

Strengthening Organizational Capacity of Women Farmers Group through POAC Training and Digital Documentation

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Abstract. This community service program aimed to strengthen the organizational capacity of the Women Farmers Group (KWT) Puspitasari in Sampangan, Semarang, Indonesia. The group faced challenges related to ineffective organizational management, weak internal communication, and the absence of strategic planning and digital documentation. The program implemented training and mentoring based on the POAC management cycle (planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling), combined with guidance on internal communication and basic digital archiving using accessible tools such as Google Drive and spreadsheets. The activity involved 23 participants and was conducted through interactive lectures, demonstrations, and group discussions. Program effectiveness was evaluated using a pretest–posttest design. The mean score increased from 64.35 to 83.04, indicating significant improvement ($t(22)=16.36$; $p<0.001$). The results demonstrate that targeted capacity building improves participants' knowledge and readiness in organizational planning, role distribution, meeting documentation, and evidence-based evaluation. This program contributes to strengthening women's community organizations and supports SDG 8 through more productive and sustainable urban farming activities.

Keywords: community service; organizational capacity; POAC; digital documentation; women farmers group

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INTRODUCTION

Women's community organizations play an essential role in strengthening local food systems, environmental sustainability, and household economic resilience. In many developing countries, including Indonesia, community-based agricultural groups serve as important platforms for promoting women's participation in local economic development and food production. One example of such organizations is the Women Farmers Group (Kelompok Wanita Tani/KWT), which functions as a grassroots institution that supports urban farming activities, food security initiatives, and community collaboration. These groups enable women to share knowledge, coordinate agricultural activities, and develop community-based economic initiatives. Particularly in urban areas where agricultural land is limited, urban farming initiatives managed by community organizations contribute significantly to food supply, environmental improvement, and social cohesion.

Urban agriculture has increasingly been recognized as a strategic approach to support

sustainable urban development. Community-based farming activities not only improve access to fresh food but also provide opportunities for local entrepreneurship and environmental education. Research shows that urban agriculture can strengthen local food systems while enhancing community participation and social networks (Artmann et al., 2019; Dixon et al., 2019). In addition, urban farming initiatives contribute to ecological sustainability through greener urban landscapes and improved environmental awareness among community members. However, the long-term sustainability of community-based agricultural initiatives depends not only on agricultural practices but also on the organizational capacity of the groups managing these activities.

Despite the significant potential of urban farming initiatives, many community organizations experience challenges in maintaining effective organizational management. Weak organizational structures, unclear division of roles, and limited documentation of activities often hinder the continuity of community-based programs. Organizational management is

therefore a crucial factor in ensuring that community initiatives remain productive, participatory, and sustainable over time. Effective organizational management enables community groups to plan activities systematically, coordinate member participation, and evaluate program outcomes. According to management theory, organizational effectiveness is strongly influenced by structured management processes that include planning, organizing, implementation, and monitoring of activities (Daft, 2016; Robbins & Coulter, 2021).

The Women Farmers Group (KWT) Puspitasari located in Sampangan Village, Gajahmungkur District, Semarang City, Indonesia represents one example of a community-based organization that actively engages in urban farming activities. The group has been involved in cultivating vegetables and other local agricultural products in limited urban spaces. However, preliminary observations and informal discussions with group members indicated several organizational challenges that affect the effectiveness of the group's activities. First, organizational management practices were still relatively informal, with limited strategic planning and unclear distribution of responsibilities among members. Second, internal communication within the group was not well structured, resulting in uneven participation and coordination difficulties during program implementation. Third, the organization lacked a systematic documentation system, including meeting minutes, attendance records, and activity reports, making it difficult to evaluate the progress and impact of the group's activities.

