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# Community Empowerment Through the Utilization of Family Medicinal Plants with the PKK Women's Group in Losari Kidul Village

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**Abstract**

Community empowerment through the cultivation of family medicinal plants (TOGA) is an effort to optimize the use of land and plant resources available within the community. This initiative was carried out in collaboration with the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) group of Losari Kidul Village, utilizing the land in front of the Village Hall for planting and plant management. The plants cultivated included Ghost pepper, tomatoes, galangal, watermelons, peperomia pellucida, aloe vera, and mung beans. The activity aimed to enhance community skills and foster a sense of responsibility regarding the use and care of plants that offer practical value in daily life. Implementation involved hands-on activities—such as land preparation, planting, layout arrangement, and plant maintenance—with active participation from the PKK members. Utilizing the land in front of the Village Hall was intended to create an environment that is greener, more productive, and beneficial to the community. The results indicate that the involvement of PKK members in plant management successfully boosted productive land use while fostering environmental awareness and a commitment to plant sustainability. It is hoped that this initiative will continue to be developed as a form of community empowerment that benefits the environment, health, and overall well-being of the people of Losari Kidul Village.

**Keywords:** Community empowerment, Family Medicinal Plants (TOGA), PKK women, Land utilization, Losari Kidul Village.

## Introduction

Family medicinal plants (TOGA) represent a resource that communities can utilize to support family health while simultaneously optimizing the use of available land. The presence of plants with practical value within the community can yield benefits if they are managed and maintained sustainably. Utilizing underused land offers an alternative for creating a greener and more productive environment. Research by Aryani et al. (2024) demonstrates that vacant land can be transformed into green spaces for medicinal plants through hands-on practice, thereby fostering a more productive environment and supporting sustainable health.

Community empowerment regarding the use of medicinal plants can also enhance residents' skills in cultivating and utilizing plants found in their local environment. Qamariah et al. (2022) explain that community empowerment through the cultivation of medicinal plants supports the use of family medicinal plant gardens (TOGA) while simultaneously boosting family health and economic benefits. Land utilization for cultivating these medicinal plants has been implemented as part of community empowerment activities in Tolutu Village. These activities demonstrate that using land for medicinal plants encourages the community to cultivate plants that are easily accessible and practically useful.

In addition to land utilization, direct community involvement is a crucial factor in the success of empowerment initiatives. Mujiburrahmad et al. (2023) demonstrated that the cultivation of medicinal plants (TOGA) involves stages such as land preparation, seedling propagation, planting, and maintenance, thereby equipping the community with skills in managing medicinal plants. Meanwhile, Simangunsong (2024) specifically highlighted that empowerment through medicinal plant cultivation can be implemented in collaboration with PKK Dasawisma groups, even on limited land. This underscores the significant role PKK groups can play in the management and utilization of medicinal plants within the community.

Previous research has extensively covered land utilization and community empowerment through family medicinal plant gardens (TOGA)—whether on vacant

lots, in home gardens, or through PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) groups. However, existing studies have not addressed empowerment initiatives that utilize the land in front of the Village Hall as a cultivation area involving the PKK women of Losari Kidul Village—specifically by combining crops such as chili peppers, tomatoes, galangal, watermelons, peperomia, aloe vera, and mung beans. This initiative introduces a novel approach by transforming a village public space into a productive area managed collaboratively with the community. Consequently, this activity aims to empower the PKK women of Losari Kidul Village by utilizing and managing the land in front of the Village Hall for the cultivation of various useful plants, while simultaneously fostering a greener, more productive village environment that benefits the community.

## Method

### 1. Tools and Materials

The tools used in the empowerment activities include hoes, shovels, gloves, buckets, watering cans, and water hoses, alongside other equipment required for preparing and tending to the plants. Large, discarded water jugs are repurposed as planting containers. The materials utilized include soil, fertilizer, water, and the crops themselves—specifically *cabai setan* (a type of hot chili), tomatoes, galangal, watermelons, *sirih cina* (peperomia), aloe vera, and mung beans. The activities take place on the grounds in front of the Losari Kidul Village Hall, involving members of the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) group in the planting and maintenance processes.

