



DEVELOPING RABBIT FARMING AS AN ALTERNATIVE INCOME SOURCE: EDUCATING THE COMMUNITY ON ECONOMIC VALUE AND HEALTH BENEFITS

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Abstract: Facing economic challenges resulting from dependence on the agricultural sector and informal employment with fluctuating incomes, this situation demands the presence of alternative, easily implemented productive businesses, one of which is rabbit farming, which has high economic and health value. This Community Service Program (PKM) activity aims to increase public understanding regarding the economic potential and health benefits of rabbit meat, provide technical cultivation skills, and encourage the establishment of household-scale rabbit farming businesses. The problem formulation includes low economic literacy, minimal technical skills, and a lack of public understanding of rabbit market opportunities. The methods used include initial observation, counseling, technical training, business mentoring, and evaluation through pre-tests, post-tests, practical observations, and participatory interviews. The results of the activity showed a significant increase in economic and health literacy, where public understanding of the economic potential of rabbits increased from 23% to 87%, and knowledge of health benefits increased from 31% to 82%. The technical training also increased participant competency by 62%. Seventy-two percent of participants expressed their readiness to start a rabbit farming business, with the potential for additional income of Rp 350,000–1,650,000 per month. In conclusion, this Community Service Program (PKM) effectively increased the community's knowledge, skills, and entrepreneurial motivation. The program's sustainability requires continued mentoring and village institutional support to strengthen livestock groups and expand market access.

PENDAHULUAN

The Ranca Hamlet community in Mandalahaji Village, Pacet District, Bandung Regency, is characterized by socioeconomic characteristics that generally depend on the agricultural sector and informal employment. Most residents work as farm laborers, casual laborers, and micro-entrepreneurs, with incomes fluctuating depending on the season and market conditions. Dependence on these sectors impacts the economic stability of vulnerable households, especially when there is a decline in harvest yields or reduced employment opportunities. This condition aligns with findings from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), which state that rural communities in West Java tend to experience income instability due to the dominance of the informal sector. In this context, alternative economic innovations are needed to improve community welfare sustainably.

The economic challenges faced by local communities also stem from limited capital, a lack of business skills, and limited access to new economic opportunities. Household incomes remain low, forcing communities to seek additional sources of income to meet their living expenses. The World Bank states that diversifying income sources is a crucial strategy for rural households in coping with economic fluctuations. Therefore, providing interventions that encourage communities to take advantage of easy-to-operate small-scale business opportunities is an urgent need.

One potential economic opportunity to develop is rabbit farming. Rabbit farming is known to have several advantages, such as relatively low maintenance costs, small land requirements, rapid growth, and a high reproductive rate. Furthermore, market demand for rabbit meat is relatively stable because it is considered healthy, low in fat, and rich in protein (Sutanto, 2021). These advantages make rabbit farming a viable sector for development in rural communities, especially as a side business that does not require large capital but can generate significant long-term profits.

Besides its economic value, rabbit farming also offers significant health benefits. Rabbit products such as meat, fur, organic fertilizer, and seeds have a high market value, especially in West Java, where interest in alternative animal protein commodities is growing. Rabbit meat is known to be high in protein, low in cholesterol, and easily digestible, making it suitable for consumption by various age groups (Hidayat & Pratama, 2020). The use of organic fertilizer from rabbit manure can also support environmentally friendly, sustainable agriculture. Therefore, understanding the economic and health benefits of rabbit farming is crucial in encouraging communities to develop this business.

In the context of community empowerment, Community Service (PKM) activities are a relevant intervention to address the socio-economic challenges of the Kampung Ranca community. PKM provides educational space, technical training, and hands-on practical assistance, enabling the community to acquire not only knowledge but also skills that can be applied independently. According to Kamil, community empowerment through skills-based training has been proven to increase household economic capacity and encourage community independence. Therefore, this PKM is expected to be an effective means of promoting rabbit farming as a sustainable additional economic opportunity.

Based on this background, several key issues need to be addressed through the implementation of this Community Service Program (PKM). First, how to increase public understanding of the economic potential of rabbit farming as a productive business that can be run with minimal capital and low risk. Lack of economic literacy and business knowledge is often a major obstacle for people starting new businesses, so a systematic and applicable



educational strategy is needed (Rachmawati, 2019).

