



## **Increasing Community Skills in Developing and Producing Local Food**

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### **Abstract**

Community service in 1 Village aims to empower and improve community welfare by developing local food potential. The method of service activities is to carry out the preparation stage, namely identifying the problem, the implementation stage of counselling and practicum of local food production until product presentation and promotion and the closing stage. This community service activity increases public understanding of the development of local raw material products in large quantities found in the Were 1 Village area, such as banana stems, which can be processed into snacks with various flavour variants. Another thing is that this product is a product characteristic that needs to be developed to increase the potential of Were 1 Village.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Community skills are an important part of developing a competent and independent community. In this article, we explore how important it is to improve people's skills in various areas of life, both in education and in the workplace. By improving people's skills, we can create a society that is more competent, independent and competitive in changing times. Therefore, it is important for the government, schools and the entire community to work together to improve community skills in order to achieve better and more sustainable development. With the challenges of climate change, fluctuations in global food prices, and the risk of dependence on imports, local food development increases a region's food security. Local food production can minimize the risk of food supply instability and ensure adequate food availability. (Pamujiati et al., 2023). Sustainable local food production can help protect the environment (Agustia Dwi Pamujiati et al., 2023; Andikaningrum et al., 2023). Local food production can empower local economies by creating new jobs, supporting local farmers and producers, and increasing household incomes in the region. This can also create new business opportunities in the local food and agro-industry sectors (Nani et al., 2023; Wijayanti & Meimaharani., 2022). Local foods often have higher nutritional value because they are suited to local soil and climate conditions. Encouraging local food consumption can improve public health and reduce dependence on unhealthy processed foods (Irawati et al., 2023). Local food often reflects local culture and traditions. Promoting local food production and consumption can help maintain cultural identity and advance local culinary heritage (Rahmatin, 2023; Saputera & Wiguna, 2023). The focus on local food potential provides special support to small farmers and local producers who often

face challenges in competing with global markets. This helps create social and economic inclusion. The development and production of local food potential is an integral part of global efforts to achieve Sustainable Development, especially in the context of food security, environmental sustainability and social welfare ([Novitri et al., 2023](#); [Riyadi et al., 2023](#); [Setiowati et al., 2024](#)). Involving various stakeholders and implementing supportive policies is the key to achieving maximum benefits from local food potential ([Margi, 2013](#); [Marsigit, 2010](#)).

Objectives of community service activities: increase knowledge, skills and independence; people can gain new knowledge and skills that they can use to improve their standard of living; improve quality of life: People can get access to basic needs such as clean water, sanitation and health services; Strengthening communities: the community service can help communities work together and solve problems together.

Some of the problems faced by the Were 1 Village community in developing and producing local food include: limited resources. Small farmers and local producers often face limited capital, land and modern agricultural equipment, which can hamper the potential for developing local food production. Lack of access to markets ([Siregar et al., 2023](#)): Difficulty marketing local products can be a problem, especially if farmers or producers do not have adequate access to local or regional markets. Inadequate Infrastructure: Lack of infrastructure, such as poor roads or a lack of local food processing facilities, can hinder the distribution and addition of value to local food products. Price Uncertainty: Local farmers and producers often face price uncertainty, especially when there are price fluctuations in global or regional markets. Lack of Education and Skills: Lack of knowledge of modern agricultural practices and management skills can be a barrier to increasing productivity and efficiency. Lack of government support: Unsupportive policies, lack of fiscal incentives, and unfavorable trade policies can hinder the growth of the local food sector.

## METHOD

The following are several methods that can be applied to develop and produce local food potential in Were 1 Village, Ngada Regency ([Harsana & Triwidayati, 2020](#); [Sriyana & Sari, 2018](#)):

1. Local Potential Study:
  - a. Conduct studies on local food potential, including biodiversity.
  - b. Identify local plants, animals and types of food that have the best adaptation to local conditions.
2. Research and Development of Local Varieties:
  - a. Support research activities to develop local plant and animal varieties that are superior in productivity, disease resistance and adaptation to climate change.
  - b. Collaboration with research institutions and universities to integrate scientific knowledge in the development of local varieties.
3. Training and Education:
  - a. Provide training to local farmers and ranchers on sustainable farming practices, natural resource management, and modern farming techniques.
  - b. Promote the importance of sustainability, biodiversity and food security to local communities.
4. Promotion of Local Food Development Practices:
  - a. Support the implementation of organic or sustainable farming practices to reduce the use of chemicals and minimize negative impacts on the environment.
  - b. Implement an efficient crop rotation and waste management system.
5. Product Processing and Innovation:

- a. Develop local food processing facilities to increase added value to local products. Encourage innovation in the development of local food products, such as processed products, functional foods or quality local drinks.
6. Local Market and Distribution:
  - a. Build relationships with local markets, traders, restaurants, and food stores to increase distribution of local food products.
  - b. Develop efficient distribution channels and support local product promotion at local and regional levels.
7. Community and Stakeholder Participation:
  - a. Involve local communities, farmers, producers and other stakeholders in decision making and strategic planning.
  - b. Form work groups or associations to increase collaboration and mutual support.
8. Public Education and Promotion of Local Consumption:
9. Increase public awareness about the benefits of consuming local food through educational campaigns. Promote the uniqueness and nutritional value of local food products to increase demand.

Activity Theme : "Developing Local Potential in Efforts to Improve the Economy through Empowering MSMEs in the 5.0 Era"

Implementation Time : 19 – 22 October 2023

Place : Were 1 Village, Golewa District, Ngada Regency.

Participants : 92 students and 3 accompanying lecturers

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Community service activities in Were 1 Village were very welcomed by the community, including traditional dances and the subsequent process of the community accepting the team community service with students to be placed in community residents' homes, as in Figure 1. This activity will be carried out for 4 days starting from 19 – 22 October 2023.



