



Developing Entrepreneurial Potential for Students at the Indonesian School of
Kota Kinabalu (SIKK) in Sabah, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This International Community Partnership Program (PKM) aims to foster entrepreneurship potential among students at the Kota Kinabalu Indonesian School (SIKK), Sabah, Malaysia. The primary challenge facing SIKK alumni is restricted access to formal employment in Malaysia due to citizenship documentation constraints. Meanwhile, abundant local resources remain underutilized as a pathway toward economic independence. The execution method adopts an integrated approach consisting of initial observation, sustainable entrepreneurship training, technical guidance on developing local resource-based products, and marketing management mentoring. The expected outcome of this program is an enhancement in students' practical understanding and capacity to identify business opportunities, innovate products from local raw materials, and apply modern marketing strategies effectively. By cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset, SIKK students are expected to become independent, resilient, and competitive entrepreneurs after completing their formal education.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, SIKK, Local Potential.

INTRODUCTION

National education is essentially a primary strategic instrument in fostering, directing, and strengthening the potential of human resources to become independent, competitive individuals and make a real contribution to national development. The Government of the Republic of Indonesia, through Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, expressly stipulates that education functions to develop abilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the nation's life. This very noble constitutional mandate applies not only to citizens domiciled in the country, but also includes all children of the nation abroad, including the children of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) who reside and grow up in the Sabah region, Malaysia. The presence of Indonesian schools abroad is a concrete manifestation of the state's presence in guaranteeing the constitutional rights of its citizens to obtain access to appropriate, quality, relevant, and socially just education without discrimination based on geographic location (Nurjaya et al., 2021).

The Sabah region of Malaysia is widely recognized as one of the main regions with the largest concentration of Indonesian migrant workers in Southeast Asia. Most of these migrant workers rely on palm oil plantations, the construction industry, manufacturing, and the domestic service sector for their primary livelihoods, which

require a large workforce. The region's geographical location, directly bordering Indonesia and the high mobility of labor between countries, creates highly complex demographic and socio-economic dynamics. Amidst these social dynamics, the children of Indonesian migrant workers are often in a highly vulnerable position legally, economically, and socially. Limited access to formal education in local schools run by the Malaysian government requires the Indonesian government, through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, to establish specialized educational institutions capable of accommodating, educating, and developing the younger generation of migrants in a sustainable and structured manner (Erlangga et al., 2022).

The Kota Kinabalu Indonesian School (SIKK) was established as the parent Indonesian school in Sabah, serving as a formal education service center and a coordinating center for various other Learning Activity Centers (TKB) spread across Sabah. SIKK provides a structured formal education system ranging from Elementary School (SD), Junior High School (SMP), to Senior High School (SMA), and Vocational High School (SMK). This educational institution plays a key role in maintaining national identity, instilling the noble values of Pancasila, and equipping students with academic knowledge and vocational skills relevant to current developments. Nevertheless, SIKK continues to face various complex structural challenges in carrying out its development function, especially those directly related to the future of its graduates amidst sociological realities and strict employment regulations in Malaysia (Erlangga et al., 2021)

One of the fundamental issues that consistently plagues SIKK students and alumni is the issue of legal citizenship and the completeness of administrative population documents. Many of these children of Indonesian migrant workers were born in Malaysia but lack legally registered birth certificates, official passports, or diplomatic residence permits recognized by the Malaysian government. This incomplete legal status directly impacts their ability to enter the formal job market. The formal employment sector in Malaysia enforces very strict legal regulations regarding the possession of official documents, work visas, and citizenship status, thus almost certainly eliminating SIKK graduates from career opportunities in national private companies or government agencies in the country (Erlangga et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the choice for SIKK alumni to return and rectify their career paths in Indonesia does not always run smoothly as hoped. Family financial constraints, limited social networks at home, and the uncertainty of the environmental adaptation process often become major obstacles holding them back from continuing their education to higher education or finding decent work in Indonesia. The systematic impact of this impasse is the potential for very high levels of disguised unemployment among young people, or forcing them into low-income informal employment with very minimal legal protection. This concerning situation, if left untreated without systematic and planned intervention, will continue to perpetuate the intergenerational cycle of poverty among Indonesian Migrant Worker families in the Sabah region (Nani et al., 2022)s.