### 2. The Conduct of the Research

The activity took place on the grounds in front of the Losari Kidul Village Hall. The initial phase involved clearing and preparing the land designated for the planting area. Next, large, discarded mineral water jugs were repurposed as planting containers; they were cleaned and fitted with drainage holes at the bottom to prevent water stagnation. The containers were then filled with a growing medium consisting of a mixture of soil and fertilizer. Once the medium was ready, various crops—including chili peppers, tomatoes, galangal, watermelons, peperomia, aloe vera, and mung beans—were planted according to their specific requirements. The planting containers were then neatly arranged in the designated area in front of the Village Hall. Ongoing

care involved regular watering, weeding, growth monitoring, and other maintenance tailored to the plants' needs. Members of the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) group were directly involved in preparing the containers, planting, arranging the setup, and maintaining the plants. The initiative was evaluated based on the condition of the containers, plant growth, the level of PKK involvement, and the successful repurposing of the jugs, all of which contribute to a more productive and eco-friendly environment.

### 3. Data Analysis

Data obtained during the activity were analyzed descriptively based on observations of the community empowerment initiative's implementation. The analysis covered several aspects: the involvement of PKK members in the activities, the condition of the land before and after utilization, the use of used water jugs as planting containers, and the condition and growth of the planted vegetation. Observations recorded during the planting and maintenance phases were compared to assess changes resulting from the activity. PKK member involvement was evaluated based on their participation in preparing containers, filling them with growing media, planting, arranging the plants, and performing maintenance. Land conditions were assessed by observing the functional shift of the area in front of the Village Hall from an underutilized space into a more organized and productive planting area. The use of discarded water jugs was evaluated based on their repurposing as planting containers, thereby reducing waste. Plant growth was monitored periodically by observing physical characteristics—such as size increase, leaf count, and general condition—throughout the maintenance period. Finally, the observational findings were described to provide an overview of the implementation and benefits of this community empowerment activity, which focused on land and plant utilization in Losari Kidul Village.

## Results and Discussion

A community empowerment initiative utilizing medicinal plants was carried out on the land in front of the Losari Kidul Village Hall, involving members of the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) group. The land, which had previously been underutilized, was transformed into a more organized and productive planting area. The site was cultivated with a variety of plants, including chili pepper, tomatoes, galangal,

watermelons, peperomia, aloe vera, and mung beans, as shown in **Figure 1.**



**Figure 1. Land preparation and layout in front of the Losari Kidul Village Hall, involving KKN members and PKK women.**

Utilizing previously underutilized land for cultivation aligns with the research of Santoso et al. (2021), which demonstrates that managing medicinal plant gardens can serve as a form of community empowerment by harnessing the land's potential. Productive land use not only creates cultivation areas but also offers the community opportunities to participate directly in their management.

In addition to utilizing available land, this activity employs large, used mineral water jugs as planting containers. These used jugs are prepared by cleaning the container and creating drainage holes in the bottom; they are then filled with growing medium before being used to plant the prepared crops. This is illustrated in **Figure 2.**



**Figure 2. Use of used large water containers as planting vessels.**

In addition to land utilization, this activity creates added value by repurposing used water jugs as planting containers. Using simple containers offers a viable alternative for plant cultivation when available land is limited. This approach supports the cultivation of medicinal plants (TOGA), which can be carried out using various growing media and within community settings.

