



Simba Kuat: Implementation of an Environmental Cadre Program from School to Village Level in Keluang Village, Tunkal Ilir, South Sumatra

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received : 01.08.2024

Revised : 31.08.2024

Accepted : 02.09.2024

Article Type: Research

Article

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ABSTRACT

Since its inception in 2021 at SMP Negeri 2 Tunkal Ilir, the Synergy Towards a Healthy and Civilized School (Simba Sehati) program has successfully produced environmental cadres through the concept of an environmentally friendly school. Students have become familiar with and skilled in applying Clean and Healthy Living Behavior (PHBS), environmental conservation efforts, and organic farming. The skills acquired include waste bank management, maggot cultivation from organic waste, wastewater treatment, biopore hole creation, hydroponic cultivation of Family Medicinal Plants (TOGA), fish farming in buckets ("budidamber"), and public health. This year, the Simba Sehati program is being implemented at the village level under the Synergy of Ramba Field Towards a Clean and Healthy Keluang (Simba Kuat) program, with the village community as the beneficiaries. In its development, the Simba Kuat program involves environmental cadres actively transferring knowledge to community groups. The program aims to improve the health and environmental quality of Keluang Village and create opportunities for additional income for the residents.

Keywords: Simba Sehati, Simba Kuat, Knowledge Transfer, Waste Bank Management, Public Health, Organic Farming

1. Introduction

Keluang Village is located within the administrative area of Tunkal Ilir Subdistrict, Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra Province. This village covers a vast area of 1,379.27 hectares (BPS Banyuasin, 2021), nearly all used for agriculture and plantations owned by the residents. However, the areas designated for residential purposes, offices, and other facilities could be more extensive.

Most Keluang Village's population earns their livelihood as farmers, primarily cultivating rubber, oil palm, and various food crops such as vegetables and spices. Rubber plantations serve as the central economic pillar for the residents of Keluang Village. Most villagers meet their basic needs, such as food, clothing, housing, and education, through agriculture and plantation activities. In addition to rubber farming, some residents also engage in livestock farming as an alternative income source, although this is limited and remains traditional.

According to the 2019 Keluang Village Profile, 1,926 households in Keluang Village own their farmland, passed down through generations as a family inheritance. Conversely, 839 households do not own land, work as farm laborers, or engage in other non-agricultural businesses. Land ownership has driven the community to preserve their inherited skills, fostering a mindset that heavily relies on rubber as the backbone of their family economy. This reliance has led to a lack of motivation among the community members to acquire new

knowledge and skills outside of rubber cultivation, leaving little room for a transition to non-rubber sectors. However, the reality is that rubber productivity declines as the trees age.

The income from rubber plantations has gradually decreased due to declining rubber productivity and low raw material prices. This reduced income has forced some residents to sell their land, leading many into a poverty trap. As a result, over 1,600 households cannot meet their basic needs for a month, indicating that these households live below the poverty line.

In terms of health, most residents only experience mild illnesses that local health facilities can treat. However, the high poverty rate has increased the risk of stunting among children as families struggle to provide nutritious food for pregnant women and children. Additionally, awareness of the importance of clean and healthy living behaviors (PHBS) must be increased. According to the 2019 Social Mapping of Keluang Village, many houses in the village are uninhabitable due to the need for more basic sanitation facilities. Furthermore, household waste management is still very traditional, often involving burning waste, which pollutes the environment and can lead to respiratory infections among villagers.

In response to these conditions, PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field initiated a community development program aimed at improving the well-being of Keluang Village residents by raising awareness of the importance of PHBS, promoting the utilization of waste into high-value products, improving health, and advancing organic farming. This program is called "Sinergi Ramba Field Menuju Keluang Bersih dan Sehat" (Simba Kuat).

Before launching the Simba Kuat program, PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field piloted a smaller-scale program by implementing the eco-friendly school concept in one of the local schools. This program provides a framework for schools to enhance students' environmental awareness and character, ultimately shaping environmentally conscious individuals. This approach is expected to create a comfortable and conducive environment for daily activities in schools, communities, and families (Hermawan & Mahmudah, 2023). PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field adopted this concept in its "Sinergi Menuju Sekolah Sehat dan Madani" (Simba Sehati) program, where students were trained to become environmental cadres.