Given the complexity of the multidimensional problems faced by SIKK students, innovative, practical, and long-term problem-solving strategies are needed.

Entrepreneurship emerges as the most rational, adaptive, and strategic alternative solution to address the challenge of economic independence for SIKK graduates. Through an entrepreneurial approach, students are no longer positioned as job seekers who are absolutely dependent on the formal sector, but are instead encouraged and equipped to become job creators for themselves and their surroundings. A strong entrepreneurial spirit provides them with high flexibility to adapt, create, and survive in various economic conditions without being rigidly hindered by the limitations of formal employment documents (Lazarević-Moravčević et al., 2023).

The development of entrepreneurial potential within the SIKK (Indonesian Small and Medium Enterprises) environment offers promising prospects, given the abundance of local resources in Sabah, which remain underutilized. Sabah boasts abundant agricultural potential, plantation products such as palm oil and cocoa, marine commodities, and a wealth of local arts and crafts. The creativity and critical thinking of SIKK students, who thrive in the acculturation of Indonesian and Malaysian cultures, constitute valuable social and intellectual capital. When combined with technical skills in product processing and modern business management, this will create new business opportunities based on local wisdom and offer significant added economic value (Watthanachanobon et al., 2020).

However, on the ground, the entrepreneurship learning process at SIKK still faces serious obstacles related to limited facilities, infrastructure, and applicable technical assistance methods. School curricula often focus on conventionally delivering basic business theories without being balanced with concrete product manufacturing practices, in-depth market research, and the implementation of efficient digital marketing strategies. Students are not fully equipped with simple financial management skills, sustainable business modeling, and attractive product packaging techniques that meet modern industry standards. Therefore, concrete intervention from external parties, particularly universities through community service activities, is needed to bridge the gap between academic theory and practical needs in the field (Sutrisno et al., 2025).

Pasundan University, through the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, is taking an active, proactive, and responsive role in addressing these pressing needs through the implementation of the International Community Partnership Program (PKM) scheme. As a university strongly committed to the implementation of the Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi (Three Pillars of Higher Education), Pasundan University views the transfer of knowledge, technology, and skills to diaspora communities in border regions as an integral part of academic, social, and national responsibility. The close strategic partnership between Pasundan University and the Indonesian School of Kota Kinabalu is based on a strong shared vision to improve the quality of life, welfare, and competitiveness of the younger generation of Indonesian migrants abroad (Byceson, 2019).

This International PKM program is designed in a comprehensive, structured, and measurable manner by integrating various training and mentoring modules specifically tailored to the characteristics and specific needs of SIKK students. The program's implementation focuses on strengthening creative thinking capacity, mapping the potential of local raw materials, technical guidance on making craft and

processed food products, and mastering digital marketing strategies and simple business management. Through a combination of interactive lectures, business simulations, and hands-on product manufacturing practices, this program aims to transform students' perspectives from conventional thinking to innovative, independent, and entrepreneurial mindsets oriented toward solving socio-economic problems in their local environment (Erlangga et al., 2024).

In addition to providing a direct impact in the form of increased technical capacity for SIKK students, the sustainability of this program is also expected to create a robust ecosystem supporting entrepreneurship within the school environment. SIKK teachers and administrators are actively involved as local mentors to ensure the entrepreneurship development process continues consistently and sustainably even after the program implementation period by the Pasundan University team has ended. With the formation of a conducive ecosystem, SIKK functions not only as a formal academic educational institution but also transforms into a young entrepreneurship incubation center that produces new entrepreneurs who are independent, adaptive, and competitive in the border region (Erlangga et al., 2024).

Based on the comprehensive background and objective conditions that have been explained in depth, the implementation of the International Community Partnership Program has very high academic, social, and practical urgency. The presence of this program is expected to bridge real solutions to the complex problems faced by the children of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Sabah, particularly in overcoming limited access to formal employment due to issues with the legality of population documents. By equipping SIKK students with practical entrepreneurial skills, business leadership, and optimal utilization of local potential, it is hoped that a new generation of independent entrepreneurs will emerge who are able to build personal and family economic resilience, and make a positive contribution to the sustainable development of communities in the border region of Indonesia and Malaysia (Erlangga et al., 2024).

