

Training on Tamban Fish Crackers Processing for MSMEs in Labuhan Ruku Village, Batu Bara Regency

Adil Arifin¹, Indra Fauzan¹, Fajar Utama Ritonga¹, Suci Rahmadani¹

¹Universitas Sumatera Utara

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ABSTRACT

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are businesses that have potential for economic development in Indonesia. Therefore, it is very important to empower Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). One of them is MSMEs in Labuhan Ruku Village, Batu Bara Regency. The problems faced by business actors include low production quality, availability of raw materials, product packaging, and low knowledge of business actors in marketing their products. The methods applied in implementing this service are starting with strengthening MSME materials, strengthening training for business actors. The activities that have been carried out include the implementation of several trainings including; Tamban Fish Cracker Processing Training to produce quality crackers, namely by using a stable cracker molding method, training on providing raw materials so that production is not hampered in the form of how to store raw materials so they don't rot easily, training on more attractive product packaging through collaboration with the Batu district packaging house Bara, as well as product marketing by presenting experts in their fields.

*Corresponding Author: Adil Arifin

Email: adil.arifin@usu.ac.id

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INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are businesses with potential for economic development in Indonesia. In 2011, MSMEs had a large role in state revenues, amounting to 61.9% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) revenues through tax payments (Sudaryanto & Wijayanti, 2013). Also, MSMEs can absorb 99.45% of the workforce, and the number of business units is very large, reaching 99.84% of all existing businesses (Niode, 2009). This is as explained by Kuncoro (2007), who said that small industries such as MSMEs have a fairly large positive role because they provide employment opportunities, help solve the unemployment problem, equalize income distribution, and reduce the

amount of poverty. Pramiyanti explained that there are two main problems experienced by MSMEs in general, namely financial and non-financial problems (management organization) (Pramiyanti, 2008). Therefore, empowering Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is very important and strategic in anticipating the future economy, especially in strengthening the national economic structure. One of them is MSMEs located in Labuhan Ruku Village, Batu Bara Regency, one of the districts located in the coastal area of North Sumatra.

As a coastal area, the people in Labuhan Ruku Village generally make their living as fishermen. Various ideas have also emerged to form MSMEs by utilizing marine products. In Labuhan Ruku Regency, one of the businesses formed was processing Tamban fish crackers. Fish caught by fishermen are processed into crackers through several stages, such as boiling, grinding, molding, drying, packaging, and marketing.



Figure 1. The flow of making Tamban fish crackers

However, various problems are faced by these MSME actors, namely, first, a need to understand the Tamban fish cracker printing technique, which results in the crackers being partially destroyed. This situation also results in losses for business actors because some of the destroyed products, even though they sell well, experience a price reduction from the normal selling price per kilogram of Rp. 35,000,-, to Rp. 20,000,-.



Figure 2. Difference between crushed and uncrushed crackers

Second, the availability of raw materials when fishermen are not going to sea is caused by bad weather, which impacts production delays. Third, there needs to be more knowledge among MSME actors processing Tamban fish crackers regarding product packaging strategies. So far, Tamban fish cracker business actors only package their products in ordinary and makeshift plastic packaging. However, in marketing strategy, attractive product packaging is very important. This, as stated by Christine, is that the appearance of a product's packaging influences the eyes of consumers because, through this packaging, consumers get a message from the contents of the product inside, either through written information on the packaging or from the appearance of the packaging which gives a special image or impression in their eyes. Consumers so that consumers can decide whether to buy or not buy a product (Cenadi, 2000). This situation is one of the problems that causes product marketing to not have a low selling value on the market.

Fourth, weak knowledge of business actors regarding product marketing strategies, in this case related to building a marketing network for the products they produce. Lack of knowledge among actors in building marketing networks so that the products produced can reach national and even international markets. Even though the product produced is of good quality and has attractive packaging, the product will only be marketed optimally if it is balanced with extensive marketing network knowledge. This problem also becomes an obstacle for business actors in marketing their products. Some problems above require solutions and assistance to help partners through various methods.

METHODOLOGY

Efforts to improve the welfare of the people of the Coastal Area are carried out through the activity "Training on the Development of Tamban Fish Cracker Processing Businesses in Labuhan Ruku Village, Batubara Regency." To implement this, several methods are needed that can support the process of implementing community service in the field. Some of the methods that will be used

are as follows:

1. Scientific preparation in the form of basic materials related to micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) development strategies, which will later be applied to overcome the problems faced by Tamban fish cracker entrepreneurs.
2. Survey of service locations in Environment V, Labuhan Ruku Village, Talawi District, Batubara Regency to seek information about empirical conditions in the field. The survey stages will be carried out directly at the service location by discussing with partners. This is done to obtain real information regarding the challenges and obstacles faced by partners as business actors.
3. Socialization regarding the importance of developing MSMEs in the form of processed Tamban fish as a support and support for community welfare in Labuhan Ruku Village. Socialization is carried out by presenting all partner members. Furthermore, the Service Team will routinely monitor the mentoring activities according to the agreement of both parties.
4. Socialization about the importance of innovation in making processed fish crackers, especially related to the problems faced by partners, namely the destruction of some of the crackers produced and the availability of raw materials. It is hoped that improvements will occur. Apart from that, assistance will be provided regarding product packaging strategies for marketing.
5. Assistance to groups of processed Tamban fish production business partners in expanding the reach and marketing and distribution network, starting from the manufacturing process to advertising on various online media such as Facebook and Instagram, which the partners themselves can later control.
6. Conduct a final evaluation of the training program to look for alternative solutions to problems, constraints, and obstacles in the field.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Efforts to improve the welfare of the people of the Coastal Area are carried out through the activity "Training on the Development of Tamban Fish Cracker Processing Businesses in Labuhan Ruku Village, Batubara Regency." In running their business, business actors, of course, face obstacles that each business actor faces, such as a lack of knowledge of business actors in marketing their products, how to manage raw materials, lack of business capital, limited production equipment, and other problems.

For the tamban fish cracker business actors, the problems faced by partners generally include

three things, namely a lack of understanding of tamban fish cracker printing techniques, which results in the resulting crackers being partially destroyed, problems with the availability of raw materials, lack of knowledge of MSMEs processing fish crackers. Improvement regarding product packaging strategies and the weak knowledge of business actors regarding product marketing strategies, in this case, related to building a marketing network for the products they produce. These various problems are, of course, factors that inhibit the development of MSMEs. Due to this problem, community service is implemented in the field through training.

Tamban Fish Cracker Processing Training to Produce Quality Crackers

Tamban fish crackers are processed through various procedures or steps until the crackers are sold. The method for making tamban fish crackers is generally good. However, the resulting product often experiences a decrease in quality when the crackers are packaged, in the form of some of the crackers being destroyed. This, of course, causes losses for the business actors themselves. What causes some crackers to break is due to the cracker printing technique itself. The machine used to print crackers needs to be scraped in the cutting area not to cause the crackers to have different thicknesses. The following is a portrait of the training.



Figure 3. Enthusiasm of the Training Participants

After scraping the cracker cutting tool, the crackers produced are of higher quality and no longer crumble.

Raw Material Provision Management Training

The raw materials used in making crackers include the main raw materials used in large quantities, whose function cannot be used by other materials, and additional raw materials, which are complementary to the main raw materials in the production process. The raw materials used in making these crackers are tapioca flour, sago flour, and tamban fish. The raw material for flour is relatively

easy to provide. However, raw materials are only sometimes available for Tamban fish. Depends on the weather. This means that if the weather is good, tamban fish catches will increase so that production can occur.

On the other hand, the problem is that when the weather is bad, fishermen generally find it difficult to find fish, which has an impact on stopping the production process. This becomes an obstacle in the production process, so finding a solution through several strategies is very important. In this case, the training was carried out by presenting resource persons from the Batu Bara Regency MSME Assistance Service representatives. This training will be held on June 26, 2022. The following is a portrait of the training.



Figure 4. Training on Providing Raw Materials

Training managing the supply of raw materials for tamban fish is carried out by implementing raw material storage strategies when marine products are abundant. Storage of raw materials is carried out as a reserve so that production can continue even if bad weather causes fishermen not to go to sea. The following is the process for storing raw materials suggested by the source:

1. If you want to keep fish, choose the best quality fish when buying. Choose fish that is still fresh, chewy, and has clear eyes. Good quality fish will last a long time when stored in the refrigerator.
2. Make sure to clean the fish before storing. Clean the gills and remove the stomach. Wash the fish clean. If you do not want the fish to smell too fishy, you can put lime juice on the fish's body.
3. When the fish is finished cleaning, store the fish in a closed container. This container can be a jar or food box. You can also store fish in plastic containers. However, it is feared that storing

fish in plastic containers will make the fish easily destroyed when removed from the plastic or when cooked later.

4. Try to store fish in the freezer section of the refrigerator. Fish that has been frozen in the freezer can last for days or even months.
5. Fish kept near food with a strong odor are likely to be contaminated with the smell of this food. It is best to avoid keeping fish near strong-smelling foods.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion from this service activity is that training in developing the Tamban fish cracker processing business in Labuhan Ruku Village, Batubara Regency, has positively contributed to improving the welfare of communities in coastal areas. The training aims to overcome several problems micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) face, including understanding cracker printing techniques, availability of raw materials, product packaging strategies, and marketing. In this training, participants are given new knowledge and skills needed to improve the quality of their products, manage raw material supplies, and expand marketing networks. Through implementing this strategy, MSMEs in Labuhan Ruku Village can develop and contribute more to the local economy. Apart from that, this training also highlights the importance of collaboration between the government, educational institutions, and the community in supporting the development of MSMEs and increasing economic prosperity in the area.

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