From the perspective of organizational theory, strengthening community organizations requires the development of structured management systems that enable groups to manage resources and activities effectively. One practical management framework widely used in organizational development is the POAC model, which consists of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. This framework emphasizes the importance of clear activity planning, effective allocation of responsibilities, coordinated implementation, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. The POAC management cycle provides a systematic approach that helps organizations improve their operational efficiency and accountability (Robbins & Judge, 2019). For community-based organizations such as KWT, the application of this framework can facilitate more structured program implementation and better

coordination among members.

In addition to structured management practices, effective communication is a fundamental element in strengthening community organizations. Communication serves as a mechanism for sharing information, coordinating activities, and building trust among members. Weak communication structures may lead to misunderstandings, low participation, and ineffective decision-making processes. Therefore, improving internal communication within community organizations is essential for strengthening collaboration and collective leadership among members.

Another important aspect of organizational strengthening in the contemporary era is the integration of digital documentation systems. Digital tools enable community organizations to document activities, manage organizational records, and monitor program implementation more effectively. Proper documentation of meetings, attendance, financial transactions, and activity outcomes helps organizations maintain transparency and institutional memory. Furthermore, digital documentation facilitates knowledge sharing and supports organizational learning processes. Studies have shown that the adoption of digital tools in community organizations can improve information management and strengthen organizational capacity (van Deursen & van Dijk, 2019).

Capacity development is widely recognized as a key strategy for strengthening community-based organizations. Capacity building initiatives aim to improve the knowledge, skills, and organizational systems that enable communities to manage development initiatives independently and sustainably (OECD, 2019). Community empowerment programs that emphasize participatory learning and collaborative engagement can help community members develop leadership skills, strengthen organizational structures, and improve decision-making processes. In the context of grassroots agricultural groups, capacity building programs often involve training, mentoring, and practical learning activities that enable members to enhance their organizational and managerial competencies.

Strengthening community organizations such as the Women Farmers Group also contributes to broader sustainable development agendas. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlight the importance of promoting inclusive economic growth, gender equality, and sustainable resource management. In particular,

SDG 8 emphasizes the need to promote productive activities and strengthen local economic initiatives. Urban farming activities managed by women's community groups can support these objectives by creating opportunities for household income generation while promoting environmentally sustainable practices (United Nations, 2015).

Considering the organizational challenges faced by KWT Puspitasari and the importance of strengthening community organizational capacity, a targeted community service program was designed to enhance the group's organizational management practices. The program focused on strengthening management capacity through training and mentoring activities based on the POAC management cycle. In addition, the program introduced strategies to improve internal communication and establish simple digital documentation systems using accessible digital tools.

Therefore, the objectives of this community service program were threefold. First, the program aimed to improve the knowledge and skills of KWT Puspitasari members in organizational management and strategic planning based on the POAC framework. Second, the program sought to strengthen internal communication and collective leadership practices to improve coordination and participation among group members. Third, the program aimed to develop simple digital documentation practices that support organizational transparency, activity monitoring, and evidence-based evaluation of community programs. Through these interventions, the program was expected to strengthen the organizational capacity of KWT Puspitasari and support the sustainability of its urban farming activities while contributing to community empowerment and local economic development.

METHODS

The community service program applied a needs-based capacity building approach aimed at strengthening the organizational management capacity of the Women Farmers Group (KWT) Puspitasari. The program combined training and mentoring activities designed to improve participants' knowledge and practical skills in organizational management, communication, and digital documentation. The intervention used a one-group pretest–posttest evaluation design to assess the effectiveness of the training program in improving participants' understanding of

organizational management practices.

The learning methods used during the training activities included interactive lectures, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical demonstrations. These methods were selected to ensure that the learning process was participatory and suitable for adult learners who already possessed practical experience in community-based activities. Interactive sessions allowed participants to share experiences related to organizational challenges, while demonstrations and practical exercises enabled participants to directly apply the knowledge introduced during the training.

The community service program was conducted on 20 July 2025 in Sampangan Village, Gajahmungkur District, Semarang City, Indonesia. The training activities were held at the residence of the head of the Women Farmers Group located at Jl. Mahoni No. 79, Perumnas Sampangan. This location was selected because it functions as the main meeting place for members of the organization.