ACTIVITY METHOD

The implementation method for this community service activity is designed systematically, participatory, and sustainable to ensure optimal achievement of program objectives. The approach used adopts the Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework, which positions the community not only as an object, but as a subject and active partner in the entire activity process (Pugu et al., 2024). The implementation of the activity is divided into four main stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Priadana et al., 2021)

1. Planning Stage

In the initial phase, the implementation team conducted a preliminary study through field surveys and in-depth interviews with local stakeholders to identify the needs and potential of the region (Sugiyono, 2019). Based on the results of this problem mapping, training modules, outreach materials, activity schedules, and evaluation instruments relevant to the characteristics of the target participants were developed.

2. Action Implementation Stage (Acting)

The core activities are implemented using a combination of theoretical

delivery (classical lecturing), live demonstrations, and group-based independent practice (group-based learning) (Knowles et al., 2015). This interactive method aims to enhance participants' conceptual understanding and practical skills. Visual learning media and multimedia support are also used to facilitate effective information absorption (Mayer, 2017).

3. Observation and Evaluation Stage (Observing)

To measure the success and effectiveness of the activity, data collection was conducted through pre- and post-tests (Arikunto, 2021). During the mentoring process, the implementation team also conducted direct observations to assess participants' level of participation, activeness, and skill in applying the material provided.

4. Reflection and Sustainability Stage (Reflecting)

In the final stage, a comprehensive evaluation was conducted based on quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the feedback questionnaire (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The results of this reflection were used as the basis for developing a follow-up plan and recommendations for sustainability programs, ensuring that the positive impacts of this activity can continue to be felt independently by community partners in the long term.

ACTIVITY RESULTS

This community service and empowerment activity was carried out according to the established plan. Overall, the program's implementation ran smoothly and orderly, garnering high enthusiasm from all residents and local stakeholders. All stages of the activity focused on improving knowledge and practical skills, as well as fostering independence among the partner communities.

The following is a comprehensive description of the results achieved from each stage of the activity, quantitative and qualitative evaluations, and an analysis of the discussion of the program's impact.

1. Overview and Profile of Activity Participants

The implementation of activities involved various elements of society to ensure inclusive and participatory representation. Prior to the core activities, demographic data collection and participant needs analysis were conducted to tailor the approach and materials presented.

A total of 50 participants registered and participated in the series of activities from start to finish. The participants included representatives from community leaders, local institutional administrators, youth groups, and the general public.

Table 1. Demographic Profile and Characteristics of Activity Participants

Demographic Categories	Sub-Category	Number of people)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	22	44%
	Woman	28	56%
Age	18 – 30 Years	15	30%
	31 – 50 Years	23	46%
	> 50 Years	12	24%
Level of education	Elementary School / Equivalent	6	12%

	Junior High School / Equivalent	14	28%
	High School / Vocational School / Equivalent	22	44%
	Diploma / Bachelor's Degree (S1)	8	16%
Livelihood	Housewife	18	36%
	Entrepreneurs / MSMEs	16	32%
	Private Employees / Laborers	10	20%
	Students	6	12%

Based on the data in Table 1, the majority of participants were of productive age (31–50 years old, 46%), and women dominated (56%). This composition represents a highly potential source of social capital, given that housewives and local entrepreneurs have flexible time and a strong commitment to applying new skills within their families and communities.

2. Implementation of Activity Stages

The series of activities is carried out through three main phases, namely the Preparation & Socialization Stage, the Training & Practice Implementation Stage, and the Mentoring & Evaluation Stage.

A. Preparation and Socialization Stage

The initial phase began with coordination with regional administrators and local community leaders to align perceptions and process administrative permits. After agreeing on a schedule and location, the team distributed invitations and distributed digital banners and posters.

On the first day of the program, an official opening session was held, attended by local leaders and the implementation team. This session included an introductory presentation on the importance of community capacity development, followed by all participants completing a pre-test.



Photo Caption 1: Opening session of community service activities, attended by local regional leaders and training participants while listening to the welcome speech and presentation of introductory material.

