
Partnership Marketing Counseling for Siwalan sugar in Pedak Village, Sulang District, Rembang Regency, Central Java

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Abstract:

Pedak Village in Sulang District, Rembang Regency, is a village that produces the most agricultural commodities in the form of siwalan. This village is even nicknamed 1000 Bogor (siwalan). The siwalan tree produces sap that can be used as raw material for siwalan sugar. The community can produce 2,200 kg of siwalan sugar every day. The abundant production of siwalan sugar is still marketed conventionally by selling it to siwalan sugar collectors. However, collectors have not been able to accommodate all of the residents' siwalan production. In addition, the price of siwalan sugar sold to collectors is relatively low, IDR 18,000.00 per kg, even though the cost of siwalan sugar at the consumer level is IDR 27,000.00 - IDR 30,000.00 per kg. This relatively large price margin allows siwalan sugar artisans in Pedak Village to get optimal profits, so the Muria Kudus University Development Service Team took the initiative to introduce a marketing method for siwalan sugar so that the price margin sold by artisans and the price purchased by consumers is not too far apart. Artisans can also sell siwalan sugar products to a broader market segment. The proper marketing method for siwalan sugar is partnership marketing. This method is introduced to the community through the counseling of ideas. The marketing partner formed is the BUMD. This institution is expected to be able to accommodate siwalan sugar as a typical souvenir from Pedak Village, especially for the "1000 Bogor Tourism, Pedak Village". BUMD can also participate in UMKM product exhibitions organised by the government and the private sector

1. INTRODUCTION

The palm tree (*Borassus Flabellifer* linn) is a type of palm plant that uses all parts of the tree, including the trunk, fruit, leaves and flowers. If the palm flower is tapped, it produces sap. This sap has high economic value because it can be used as a raw material for making siwalan sugar (Faizah et al., 2023). One of the areas with the most palm sap is in Rembang Regency, Central Java.

Palm production in Rembang Regency in 2022 is as follows:

Table 1. Area, production, productivity, and number of siwalan sugar farmers in Rembang

Subdistrict	Area (Ha)	Production (Tons)	Productivity (Kg/Ha)	Number of Farmers (KK)
Source	5	9.84	2 459	29
Hair	-	-	-	-
Gunem	-	-	-	-
Sale	-	-	-	-
Nest	-	-	-	-
Sedan	-	-	-	-
The Promise	-	-	-	-
Toast	395	811.20	2704	1098
Kaliori	30	57.48	2499	133
Rembang	18	32.84	2526	95
Fountain	-	-	-	-
The Crag	2	5.03	2514	12
Slug	-	-	-	-
Lasem	-	-	-	-
Total	450	916.38	2 679	1367

Source: Central Statistics Agency of Rembang Regency, 2023

The sub-district that produces the most palm sap is the Sulang Sub-district, which has a total area of 395 Ha and a production of 811.20 tons per year. Sulang Sub-district has a village that produces palm sap, Pedak Village, nicknamed "1000 Bogor Tourism Village." This village area was opened for natural tourism to introduce palm trees to the general public.

One of the most famous processed palm sap products is siwalan sugar. This sugar is made from palm sap, heated and mixed with Japanese tree bark (Laro) or lime. This sugar solution is cooked until boiling and ready to be moulded into coconut shells (Sadewo et al., 2023). The advantage of siwalan sugar is that it has a lower glycemic index than granulated sugar, so it is safe for consumption by people who want to live healthier lives (Hadi et al., 2024).

The people of Pedak Village can produce 2.2 tons or 2,200 kg of siwalan sugar per day, which makes quite a lot of siwalan sugar products. However, not all siwalan sugar products are easily marketed in the community. The community only takes advantage of the collectors in the village, and collectors can no longer accommodate the overflowing siwalan sugar products. One of the problems in Pedak Village has not been resolved, so it can be a subject of devotion.

Community service is carried out by disseminating marketing partnerships for siwalan sugar products. Marketing partnerships are collaborative business relationships between two or more parties that are mutually beneficial and help both achieve the desired marketing targets. Community service is carried out by disseminating siwalan sugar artisans in Pedak Village about the advantages of partnerships, partnership procedures, and documents that need to be

prepared in partnerships. This community service also brings together partners who can accommodate the siwalan sugar of the Pedak Village community to make it easier to market

2. METHOD

The implementation of this community service program was carried out in Pedak Village, Sulang District, Rembang Regency, by establishing several steps, namely:

- a. With Village Apparatus, conduct a survey of siwalan sugar craftsmen and potential siwalan sugar marketing partners to determine the location and time for implementing community service.
- b. Creating a module for partnership-based siwalan sugar marketing
- c. Conducting counseling on partnership-based marketing of siwalan sugar
- d. Carrying out cooperation between siwalan sugar artisans and potential siwalan sugar marketing partners
- e. Re-operating BUMD as a marketing partner for siwalan sugar craftsmen

Community service activities in Pedak Village, Sulang District, Rembang Regency were carried out using the following methods:

- a. Marketing partnership counseling lecture

The lecture was conducted by delivering material about the meaning of marketing partnerships, advantages, procedures, and documents that must be present in marketing partnerships.

- b. Discussion

The discussion was conducted by involving siwalan sugar artisans in the forum to convey the obstacles and conditions of their siwalan sugar products and obtain solutions to the problems so that artisans can participate in marketing partnerships.

- c. Packaging practices that comply with marketing partner standard

Practice by demonstrating the correct way to package siwalan sugar so that it lasts longer and is acceptable to siwalan sugar marketing partners.