A total of 23 members of the Women Farmers Group (KWT) Puspitasari participated in the program. Most participants were women aged over 40 years who had been actively involved in urban farming activities within the community. In addition, two male members assisted the group in operating electronic equipment during the training activities. Participants were selected using a total participation approach, meaning that all active members of the group were invited to participate in the training program.

The training materials were developed based on the organizational needs identified during preliminary observations and discussions with group members. The training content was structured according to the POAC management framework, which consists of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling.

The planning component introduced the basic concepts of organizational management and strategic planning. Participants were guided to understand the importance of setting clear objectives, developing annual work plans, and organizing simple financial management systems. This stage emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability in managing community-based programs.

The organizing component focused on improving the organizational structure and role distribution within the group. Participants discussed the importance of clearly defined responsibilities, effective teamwork, and

collaborative decision-making processes. This stage also addressed human resource management in community organizations by encouraging active participation and shared leadership among members.

The actuating component emphasized the importance of effective internal communication and coordination. Training sessions discussed communication strategies that could strengthen collaboration among members, including regular meetings, information sharing through messaging platforms, and participatory decision-making processes. Participants also practiced communication techniques that support collective leadership and inclusive participation.

The controlling component focused on monitoring and evaluating organizational activities. Participants were introduced to simple evaluation methods that allow community organizations to track progress and assess the effectiveness of their programs. This stage also emphasized the importance of documenting organizational activities as a basis for evaluation and future planning.

The program introduced digital documentation practices aimed at improving organizational transparency and information management. Participants learned how to create digital archives of attendance lists, meeting minutes, activity reports, and photo documentation using accessible tools such as Google Drive and spreadsheet applications. The training also introduced basic strategies for promoting group activities and products through social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Instagram.

The effectiveness of the program was evaluated using knowledge assessment tests conducted before and after the training activities. The pretest and posttest instruments measured participants' understanding of several key indicators, including organizational management concepts, the POAC management cycle, internal communication practices, and digital documentation procedures.

Program success was assessed based on two main indicators. The first indicator was the increase in participants' knowledge scores between the pretest and posttest assessments. The second indicator was participants' ability to demonstrate an understanding of organizational planning, role distribution, communication mechanisms, and documentation practices during group discussions and practical sessions.

Quantitative data obtained from the pretest and posttest assessments were analyzed using

descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations, to describe changes in participants' knowledge levels. In addition, paired-sample t-test analysis was conducted to determine whether the difference between pretest and posttest scores was statistically significant. The analysis was performed using statistical procedures to measure the effectiveness of the training intervention.

The implementation of this community service program was conducted with the consent and cooperation of the Women Farmers Group (KWT) Puspitasari. Participation in the training activities was voluntary, and all participants agreed to take part in the program and evaluation process. The data collected from the pretest and posttest assessments were used solely for program evaluation and reporting purposes, while maintaining the confidentiality of participant identities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Community Service Activities

The community service program aimed to strengthen the organizational capacity of the Women Farmers Group (KWT) Puspitasari through training and mentoring activities based on the POAC management framework and digital documentation practices. The implementation of the program involved several stages, including orientation, identification of organizational challenges, delivery of training materials, practical exercises, and evaluation activities. These stages were designed to ensure that the program objectives were achieved through participatory learning and direct engagement with community members.

The program began with an introductory session in which the facilitators explained the objectives and expected outcomes of the training activities. Participants were encouraged to share their experiences related to organizational management and challenges encountered in managing the activities of the Women Farmers Group. This initial discussion served as a needs assessment stage that helped identify the main organizational issues faced by the group. The results of this discussion confirmed several key challenges, including limited organizational planning, unclear role distribution among members, and the absence of systematic documentation of group activities.