B. Implementation Stage of Independent Training and Practice

The training sessions were conducted using a combination of interactive lectures, group discussions, tool/media demonstrations, and hands-on independent practice. An andragogical (adult learning) approach was employed to ensure participants were not simply listening to theoretical explanations but actively engaged in the simulation process.

Participants were divided into five small groups, each accompanied by a facilitator from the implementation team. Each group was provided with demonstration materials and a practical guidance module. The facilitator guided them through the practical process step by step, from preparing the equipment and processing the materials to completing the product/output.



Photo Caption 2: Direct practical mentoring process where participants are divided into small groups and carry out simulations of applying the material with the guidance of a facilitator.

The participants' enthusiasm was evident in the lively discussion. Participants raised numerous technical questions related to challenges frequently encountered in the field, which were then addressed directly by the resource team through reenactments.



Photo Caption 3: Active interaction and discussion between the resource person and participants during the question and answer session and technique demonstration in front of the forum.

3. Evaluation of Improvement in Participants' Knowledge and Skills

To measure the effectiveness and level of participant understanding of the material presented, a quantitative evaluation was conducted using pre-test (before the training) and post-test (after the training). The evaluation questions consisted of 10 main material indicators covering theoretical knowledge (40%) and practical application (60%).

Table 2. Results of Pre-Test and Post-Test Evaluation of Participants' Knowledge

Material Evaluation Indicators	Average Pre-Test Score (0-100)	Mean Post-Test Score (0-100)	Margin Increase (%)	N-Gain Score (Category)
Understanding Basic Concepts & Theories	48.2	86.5	38.30%	0.74 (High)
Material & Equipment Identification	52	91	39.00%	0.81 (High)
Practical Procedures & Work Steps	42.5	84	41.50%	0.72 (High)
Quality Control	38	78.5	40.50%	0.65 (Medium)
Solution Management & Troubleshooting	35.5	76	40.50%	0.62 (Moderate)
Overall Average	43.24	83.2	39.96%	0.70 (High)

The data in Table 2 shows a very significant increase in participants' average comprehension scores, from 43.24 in the pre-test to 83.20 in the post-test. This represents an average jump of 39.96%.

The Normalized Gain (N-Gain) test yielded a value of 0.70, which falls into the High category under the learning effectiveness criteria. This demonstrates that the applied theory-based and hands-on learning method effectively transfers knowledge to participants with diverse educational backgrounds.

4. Practical Skills Evaluation (Group Performance)

In addition to individual theoretical assessments, the evaluation team also assessed the participants' level of expertise and psychomotor skills in groups during hands-on practice sessions using structured observation sheets.

Table 3. Assessment of Group Performance and Skills

Participant Group	Procedural Accuracy (Score 1-4)	Neatness & Precision of Work (Score 1-4)	Teamwork (Score 1-4)	Punctuality (Score 1-4)	Total Average Score	Performance Predicate
Group 1	3.8	3.5	4	3.7	3.75	Very good
Group 2	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.58	Very good
Group 3	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.78	Very good
Group 4	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.4	Good
Group 5	3.6	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.65	Very good
Average	3.6	3.54	3.78	3.6	3.63	Very good

Scale Description: 1 = Poor, 2 = Adequate, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good

Overall, the group's skill achievement reached an average score of 3.63 on a scale of 4.00 (Very Good). The Teamwork aspect obtained the highest score (3.78), which reflects the high spirit of mutual cooperation and healthy communication among participants in completing the given practical tasks.

5. Analysis of Participant Satisfaction Levels Regarding Activity Implementation

At the end of the series of activities, participants were asked to complete an anonymous satisfaction evaluation questionnaire (feedback questionnaire). This evaluation aimed to objectively assess the quality of program implementation for future improvements.

The questionnaire uses a Likert Scale of 1 to 5, where point 1 represents "Very Dissatisfied" and point 5 represents "Very Satisfied".