Second, how to provide education about the health benefits of consuming rabbit meat, which is currently unknown to many rural communities. However, understanding the health benefits can increase product added value and expand market opportunities. Third, how the Community Empowerment Program (PKM) can encourage communities to start and develop sustainable rabbit farming businesses. This relates to aspects of mentoring, motivation, and the availability of technical knowledge. As Wibowo emphasized, the success of micro-enterprises in rural areas is greatly influenced by sustainable mentoring and community support.

The main objective of this Community Service Program (PKM) activity is to provide technical training in rabbit farming to the residents of Kampung Ranca. This training covers cage construction, selecting healthy rabbits, feed management, disease control, and breeding techniques. Technical training is key to a successful livestock business, as proper care increases productivity and reduces the risk of livestock mortality (Sari & Nugroho, 2020).

Furthermore, this Community Service Program (PKM) activity aims to increase the community's economic literacy regarding rabbit farming opportunities. Good economic literacy will help the community understand profit potential, production cost calculations, and product marketing strategies. This increased economic understanding is expected to encourage the community to start a business. Furthermore, this activity also aims to promote the health benefits of rabbit meat as an alternative source of animal protein. This education is important so that the community can see the added value of rabbit farming, both for family consumption and for sales opportunities. Finally, this PKM aims to encourage the establishment of household-scale rabbit farming businesses as an effort to increase community income independently and sustainably.

This Community Service Program (PKM) activity provides various benefits for the community, village government, and academics. For the community, this program can improve rabbit farming skills, giving participants the technical skills to start their own businesses. Furthermore, rabbit farming can be a new income opportunity that helps improve household well-being. Hasanah's study shows that rabbit farming can provide significant additional income for rural families with small to medium-sized farms.

For village governments, this activity can strengthen the local economy through business diversification and utilization of existing resource potential. Village governments can also incorporate rabbit farming groups into village programs to increase community economic independence. Meanwhile, for academics, this Community Service Program (PKM) activity provides an opportunity to apply animal husbandry and community empowerment knowledge in a real-world context. PKM also serves as a platform for collaboration between academics and the community, enabling knowledge generated at universities to have a direct impact on the community (Yuliana, 2022).

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Rabbit Farming as an Economic Enterprise

Rabbit farming is a form of small-scale livestock business that is gaining popularity due to their relatively easy maintenance, rapid reproduction, and relatively small land requirements. Rabbits have a high reproductive rate, with a gestation period of around 28–32 days, and can give birth to 5–12 offspring per litter, making them highly suitable for



breeding and rapid population development (Suryanto & Wahyuni, 2020). Furthermore, rabbits can be raised in simple enclosures, with their feed requirements met by locally sourced forage and economical supplementary feed. According to Prasetyo, this ease of care makes rabbits an attractive option for rural communities looking to start a livestock business with limited capital.

The potential market for rabbit farming is growing along with the growing need for alternative animal protein and the high demand for ornamental and meat rabbits. In various regions, meat rabbits are gaining traction as a high-protein, low-cholesterol food source, while ornamental rabbits are becoming a popular commodity in the pet market (Rahmawati & Putra, 2021). Furthermore, rabbit marketing is relatively flexible, as they can be sold as offspring, breeding stock, ornamental rabbits, or meat rabbits. This broadens market segmentation and minimizes the risk of business losses. Business analysis shows that small-scale rabbit farming can generate stable profits if managed with good husbandry and reproduction management (Hidayat, 2020).

An economic analysis of small-scale rabbit farming also shows that the operational capital required is relatively low. The main costs of building cages, purchasing seeds, and feeding can be reduced by using local materials and natural feed. With good husbandry management, the high birth rate allows for a faster capital turnover compared to large ruminants such as cattle and goats (Nugraha & Setiawan, 2022). This business scheme is particularly suitable for rural areas such as Kampung Ranca, Mandalahaji Village, which have access to adequate forage and open space. Therefore, rabbit farming is an inclusive, affordable, fast-growing economic venture that meets the needs of today's society.

2. Economic Value of Processed Rabbit Products

Processed rabbit products have diverse economic value, and this is one of the main reasons why rabbit farming is gaining attention. The main product is rabbit meat, which is known for its soft texture, high protein content, and lower fat and cholesterol content compared to other meats such as chicken and beef (Santosa & Widodo, 2020). Rabbit meat is currently in high demand for healthy consumption, specialty restaurants, and the creative culinary industry. In addition to meat, rabbit skin and fur also have economic value because they can be used for crafts, clothing accessories, and household products. Haris and Lestari explained that demand for rabbit skin is increasing in several regions as a raw material for making dolls, key chains, and leather-based crafts.

