods from waste recycling. In this activity, children use plastic bottles and straws to create a work. Then, children are guided to make pencil boxes, but simultaneously, education about recycling plastic bottle waste can be applied to create not only pencil boxes but also mini plant pots, flower vases, and many others. In addition to helping develop children's creativity, this activity is carried out with the aim of being one of the efforts to reduce waste.

This is based on the results of observations carried out, where most people are still not independent in managing waste.

The implementation of this program during the service can show the improvement of creative skills in children and their understanding of the importance of managing waste. The community, especially children, has succeeded in developing their creativity by producing works from various origami paper and being able to turn used plastic bottles into new products that have function and aesthetics. In addition, children also showed awareness of the benefits of waste reduction efforts through reuse. The positive impact caused by this program is expected to continue, with the hope that the habit of using used goods and people's creative thinking skills will have an impact on the way they respond to daily environmental problems.



**FIGURE 8.** Documentation of Creative Literacy Activities with the Theme of Caring for the Environment: Recycling Plastic Waste in Cirompang Village

## 8. Medicinal Plant Books

The bookkeeping program is a program that is very close to the field of literacy. The medicinal plant book program is a program to create books about medicinal plants in Cirompang Village. The purpose of compiling this book is to document the types of local medicinal plants and their benefits and how to use them, so that people can better understand and utilized the natural wealth around them. This book will contain information the types of plants, their properties, processing methods, and daily health applications.

The medicinal plant book program is carried out to preserve knowledge about medicinal plants in Cirompang Village and ensure that this information is not lost and forgotten. In addition, the existence of this book will aim to provide education to the younger generation and village communities about medicinal plants. The book on medicinal plants is also compiled to increase public awareness of natural health and show the potential of villages in health based on local wisdom. This activity is supported by Kumontoy et al. (2023) that documentation of traditional knowledge about medicinal plants has an important role in ensuring that information on the benefits and uses of plants remains sustainable and can be a guide for communities in local health practices.

Program implementation began with collecting information on medicinal plants through interviews with village elders and knowledgeable community members. Collected information included plant names, parts used, processing methods, and common benefits. Data collection and documentation were conducted within Cirompang Village, particularly around the kasepuhan house, which boasts significant medicinal plant diversity and offers easy access for the local community. Table 2 presents a list of 11 popular medicinal plants found in Cirompang Village, along with their benefits/uses and how to use them.

**TABLE 2.** List of Medicinal Plants in Cirompang Village

Kind	Benefit / Uses	Howh to Use
<i>Kumis kucing</i>	Lowers high blood pressure	The decoction of the leaves is drunk.
<i>Insulin</i>	Helps the body control blood sugar levels	The leaves and flowers are boiled and the boiled water is drunk.
<i>Jawer kotok</i>	Treat inflammation, vaginal discharge and haemorrhoids	The decoction of the leaves is drunk.
<i>Kilampahan</i>	Energy booster	The decoction of the leaves is drunk.
<i>Jukut</i>	Overcome indigestion	The decoction of the leaves is drunk.
<i>bau/Bandotan</i>		
<i>Bangle/Panglay</i>	Plant medicine, human, ulcer medicine and repel spirit creatures.	The rhizome is boiled or stirred depending on the need.
<i>Kojerat</i>	Overcome eye disorders such as poor vision, myopia, cataracts, and hyperopia.	Wash the flowers thoroughly and then soak them in water and drip them on the eyes
<i>Bambu hitam</i>	Cough relievers	The water is drunk.
<i>Tangkur</i>	Stamina Booster in Men	Boiled water the tubers are drunk
<i>Kabakaran</i>	Shortness of breath in babies	The decoction of the leaves is drunk.
<i>Waru/Bisoro</i>	Overcoming ulcers and body aches	The decoction of the leaves is drunk.

While significant progress has been made, the medicinal plant book program has not been fully successful as several stages, such as editing, validation, and printing, are yet to be completed.

## CONCLUSION

The community service programme implemented in Cirompang village has successfully carried out a series of comprehensive literacy initiatives. These programmes include the revitalisation of reading gardens, education on biodiversity, enhancement of Indonesian language skills, development of creative literacy, preparation of scientific information media, adoption of the Qiraati learning method, and publication of a book on medicinal plants. The level of participation and positive responses from children and the local community in Cirompang village indicate the effectiveness of the programme in increasing reading interest and enriching local knowledge. The program's effectiveness was marked by an increase in the frequency of visits to the reading park due to its revitalization and the activation of literacy-based activities, the creation of a mini herbarium containing 9 types of local plants by documented children, and the community's familiarity with the Qiro'ati method for learning to recite the Quran. Despite facing various unexpected operational constraints, strong synergy with the community has become a crucial factor in ensuring the smooth implementation of the programme. To ensure the sustainability of the program, it is necessary to establish long-term partnerships with the local community to support the development of literacy activities. In addition, the utilization of evaluation results is crucial as a basis for designing future programs that can have a more significant impact on improving community literacy in the area.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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<b>Final Verdict: Accept with Minor to Moderate Revisions</b>
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This article provides a **rich, culturally grounded, and multifaceted case study** of literacy-driven empowerment in a remote indigenous village. It blends **educational innovation** with **local ecological knowledge** effectively. With more clarity in structure, quantitative indicators of impact, and standardization of references, this work will be well-positioned for publication in Abdimas journals.