The activities were carried out directly in collaboration with the PKK women, covering every stage from preparing the land and planting containers to filling them with growing medium, planting, arranging the plants, and ongoing maintenance. This hands-on involvement ensured the initiative focused not only on the planting outcomes but also on utilizing locally available resources. Discarded water jugs were repurposed as planters, giving a new function to items that were otherwise considered waste. Meanwhile, the previously underutilized land in front of the Village Hall was transformed into an organized planting area that offers practical value to the community, as illustrated in **Figures 3 and 4.**



**Figure 3. Process of making plant identification signs for the medicinal plant (TOGA) plot in Losari Kidul Village.**



**Figure 4. Installation of TOGA plant nameplates.**

The involvement of community groups in medicinal plant cultivation has also been incorporated into various empowerment initiatives. Atmojo and Darumurti (2021), for instance, demonstrate that the development of medicinal plant gardens can engage the community—particularly members of the PKK (Family Welfare Movement)—enabling available land to be managed and utilized collectively. This is illustrated in **Figure 5.**



**Figure 5. Joint activity with the PKK women of Losari Kidul Village.**

The results of the activity indicate a change in the condition of the land following the landscaping and planting efforts. The area in front of the Village Hall has become greener and more productive, featuring a variety of plants arranged in planting containers. Plant maintenance is carried out regularly through watering, weeding, and monitoring plant health. The activity also provided the PKK women with hands-on

experience in utilizing land and repurposed materials for plant cultivation. Thus, this empowerment initiative not only created a planted area but also encouraged the utilization of resources that had previously been underused. This is illustrated in **Figure 6.**



**Figure 6. Documentation of the condition and diversity of medicinal plants (TOGA) in Losari Kidul Village.**

These results align with the findings of Aryani et al. (2024), which demonstrated that vacant land could be transformed into green spaces for medicinal plants (TOGA) through hands-on practice. That study showed that utilizing previously underproductive land could yield planting areas that benefit the community. While the initiative in Losari Kidul Village shares similarities regarding the utilization of underused land, it differs in terms of location and the type of planting containers employed; the Losari Kidul project utilized the area in front of the Village Hall and repurposed used mineral water jugs as planters, thereby adding value through the reuse of discarded items.

This activity also aligns with the findings of Qamariah et al. (2022), who explain that community empowerment through the cultivation of medicinal plants can enhance the utilization of such plants within the community. Furthermore, Mujiburrahmad et al. (2023) indicate that medicinal plant cultivation activities involve stages such as land preparation, planting, and plant maintenance. This corresponds to the activities carried out in Losari Kidul

Village, which involved land preparation, the use of planting containers, planting, arrangement, and direct maintenance in collaboration with the PKK women's group.

The land utilization in this initiative shares similarities with a community empowerment project in Tolutu Village, where household yards were used to cultivate medicinal plants for family use. However, the project in Losari Kidul Village differs in that it does not utilize private residential yards; instead, it employs a communal plot in front of the Village Hall, creating a shared planting area that is visible to all and maintained collectively. Meanwhile, research by Simangunsong (2024) demonstrates that PKK Dasawisma groups can actively participate in empowerment efforts by cultivating medicinal plants on limited land. This reinforces the idea that the involvement of PKK groups can play a crucial role in plant cultivation within the community.

Overall, the activities in Losari Kidul Village demonstrate that underutilized land can be transformed into a planting area through direct community involvement. Repurposing used water jugs as planting containers serves as an example of reusing discarded items. The combination of land utilization, the reuse of waste materials, and the participation of the PKK women's group adds significant value to this initiative. It is hoped that the project will be sustained through ongoing plant care, ensuring the area in front of the Village Hall remains well-maintained and productive, thereby continuing to benefit the community.

## Conclusion

A community empowerment initiative involving the utilization of plants and medicinal herbs (TOGA) was carried out in collaboration with the PKK women of Losari Kidul Village, utilizing the land in front of the Village Hall as a planting area. The project involved land preparation, the repurposing of large used mineral water jugs as planters, filling them with growing medium, planting, arranging the plants, and ongoing maintenance. The plants cultivated included chili peppers, tomatoes, galangal, watermelons, peperomia, aloe vera, and mung beans. Repurposing the used jugs gave new utility to items that would otherwise have gone unused, while utilizing the land in front of the Village Hall transformed the area into a more organized and productive space. The involvement of the PKK women at every stage was crucial in encouraging the use of resources available within the village environment. It is hoped that this

initiative will be sustained through routine plant care, ensuring the cultivated land remains well-maintained and continues to benefit the community of Losari Kidul Village.

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