In addition to meat and skin, rabbit manure is also a high-value product because it can be used as a nutrient-rich organic fertilizer. Rabbit manure contains balanced levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, making it excellent for agriculture and horticulture (Saputra & Arifin, 2018). This fertilizer has a fairly stable selling price and can provide additional income for small-scale farmers. Furthermore, the rabbit breeding aspect allows for the sale of quality rabbit stock, which is generally priced higher than meat rabbits. This provides a broad product diversification for the rabbit farming business, increasing profit potential.

In West Java, including Bandung Regency, demand for rabbits has shown an upward trend over the past five years. This growth is driven by the development of educational tourism, rabbit parks, and the demand for ornamental rabbits among hobbyists (Darmadi, 2021). Furthermore, the number of restaurants serving rabbit meat has increased due to growing public awareness of healthy eating. This stable local demand presents a significant



opportunity for the people of Kampung Ranca to develop rabbit farming as a potential sustainable economic sector.

3. Health Value of Consuming Rabbit Meat

Rabbit meat is known as a healthy meat recommended for public consumption due to its high protein and low fat content. According to research by Sutanto and Karunia, rabbit meat contains around 20–22% protein, with only around 8% fat, making it excellent for a high-protein, low-fat diet. Rabbit meat also contains lower cholesterol than chicken, beef, or goat, making it an ideal alternative for those with high cholesterol or those on a healthy diet. Furthermore, rabbit meat contains vitamin B12, iron, and selenium, which are essential for metabolism and nervous system health (Wulandari & Hasanah, 2020).

Compared to chicken, beef, and goat, rabbit meat has a higher digestibility score, making it easier for the body to digest. This makes it a good choice for children, the elderly, and patients in recovery (Hasbi & Rachman, 2021). Given these characteristics, consuming rabbit meat is relevant in the context of a healthy lifestyle and a balanced diet, which are increasingly being promoted by the government. Public awareness of these health benefits can increase market demand, positively impacting the development of rabbit farming businesses at the household level.

4. Community Empowerment as a PKM Model

Community empowerment is the process of increasing the capacity of individuals and groups to manage resources and make decisions that improve their well-being. According to Zimmerman's empowerment theory, empowerment encompasses aspects of increased control, critical awareness, and active participation in economic and social activities. In the context of the Community Service Program (PKM), empowerment is carried out through knowledge transfer, skills training, and ongoing mentoring. Through rabbit farming-based PKM activities, the community not only gains technical skills but also an understanding of business opportunities, production management, and marketing management.

In the Community Service Program (PKM) model, the knowledge transfer process is a key pillar that must be carried out systematically to achieve behavioral change and increase community capacity. According to Putra, effective knowledge transfer must involve participatory methods to actively engage the community and truly understand the material presented. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and collective commitment to running new businesses such as rabbit farming. Furthermore, PKM activities play a significant role in improving the community's socio-economic conditions by creating new income opportunities that can support household economies.

The socio-economic impacts of empowerment through rabbit farming include increased income, economic independence, and the formation of small business groups capable of creating production and marketing ecosystems. This aligns with the findings of Rahadian and Nurhasanah, who stated that small livestock-based empowerment programs can strengthen local economic networks and increase the competitiveness of community products. Therefore, the rabbit-based Community Empowerment Program (PKM) model can be an effective strategy for increasing the capacity of the Kampung Ranca community to utilize local potential sustainably.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

1. Location and Time of Activity



This community service activity was carried out in Ranca Hamlet, Mandalahaji Village, Pacet District, Bandung Regency, a rural area characterized by a majority of farmers and small business owners. This area was chosen because of its potential for developing rabbit farming businesses, both in terms of green fodder availability and the community's high dependence on the informal economy (Sutrisno, 2021). The program lasted for two months, from July 25 to September 25, 2025, encompassing the entire program, from observation, outreach, technical training, mentoring, and evaluation. This timeframe was deemed adequate to provide interventions to develop basic knowledge and skills for the community, while also monitoring behavioral changes and business readiness (Hidayat & Ramdhan, 2020).