Simba Sehati program was launched in 2021, with SMP Negeri 2 Tunkal Ilir as its location. Students received training in various areas, including waste bank management, maggot cultivation from organic waste, wastewater treatment, biopore hole method, hydroponic cultivation of Family Medicinal Plants (TOGA), fish farming in buckets ("budidamber"), and health care training (young doctors). The goal is for the skills and knowledge acquired by the students through the Simba Sehati program to be shared with the broader community.

This year, PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field has initiated the first phase of Simba Kuat program, which involves forming groups and enhancing their capabilities through training. The capacity-building activities include training in waste bank management, stunting risk prevention, and village farming groups. As part of this capacity-building effort, the company has invited environmental cadres from the Simba Sehati program to participate in the knowledge transfer process, particularly regarding waste bank management and organic farming, which were previously practiced. This journal will explore these three activities as part of the effort to improve the well-being of Keluang Village residents in terms of health, economy, and environment.

2. Literature Review

One effective method for spreading environmental awareness and culture within the community is through knowledge transfer. Darr & Kurtzberg (2000), as cited in Ajith Kumar & Ganesh (2009), define knowledge transfer as an event where one entity learns from the experiences of another. This indicates that the effect of one unit on another is in terms of the learning experienced by the second unit. Organizational learning can be viewed as the goal of knowledge transfer.

Knowledge transfer is crucial in human resource development because it allows individuals within an industry or organization to develop themselves by enhancing their soft and hard skills to achieve predetermined objectives. Practices employed by industry or organizational actors in the process of knowledge transfer include conducting training sessions for members, organizing seminars and workshops,

and providing opportunities and scholarships for outstanding members to pursue further education, with the expectation that the knowledge gained can be applied to advance the industry or organization (Sudjiwanati, 2017).

3. Methodology

This phase marks the program's development based on the 2024 roadmap. "Developing the program" refers to the knowledge transfer process from Simba Sehati program to community groups, which aims to support the program's development towards its primary objective, Simba Kuat. These activities are planned in stages to ensure implementation aligns with the program's vision to improve Keluang Village residents' welfare.

The first stage involves conducting social mapping by a third party. This process is intended to understand the issues, needs, and potential of the local area and its community. The community actively provides input and considerations for the program's plans through focus group discussions (FGDs), which other stakeholders also attend. The outcomes of this planning are agreed upon collectively and documented in the Strategic Plan (Renstra) and Work Plan (Renja). Throughout the program's implementation, the community remains actively involved. Monitoring and evaluation are conducted every four months to ensure the sustainability of these programs. A third party also maintains objectivity by evaluating the Community Satisfaction Index (IKM) and the Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis.

The FGD is conducted to identify the issues currently faced by the residents of Keluang Village. The following are some of the problems that underpin the program:

- a. Environmental Issues: Problems related to waste pollution and inadequate waste management within the community.
- b. Health Issues: Residents need to be made aware of clean and healthy living practices, limited healthcare personnel and facilities in the village, and several cases of stunted growth among toddlers.
- c. Economic Issues: The underdeveloped village economy and low community welfare.

PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field has prepared several capacity-building activities for the Simba Kuat program based on these identified issues. The activities are as follows:

- a. Training on Village Waste Bank Management: Similar to the initiatives undertaken by SMP Negeri 2 Tungkal Ilir students, the village waste bank management training aims to encourage community initiatives in recycling activities within the village. In the future, the community group responsible for managing the Waste Bank will be the Kekar Gemilang Group. This group will be trained in household waste management, where the community manages waste without building infrastructure such as buildings or transport vehicles. Instead, the community collaborates with waste collectors to pick up the managed waste from the Waste Bank.
- b. The Waste Bank is chosen as an appropriate technology that the community can adopt as a tangible effort to improve the environment collaboratively at the grassroots level. This Waste Bank is used to raise community awareness that environmental conservation efforts can be achieved through collaboration between the Waste Bank and waste collectors. This approach ensures that the community can handle the need to build infrastructure for waste collection, as the managed waste can be directly absorbed by waste collectors based on mutual agreements regarding prices, locations for weighing waste, and collection times. After receiving waste collection training, the Kekar Gemilang Waste Bank group also provides training similar to what students in the Simba Sehati program received. For example, training in making eco-bricks (environmentally friendly bricks) using non-organic waste, maggot cultivation using organic waste, and processing maggots into fish feed for freshwater fish farming in buckets ("budidamber").
- c. Capacity Building for Stunting Risk Prevention: To prevent stunting in children, PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field has undertaken capacity-building activities for community groups, specifically Posyandu An-Nur. Additionally, the company has intervened to improve the primary provision of supplementary meals. This activity is the responsibility of the Posyandu An-Nur group under the supervision of the village midwife. Posyandu An-Nur was selected as the partner for this activity because they have been skilled in assisting with maternal and child health education in Keluang Village for the past ten years. The

capacity-building includes cooking training that can be used to develop the group's potential in providing healthy and nutritious food for toddlers in particular and the community in general.