- d. Partnership agreement with siwalan sugar craftsmen

Form a cooperation agreement between siwalan sugar partners, such as BUMD Pedak, as a village institution willing to accommodate siwalan sugar from village residents

3. RESULT

The Community Service Team for the Development of Fostered Villages (PDB) of Muria Kudus University has conducted a preliminary study using the community empowerment method based on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). According to Sujarwo (2021), the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method is a method of community empowerment through an approach with "insiders" or stakeholders by facilitating external parties who are more dominant as pioneers or providers of empowerment facilities. The community service team held in-depth discussions with the Head and Apparatus of Pedak Village. The discussion results showed that the people of Pedak Village have a central problem with siwalan sugar. The siwalan sugar production by the people of Pedak Village reaches 2.2 tons per day. The abundant production of siwalan sugar does not make the community prosperous because the absorption of siwalan sugar products is still tiny, and the selling price is still low. The community only makes conventional sales to collectors. The price determined by the collectors is still low, namely IDR 18,000.00 per kg, even though the selling price to end consumers is IDR 27,000,000.00 - IDR 30,000.00. This price margin is quite far. Collectors also cannot accept all of the residents' siwalan sugar products due to the collectors' limited capital. This problem confuses siwalan sugar artisans when selling their products. The community cannot sell to a broader market because the community's siwalan sugar production is still insufficient to meet the standard sales volume in the market. If the community wants to sell to the market, the community should form a group, but the community does not yet have a siwalan sugar craftsman group. The absence of a craftsman group, in addition to preventing the community from selling siwalan sugar products to the market, also slows down the handling of this economic case by the government and private sector. The government and private institutions will only assist the community by empowering siwalan sugar artisan groups so that access to assistance from the government and private institutions cannot be distributed. This prompted the Muria Kudus University Fostered Village Development Team (PDB) to take the initiative to carry out community service activities to help siwalan sugar artisans form a siwalan sugar partner. This partner can function as a forum for associations of siwalan sugar craftsmen to facilitate wider distribution of siwalan sugar marketing.

Marketing partnerships are not widely known by the people of Pedak Village, even though they have many benefits. Marketing partnerships are collaborative business activities that relate to each other between individuals and partners or groups with partners to achieve the desired marketing goals. Sugar marketing partnerships as an agribusiness product are sustainable agricultural development activities that can empower small artisans to form

efficient marketing chains to increase sugar artisans' income. The benefits of sugar partnerships are facilitating the acquisition of raw materials for production, increasing production and efficiency and developing market share (Pintakami et al., 2020). The people of Pedak Village, who still have minimal information about partnerships, need to provide information transfer to the community called counseling. According to Djaffar (2017), counseling aims to disseminate information to specific targets so that the community receives information well and is aware of implementing a particular idea. The counseling of marketing partnerships targets the siwalan sugar craftsman community so that the community knows about the siwalan sugar partnership. It is hoped that the community can participate in the siwalan sugar partnership, which has one of the advantages of increasing community income and allowing the community to live more prosperously.

The counseling of marketing partnerships was carried out by the Muria Kudus University Fostered Village Development Team (PDB) at the home of one of the Pedak Village residents on March 9, 2024, which was attended by 31 residents consisting of the Village Head, BUMDES (Village-Owned Enterprises), and siwalan sugar artisans. The counseling location at the community's home was chosen because the service team wanted to approach the community by blending in and becoming part of the community so that the community could better accept the values brought by the service team. The marketing partnership counseling process that has been carried out is divided into several activities, namely socialisation about partnership marketing, sharing sessions with marketing partnership experts, making partnership documents and training on siwalan sugar. Before conducting the socialisation, the Village Development Service Team (PDB) conducted a questionnaire on partnerships to determine the level of knowledge of the siwalan sugar artisan community regarding partnership marketing. Then, a lecturer who is a member of the Village Development Service Team (PDB) carried out socialisation regarding the urgency, benefits, objectives, principles, requirements, and documents of marketing partnerships.



Figure 1. Socialisation Regarding the Urgency, Benefits, Objectives, Principles, Conditions and Documents of Marketing Partnerships.

Then, a sharing session was held by a marketing partnership expert, Mr Safuan Noor, SP, also the Coordinator of the Millennial Farmer Ambassador for the Central Java Region. This partnership expert shared his direct experience with the community about marketing partnerships that had been carried out so that the market share of his agricultural products was increasingly expanding. Mr Safuan shared his experience of the brown sugar partnership that he had done 5 years ago. The result is that he has now partnered with various regional government agencies in Central J Farmer Ambassador Coordinator Millennials of Central Java Region

Then, we continued with the socialisation of the creation of partner documents. The artisan community created partnership agreement documents so that the community felt more confident in their partners. This partnership agreement is a form of communication and clear understanding between partners. Then, packaging siwalan sugar was carried out to last longer and be well received by partners. The activity went well and received a positive response from siwalan sugar artisans. This can be seen from the artisans actively discussing marketing partnerships. Artisans shared experiences and obstacles that might occur; then, the service team provided the right solution so that the marketing partnership would continue.

The final result of this service is that the siwalan sugar artisan community understands the siwalan sugar marketing partnership. In addition, the service also succeeded in bringing together the siwalan sugar artisan community with partners who can accommodate siwalan

sugar, namely the Village-Owned Enterprises that were initially inactive. The service succeeded in reactivating the BUMD by socialising with the Pedak Village Apparatus regarding the benefits of becoming a siwalan sugar partner for Pedak Village residents.ava Province.

4. CONCLUSION

After implementing the counseling activity of the siwalan sugar marketing partnership to the people of Pedak Village, the service team can conclude that the counseling participants who attended can accept and understand the marketing partnership. The community has also agreed to market their siwalan sugar products to partners, namely the Pedak Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMD).

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