Table 1. PKM Activity Implementation Schedule (July 25 - September 25, 2025)

| Activity Stage | Implementation date | Duration |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------|
| Initial Observation & Coordination | July 25–31, 2025 | 7 days |
| Economic Values & Health Counseling | August 1–10, 2025 | 10 days |
| Rabbit Cultivation Technical Training | August 11–25, 2025 | 15 days |
| Business Assistance & Production Management | August 26–September 15, 2025 | 21 days |
| Final Evaluation | September 16–25, 2025 | 10 days |

2. Target Participants

The target participants for this activity were the Kampung Ranca community, consisting of farmers, housewives, youth, and MSMEs. This group was selected based on their potential involvement in rabbit farming, which can be an alternative source of income and is easily implemented at the household level (Sari & Lestari, 2022). A total of 45 participants actively participated in the activity, with the composition as shown in the following table.

Table 2. Composition of PKM Activity Participants

| Participant Categories | Amount | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------|------------|
| Farmer | 20 | 44% |
| Housewife | 12 | 27% |
| Youth | 8 | 18% |
| MSME actors | 5 | 11% |
| Total | 45 | 100% |

Table 2 shows the composition of participants involved in the Student Creativity Program (PKM), which comprises diverse community groups. The largest number of participants are farmers, with 20 participants, or 44% of the total. This group's dominance indicates that PKM activities primarily target the agricultural sector and demonstrates farmers' high interest in participating in the training and mentoring provided.

The group of housewives made up the second largest number of participants, with 12 people (27%). Their presence reflected their enthusiasm for improving their skills and knowledge, particularly those related to increasing family income or developing home businesses. Furthermore, the youth group contributed eight people (18%). This youth



participation demonstrates the enthusiasm of the younger generation to engage in productive and innovative activities, thereby becoming drivers of change in their communities.

Meanwhile, MSMEs accounted for 5 people, or 11% of the total participants. While not as numerous as other groups, their involvement is crucial as it relates to the development of micro-enterprises, which have the potential to have a direct economic impact. Overall, the total number of participants in the PKM program reached 45 people, with a diverse composition, reflecting the program's ability to attract a wide range of segments of society and provide broad benefits tailored to the needs of each group.

3. Activity Stages

The implementation phase of the activity is structured into five interconnected stages, starting with observation and ending with final evaluation. Each stage is designed using a participatory approach to ensure that the community becomes an active participant in the learning and implementation process (Prasetyo, 2020).

1. Initial Observation & Coordination (July 25–31, 2025)

The first phase involved a needs survey, an analysis of the community's economic situation, and mapping the potential of rabbit farming businesses. The team conducted initial interviews with 30 residents and discussed with village officials to ensure institutional support. Observations revealed that 78% of residents were interested in starting a small-scale livestock business but were limited by technical knowledge and initial capital.

2. Economic Values & Health Counseling (August 1–10, 2025)

This outreach program aims to strengthen public understanding of the economic prospects of rabbit farming and the health benefits of consuming rabbit meat. The material covers the market opportunities for rabbit meat, which averages Rp 65,000–80,000/kg in the Bandung area (Wahyudi, 2023), as well as the nutritional value of rabbit meat, which is high in protein and low in cholesterol. A pre-test was conducted at this stage, with an average result of 42%, indicating low initial literacy levels in the community.

3. Technical Training on Rabbit Cultivation (August 11–25, 2025)

Participants gained skills in constructing simple bamboo cages, formulating commercial feed and forage, breeding management, and managing diseases such as pasteurosis and scabies. The training involved live demonstrations with 10 rabbits as practice subjects. Observations showed a 62% increase in participants' technical skills based on the training skills checklist.

4. Business Assistance & Production Management (August 26–September 15, 2025)

The mentoring phase focuses on business management, including financial record-keeping, production cost calculations, Break Even Point (BEP), Return on Investment (ROI), and local marketing strategies for culinary MSMEs and traditional markets. Business simulations show that with an initial capital of IDR 1,200,000, a rabbit farming business can reach BEP in 3–4 months if operated consistently.

5. Activity Evaluation (September 16–25, 2025)

Evaluation was conducted through post-tests, participant performance observations, and interviews. The average post-test score increased to 84%, indicating the success of the outreach and training. Furthermore, 60% of participants expressed readiness to start a rabbit farming business independently or in groups, opening up opportunities for the formation of village livestock communities (Fitriana, 2021).