- d. Capacity Building for Village Farmers: The capacity-building activities for village farmers aim to develop the local potential within Keluang Village. The Kekar Gemilang Farmers Group, located in Dusun VII, Keluang Village, has been farming and producing vegetables typically sold and purchased by village residents. The Kekar Gemilang Farmers Group has the potential to contribute to the program's implementation by providing vegetables and freshwater fish as part of efforts to meet the community's nutritional needs and food security. The Kekar Gemilang Farmers Group is provided with training in organic farming, which has been previously practiced by environmental cadres in the Simba Sehati program. This includes farming techniques such as hydroponics, cultivating medicinal plants (TOGA), and training in catfish farming using the biofloc system.
- e. Provision of Supporting Facilities and Infrastructure: PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field also provides facilities and infrastructure to support the program's implementation. These include anthropometry equipment, plastic waste shredders, and agricultural tools for the farmers' group.

4. Results and Discussion

PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field has adopted the eco-friendly school concept through the Simba Sehati program as a reference for developing the Simba Kuat initiative. In alignment with the concept, environmental cadres, composed of students, are being groomed to become agents of change within their communities, promoting environmental awareness and fostering a culture of environmental stewardship. These environmental cadres serve as models and mentors for the community, guiding them in creating a healthy, clean, beautiful, and comfortable environment. This process will facilitate knowledge transfer from these cadres to the broader community.

This knowledge transfer is not one-directional but flows from the community to the environmental cadres. For instance, the An-Nur Posyandu, responsible for stunting prevention activities, can share knowledge and experiences related to child health with school health cadres (young doctors), which they can then apply at school or home. Similarly, knowledge exchange regarding organic farming can occur between students and the Kekar Gemilang Farmers Group. While farmers can share their insights on rice and vegetable farming, students can introduce hydroponic farming techniques and the cultivation of medicinal plants (TOGA) to the farmers.

This knowledge transfer is crucial for PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field in implementing the Simba Kuat program. Through this exchange of knowledge, community skills are enhanced, and community involvement is also increased. Broad community participation is vital in supporting the achievement of the program's goals and improving its performance. The objectives of the Simba Kuat program include:

- a. Improving the quality of health, environment, and the village economy
- b. Shifting the community's education culture to a more participatory approach
- c. Enhancing community knowledge and skills
- d. Encouraging behavioral change toward environmental conservation
- e. Preventing potential environmental impacts in the village
- f. Serving as an educational platform for the younger generation on proper environmental maintenance and management
- g. Introducing and educating the community about empowerment activities in Keluang Village, as well as the products developed by the groups supported by PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field
- h. Enhancing the quality and innovation of program activities

Through the Simba Kuat program, PT Pertamina EP Ramba Field anticipates several outcomes, such as fostering environmental awareness among the community. Additionally, the company expects improvements in health and environmental quality in the village, with the community able to prevent diseases by adopting clean and healthy living practices (PHBS). Even when illnesses occur, the community should be capable of utilizing alternative treatments using TOGA cultivated locally. Another expected outcome is the ability of community groups involved in Simba Kuat (Kekar Gemilang Farmers Group, An-Nur Posyandu, and Kekar

Gemilang Waste Bank Group) to create alternative income streams from sectors they manage, such as organic vegetable farming, catfish farming using biofloc technology, TOGA cultivation, and the management of both organic and non-organic waste.

5. Conclusion

Implementing the Simba Kuat program in Keluang Village aims to enhance community welfare through education on Clean and Healthy Living Behavior (PHBS) and economic empowerment with an environmental approach. This program is an extension of the Simba Sehati initiative, which successfully established school environmental cadres and has now expanded to the village level. By applying the same concepts as Simba Sehati, Simba Kuat's first year focuses on improving the village community's health, environment, and economic conditions through waste management training, stunting prevention, and organic farming.

Simba Kuat leverages school-based environmental cadres to transfer knowledge to the broader community, particularly regarding environmental conservation and organic agriculture. This knowledge transfer aims to enhance the community's awareness and skills and encourages community participation and collaboration with stakeholders. This collaboration is expected to drive sustainable change and create alternative income sources for the village community.

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