Following the introductory discussion, the training sessions focused on strengthening participants' understanding of the POAC management cycle, which includes planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The planning stage emphasized the importance of establishing clear activity objectives and preparing realistic work plans for the organization. Participants were guided to develop simple activity plans that included schedules for urban farming activities, meeting arrangements, and group coordination mechanisms. This process helped participants understand the importance of structured planning in ensuring the sustainability of community-based programs.

The organizing stage focused on improving the internal structure of the organization by clarifying roles and responsibilities among members. Participants discussed how the distribution of tasks within the group could improve efficiency and prevent the concentration of responsibilities on a few individuals. Effective organizational structuring allows community groups to operate more systematically and encourages active participation among members (Robbins & Coulter, 2021). The training also emphasized the importance of collaborative leadership in community organizations, where decision-making processes involve collective participation rather than hierarchical authority.

The actuating stage addressed the importance of effective communication and coordination among group members. Communication is a crucial factor that influences the success of community-based initiatives because it facilitates information sharing and strengthens group cohesion. During this session, participants reflected on their current communication practices and identified several areas for improvement. For example, the group agreed to establish a more consistent communication mechanism through scheduled meetings and the use of messaging platforms to disseminate information about group activities.

The controlling stage focused on the importance of monitoring and evaluating organizational activities. Participants were introduced to simple evaluation methods that allow community organizations to assess the effectiveness of their programs. Monitoring mechanisms help organizations identify challenges and adjust their strategies in order to improve program implementation. Structured evaluation processes also contribute to organizational learning by enabling members to

reflect on their experiences and improve their practices over time.

The training activities were conducted in an interactive learning environment that encouraged participants to actively engage in discussions and practical exercises. Figure 1 illustrates the training session during which participants listened to the facilitators' explanation about organizational management and digital documentation practices.



Figure 1. Training session on organizational management and digital documentation for KWT Puspitasari members

The training session shown in Figure 1 demonstrates the participatory nature of the learning process, where participants gathered in a community meeting space and engaged in discussions about organizational management practices. The use of visual presentations and demonstrations helped participants better understand the concepts introduced during the training. Such participatory training approaches are considered effective in community development programs because they allow participants to actively construct knowledge through dialogue and shared experiences (Fullan, 2021).

The final stage of the activity involved group reflection and documentation of the training outcomes. Participants worked together to develop simple formats for documenting organizational activities, including attendance records, meeting minutes, and activity reports. These documentation practices were introduced to strengthen the organizational transparency and accountability of the Women Farmers Group. Digital documentation tools such as Google Drive and spreadsheet applications were also introduced to facilitate easier information management.

Figure 2 shows the group members and facilitators after the completion of the training activities.



Figure 2. Participants and facilitators of the organizational capacity training program

The photograph illustrates the collaborative nature of the program and highlights the active participation of members of the Women Farmers Group. The strong engagement observed during the training activities indicates that participants recognized the relevance of the program to their organizational needs. Community participation is widely recognized as a key factor in the success of capacity-building initiatives because it promotes ownership and sustainability of development programs (Potsikas et al., 2023).

The successful implementation of the training program indicates that the objectives of the community service activity were achieved. Participants demonstrated increased awareness of the importance of structured organizational management and expressed interest in applying the knowledge gained during the training to improve their organizational practices. The introduction of the POAC management framework provided participants with a practical guideline for organizing their activities more effectively.

Improvement of Participants’ Knowledge

One of the primary indicators used to measure the success of the training program was the improvement in participants’ knowledge related to organizational management and documentation practices. To evaluate the effectiveness of the training intervention, pretest and posttest assessments were conducted with all 23 participants.

The results of the knowledge assessment indicate a substantial improvement in participants’ understanding of organizational management concepts. The average pretest score was 64.35 (SD = 5.07), while the average posttest score increased

to 83.04 (SD = 6.35). This result demonstrates a significant increase in participants’ knowledge following the training program.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the pretest and posttest scores.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest Scores

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pretest	23	64.35	5.07
Posttest	23	83.04	6.35

To determine whether the improvement in scores was statistically significant, a paired-samples t-test was conducted. The results show a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores.