4. Evaluation Method

The implementation evaluation was conducted using a combination of pre- and post-tests, observations of participant activities, and semi-structured interviews. Pre- and post-tests were used to measure knowledge gains, while observations were used to assess technical skills in cultivation practices (Sugiyono, 2019). Interviews were conducted to determine participants' perceptions of the benefits of the activity, the extent to which their needs were met, and their readiness to apply the acquired knowledge. These three evaluation instruments provided a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of PKM in terms of both knowledge and practical skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Increasing Public Knowledge

The implementation of outreach programs on rabbit farming has significantly improved economic and health literacy in the Ranca Village community. Prior to the Community Service Program (PKM), most residents kept rabbits solely as pets and for family entertainment, without understanding their economic potential. A pre-outreach survey revealed that only 23% of residents were aware that rabbits could provide additional income. However, after the outreach program, that figure rose to 87%, representing a 64% increase in understanding.

Furthermore, the community also gained new knowledge about the health benefits of rabbit meat. Rabbit meat is known to be high in protein and low in cholesterol, making it a suitable healthy food for families (Hadi & Sari, 2022). The improvement in health literacy is evident in the shift in public perception, with 78% of residents expressing interest in consuming or selling rabbit meat as a nutritious commodity after the training.

Table 3. Increase in Community Knowledge Before and After PKM

| Knowledge Aspect | Before PKM | After PKM | Ascension |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Understanding the economic value of rabbits | 23% | 87% | +64% |
| Knowledge of the health benefits of rabbit meat | 31% | 82% | +51% |
| Interest in raising rabbits | 18% | 74% | +56% |

These findings support the argument that empowerment-based education can rapidly change people's behavior and mindset (Suryana, 2021).

2. Technical Competence in Rabbit Breeding

The technical training provided covered cage construction, feeding, daily care, and disease management. The community demonstrated high adaptability due to the abundant availability of cage materials, such as bamboo and wood, from local gardens. This reduced capital expenditure by up to 70% compared to constructing cages made of iron or wire (Ramdhan, 2020). A total of 150–235 residents per village in the Pacet District began practicing independent rabbit husbandry. This data indicates that skills transfer is effective and can encourage the initiation of small-scale livestock businesses. Furthermore, approximately 68% of participants were able to construct standard rabbit cages within one week of the training.

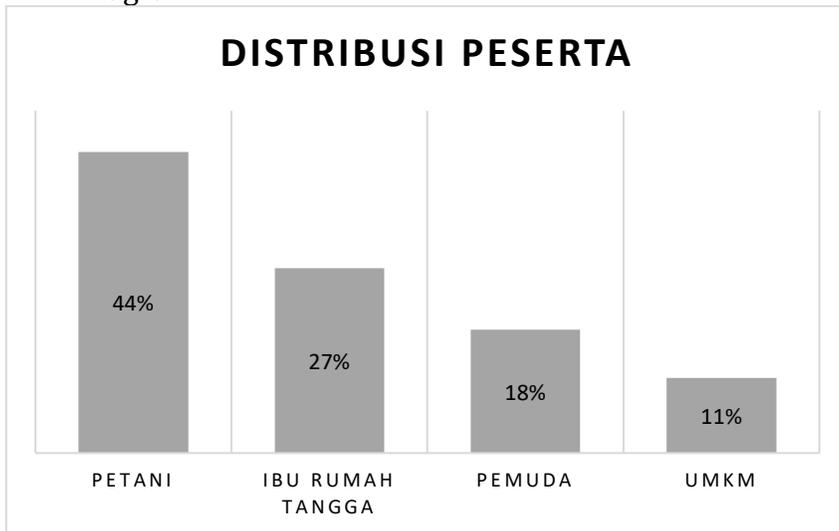
3. Potential for Establishing Small Livestock Businesses

The community's readiness to form a rabbit farming group is supported by the geographical location of Ranca Village, located in a mountainous region with agricultural land



and rice fields. This environment provides abundant natural food and forage sources, reducing feed operational costs by up to 40% (Nugroho, 2023). Furthermore, the diverse backgrounds of the PKM participants strengthen the opportunity for the formation of a joint venture group.