Figure 1 welcoming of the flores university management study program abdimas team

The activity continued with the presentation of material and a brief explanation from Were 1 village officials about the potential that exists in the village and its benefits for the community. In Figure 2, the speaker conveys matters related to efforts to develop local food based on the potential that exists in the village.



Figure 2 presentation of material for developing local food potential

The following are some materials that can be covered in local potential development training or workshops:

1. Introduction to the concept of local potential development: Definition and scope of local potential development. The importance of developing local potential in the context of sustainable development.
2. Identification and mapping of local potential: Method of identifying and mapping local potential. Use of mapping to identify opportunities and challenges in development.
3. Community and stakeholder involvement: The importance of community involvement in the development process. How to engage local stakeholders, including government, local businesses and civil society.
4. Agriculture and rural development: Sustainable agricultural practices. Agricultural diversification and optimal land use.
5. Creative industries and local products: The role of creative industries in developing local potential. Local product development and branding.
6. Locally based tourism: Culture and nature based tourism. Development of sustainable local tourist destinations.
7. Natural resource management: Principles of sustainable natural resource management. Environmental preservation and wise use of natural resources.
8. Skills and education: Improvement of local skills and education. The relationship between education and local economic development. Use of technology in developing local potential.
9. Implementation of technology to increase efficiency and accessibility. Training in the use of technology to improve production and distribution.
10. Marketing and promotion: Marketing strategies for local products. Use of social media and digital marketing.
11. Workshops and interactive activities: Group-based activities for designing local development projects.

Based on the explanation above, the technical activities regarding the manufacture of products with local potential results can be seen in the following Figure 3.



Figure 3 making products using local raw materials

The following are general steps for making chips from banana stems ([Baiquni et al., 2018](#); [Hala et al., 2022](#); [Sagajoka et al., 2021](#)):

1. Ingredients: Banana stems that are old and taken from the innermost part with fine fibers tend to be easier to process and provide a crunchy texture to chips. Cooking oil and salt to taste.

2. **Cleaning and Cutting:** Clean the banana stem from fibers or unwanted parts. Cut the banana stems into thin slices. You can use a slicer or mandolin to get uniform slices.
3. **Soaking:** Soak the banana stem slices in a salt solution of salt water or whitening water for a few minutes. This helps reduce the gum content and imparts flavor to the chips.
4. **Drying:** Dry the banana stem slices. You can use a dryer or a natural drying process in the sun. Make sure the banana stems are completely dry so the chips have a crunchy texture.
5. **Frying:** Heat cooking oil in a wok or frying pan until it reaches the right temperature. Fry the banana stem slices until golden. Make sure to flip it so that both sides cook evenly. Lift and drain the chips from the cooking oil.
6. **Serve:** Sprinkle the chips with a little salt or seasoning according to taste; let stand until the chips are completely cool before serving.
7. **Flavor Variants:** experiment with additional flavors, such as using balado spices, chili powder, or sugar to provide variations in the chips.
8. **Storage:** Store chips in an airtight container to maintain moisture and maintain their deliciousness.

After processing local food, the next stage is a product presentation attended by the community and village government, as shown in the following Figure 4.



Figure 4 product presentation and promotion to local communities

The following are some common obstacles that can be faced in promoting and marketing local food products:

1. **Budget limitations:** Local businesses often have more limited marketing budgets compared to global or national brands. This can hinder the ability to conduct extensive or sustained marketing campaigns.
2. **Distribution challenges:** Difficulty in obtaining efficient distribution can be an obstacle. Some local products may have difficulty reaching national or international markets due to logistics and infrastructure constraints.
3. **Perception of inferior quality:** Some consumers may have the perception that local products are of lower quality compared to imported products or well-known brands. Building a local product's reputation for good quality requires additional effort.
4. **Lack of consumer understanding:** Sometimes, consumers may not fully understand the benefits or added value of local products. Consumer education regarding local uniqueness, quality and value can be a challenge.
5. **Market uncertainty:** Unstable economic and political factors can cause uncertainty in the market. Changes in trade policies, fluctuations in currency values, or economic crises can affect purchasing power and demand for local products.
6. **Online competition and e-commerce:** The growth of e-commerce and online sales can become a hurdle if local businesses cannot adapt to these trends. Online competition can challenge the sustainability of conventional businesses. Ineffective use of digital

marketing or a limited understanding of marketing technology can make it difficult for local products to reach a wider audience online.

7. Lack of strategic partnerships: Cooperation and partnerships with related parties, such as large retail stores or other stakeholders, may be poorly developed, hindering distribution and promotion of local products.

### CONCLUSION

Developing local potential is a strategic effort to encourage economic, social and environmental sustainability in a region. From the previous discussion, several conclusions can be drawn: (1) The importance of developing local potential: Developing local potential plays a key role in creating economic sustainability and improving community welfare. This involves the use of local resources, community empowerment, and the creation of added value at the local level. (2) Important aspects in development: Various aspects such as agriculture, creative industries, tourism and natural resource management have a significant role in developing local potential. This integration of various sectors supports economic diversity and creates long-term sustainability. (3) Challenges in developing local potential: Even though it has great potential, developing local potential is also faced with a number of challenges, such as budget limitations, global competition, and low perception of local products. Overcoming these challenges requires holistic strategies and cross-sector collaboration.

### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

LLL was responsible for conceptualizing the background, designing the methodology, and collecting data. YL conducted data analysis, interpreted the results, and wrote the initial draft. GT acted as research supervisor, provided critical input, and revised the manuscript. All authors contributed to the discussion and final revision of the manuscript.

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