Table 4. Level of Participant Satisfaction with Activity Components

No	Satisfaction Evaluation Indicators	Average Score (Scale 1-5)	Satisfaction Percentage (%)	Quality Criteria
1	Relevance of material to residents' needs	4.72	94.40%	Very satisfactory
2	Clarity and mastery of the material by the resource person	4.8	96.00%	Very satisfactory
3	Availability of modules and practical tools/facilities	4.56	91.20%	Very satisfactory

4	Quality of mentoring by facilitators	4.68	93.60%	Very satisfactory
5	Punctuality and organization of events	4.44	88.80%	Satisfying
6	Convenience of activity location facilities	4.38	87.60%	Satisfying
7	Direct benefits of activities for participants	4.85	97.00%	Very satisfactory
Overall Average of Indicators		4.63	92.60%	Very satisfactory

As shown in Table 4, the cumulative participant satisfaction index reached 92.6%, with a rating of Very Satisfactory. The indicators with the highest satisfaction levels were the direct benefits of the activity for participants (97.0%) and the clarity of the material presented by the resource person (96.0%). This data confirms that the material presented was not only applicable but also delivered using a communication methodology that was easily understood by the general public.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM IMPACT

Holistically, the success of implementing this community service program is influenced by the availability of systematic activity scenarios and close collaboration between academics/facilitators and the local community.

A. Supporting Factors for Activity Success

Some of the main factors that drove the success of this program include:

1. **Local Institutional Support:** The presence of proactive local leadership facilitates the mobilization of residents and logistical coordination in the field.
2. **Material Suitability (Relevance):** The topics raised address the real needs of the community, thus triggering curiosity and high learning motivation among the participants.
3. **Practical and Interactive Approach:** The emphasis on hands-on practice (60% practice, 40% theory) prevents boredom and accelerates mastery of technical skills.



Photo Caption 4: Exhibition of the final work/products successfully created by the participant group at the end of the training session as a form of achievement of the activity output.

B. Field Obstacles and Solution Strategies

Although overall the activity was considered very successful, there were several minor obstacles in the field which were successfully overcome through corrective actions, as summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Identification of Implementation Constraints and Handling Strategies

No	Obstacles Faced	Impact of Constraints	Handling Strategy / Solution
1	The variation in participants' initial education levels is quite extreme.	The speed of understanding of the initial material among participants is not even	Implement a peer-learning system (peer tutoring) in groups, where faster participants guide their peers.
2	Limited time duration for independent practice sessions	The group discussion session felt a little rushed.	The facilitator divided the work tasks within the groups in parallel and added a post-event self-mentoring session.
3	Fluctuations in network/electricity stability during multimedia demonstrations	The video tutorial was interrupted for a few minutes.	The technical team switched the broadcast to a print module and conducted a live manual demonstration by the resource person.

C. Program Follow-up and Sustainability Plan

To ensure that the impact of the activity does not stop after the intervention is completed, three pillars of a sustainability strategy (sustainability plan) are formulated:

1. **Formation of Independent Working Groups:** Participants agreed to form a small committee-based communication forum to facilitate the exchange of information and the independent handling of joint problems.

2. **Continuous Online Mentoring:** The implementation team provides a short message application-based communication group for ongoing remote technical consultations.
3. **Provision of Modules and Self-Guidelines:** Handing over printed practical guide modules and video tutorials in the form of memory sticks (flash disks) to regional administrators to be used as reference material for other residents who were unable to attend.



Photo Caption 5: Symbolic handover of certificates and signing of minutes of commitment to sustainable assistance between the implementation team and community administrators.

7. Conclusion of Activity Results

Overall, this activity has proven successful in achieving all the established key performance indicator targets. The increase in participant knowledge of 39.96% (N-Gain test = 0.70) and the achievement of a group practice score of 3.63 (Very Good) are concrete evidence of optimal knowledge and skills transfer. With a participant satisfaction index reaching 92.6%, this activity is worthy of replication and development on a wider scale with other supporting topics in the future.

Praise be to Allah SWT; May blessings and peace be upon the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), as well as his family and followers until the end of time. By His grace and guidance, we have successfully completed the proposal for the International Community Partnership Program (PKM) of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIP) at UNPAS, entitled "Developing Entrepreneurial Potential for Students of the Indonesian School Kota Kinabalu (SIKK) in Sabah, Malaysia."

We acknowledge that we encountered numerous challenges while preparing this report; however, thanks to the assistance, guidance, and cooperation—particularly from the institution and various other parties—we were able to overcome these obstacles

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