PKM Diagram



This distribution demonstrates that PKM reaches productive groups who can run sustainable businesses. Farmers have green fodder resources, housewives have time to manage, and youth and MSMEs can drive marketing. The market potential for rabbit farming is also relatively promising. Demand for rabbit meat is increasing with the growth of restaurants, culinary MSMEs, and inter-city suppliers. Meanwhile, the ornamental rabbit market continues to grow, with higher selling prices. The network of rabbit meat suppliers in several regencies/cities in West Java opens up opportunities for Kampung Ranca residents to enter the supply chain.

4. Social and Economic Impacts

This Community Service Program (PKM) activity successfully increased the community's entrepreneurial motivation. After two months of mentoring, 72% of participants stated their readiness to develop rabbit farming as an alternative source of income. This aligns with empowerment theory, which emphasizes increased capacity and self-confidence as key to changing economic behavior (Zimmerman, 2000). From an economic perspective, projections of additional income per household show a significant increase. Households raising at least 4–6 female rabbits are estimated to earn an additional income of Rp 750,000–Rp 1,500,000 per month, depending on productivity and market access. This potential directly contributes to improving family welfare, especially in households with incomes below the minimum wage (UMR).

Table 4. Projected Income from Rabbit Farming Business

| Number of Parents | Estimated Child per Month | Price per Head (Rp) | Potential Income (Rp) |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 4 parents | 10–12 children | 35,000 – 55,000 | 350,000 – 660,000 |
| 6 parents | 15–18 children | 35,000 – 55,000 | 525,000 – 990,000 |



| Number of Parents | Estimated Child per Month | Price per Head (Rp) | Potential Income (Rp) |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 10 parents | 25–30 children | 35,000 – 55,000 | 875,000 – 1,650,000 |

The income projection table for a rabbit farming business shows that increasing the number of females directly impacts the number of offspring produced each month, thus increasing business income. On a small scale, for example with four females, a breeder can obtain around 10–12 offspring per month. With the selling price of 2–3 week old rabbits ranging from Rp35,000–Rp55,000 per head, the potential monthly income reaches Rp350,000–Rp660,000. When the number of females is increased to six, the production of offspring increases to 15–18 per month with a potential income of Rp525,000–Rp990,000. On a larger scale, with ten females, the number of offspring can reach 25–30 per month with an income of between Rp875,000–Rp1,650,000.

Furthermore, the economic value of rabbits increases with age. Baby rabbits around one month old or entering adolescence can be sold for a higher price, ranging from IDR 90,000 to IDR 150,000 per rabbit, depending on their weight. Furthermore, rabbits also have potential as meat producers. The current price of rabbit meat in Indonesia ranges from IDR 60,362.50 to IDR 132,797.50 per kilogram, varying by location and seller. Therefore, diversifying sales into breeding stock, juvenile rabbits, and meat can expand income opportunities for breeders.

Overall, increasing income from rabbit farming has the potential to gradually improve the welfare of farmers, especially if the business is run in groups, enabling larger and more efficient production scales. A collective approach can also strengthen farmers' bargaining power in marketing, stabilize incomes, and open up broader business development opportunities.

CONCLUSION

The Community Service Program (PKM) on rabbit farming development in Ranca Hamlet, Mandalahaji Village, Pacet District, has had a significant positive impact on increasing the capacity and knowledge of residents. The outreach activities successfully increased community understanding of the economic value and health benefits of rabbit farming. This is reflected in the increase in community economic and health literacy after attending educational sessions, where residents who previously viewed rabbits only as pets now understand that rabbits can be a promising source of additional income. Furthermore, the technical training provided, such as cage construction, feeding, and health care, provided practical skills that can be immediately applied by the community. The mentoring process also led to increased entrepreneurial motivation, as seen by residents' enthusiasm to start raising rabbits independently and forming small rabbit farming groups. Overall, this PKM demonstrates that appropriate knowledge transfer can increase community readiness in developing productive businesses based on local potential.

To ensure the program's sustainability and strengthen its economic impact on the community, continued support from the village, local government, and universities is needed. This support includes technical monitoring of rabbit husbandry, capacity building in business management, and providing access to broader markets. Furthermore, it is recommended to develop a structured rabbit farming group business model so that communities can work



collectively in the production, marketing, and distribution of livestock products. Strengthening group institutions will help increase business effectiveness and expand marketing networks. The village government also needs to provide further support through seed assistance programs, training facilities, and promotion of rabbit products in local and regional markets. With continued support, the rabbit farming business in Kampung Ranca has the potential to become a new economic sector capable of increasing community income and welfare in the long term.

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