Table 2. Paired-Sample t-Test Results

Comparison	Mean Difference	t (df)	p-value	95% CI
Posttest – Pretest	18.70	16.36 (22)	<0.001	[16.33, 21.07]

The statistical results indicate that the training program significantly improved participants’ knowledge of organizational management and digital documentation practices. The correlation between the pretest and posttest scores was also found to be moderately positive ($r = 0.559$; $p = 0.006$), suggesting consistent improvement among participants.

The increase in knowledge observed in this program aligns with findings from previous studies on training-based capacity development. Training programs that combine theoretical explanations with practical exercises are known to enhance participants’ understanding and encourage the application of new knowledge in real-life contexts (Lee, 2023; Aznar-Martínez et al., 2025). Community-based training initiatives are particularly effective when participants are actively involved in problem-solving and collaborative learning activities.

The improvement in participants’ knowledge demonstrates that the training program successfully addressed the organizational challenges identified during the initial needs assessment. By strengthening participants’ understanding of management principles and

documentation practices, the program contributed to enhancing the organizational capacity of the Women Farmers Group.

Organizational Capacity Strengthening

Beyond the statistical improvement in knowledge scores, the training program also produced observable changes in participants' perceptions regarding organizational management and collective coordination. During the group discussions conducted after the training sessions, participants demonstrated a stronger understanding of how organizational management practices influence the sustainability of community-based activities. Several participants expressed that prior to the training program, organizational activities were largely carried out based on informal agreements and spontaneous coordination among members. While such practices allowed the group to function, they often resulted in inconsistent participation and unclear responsibilities.

The introduction of the POAC management framework helped participants recognize the importance of structured planning and systematic coordination. Participants began to understand that clear planning enables organizations to anticipate challenges and allocate resources effectively. Structured planning also helps ensure that community activities align with shared objectives and community needs. These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting that structured organizational planning improves the efficiency and sustainability of community initiatives (Fullan, 2021).

Another important outcome of the training program was the increased awareness among participants regarding the importance of role distribution within community organizations. Prior to the training, several organizational tasks were handled primarily by a small number of active members, particularly the group leader. This situation often created an imbalance in workload and reduced opportunities for other members to contribute actively. Through discussions and practical exercises conducted during the training sessions, participants explored alternative approaches to distributing responsibilities among members. As a result, participants agreed to adopt a more collaborative approach in which tasks such as documentation, coordination, and monitoring of activities could be shared among different members of the organization.

The improvement in collaborative leadership practices observed during the training sessions reflects the importance of participatory learning approaches in community empowerment programs. Participatory learning allows community members to reflect on their own experiences and identify practical solutions to organizational challenges. Such approaches are widely recognized as effective strategies for strengthening community-based organizations and promoting sustainable social change (Adamson & Skattebol, 2023).

Strengthening Communication and Collaboration

Another significant outcome of the program was the improvement in participants' awareness of effective communication practices within the organization. Communication plays a central role in maintaining the cohesion and effectiveness of community organizations. Weak communication mechanisms often lead to misunderstandings, reduced participation, and inefficient coordination of activities.

During the training sessions, participants discussed various communication challenges that had previously affected their organizational activities. For example, several members reported that information regarding meetings or group activities was sometimes shared informally and not all members received the same information. This situation occasionally resulted in uneven participation in group activities.

To address this issue, participants collectively agreed to implement a more structured communication system. One of the solutions proposed during the training was the establishment of a dedicated communication channel using a messaging platform that would serve as the official communication medium for the organization. In addition, participants agreed to conduct regular coordination meetings in order to discuss ongoing activities and future plans.

Improving communication practices is essential for strengthening the effectiveness of community-based organizations because communication facilitates collaboration and shared decision-making. Previous research has demonstrated that clear communication mechanisms contribute to higher levels of engagement and trust among group members (Keary et al., 2023). When community members feel that they are actively involved in organizational discussions, they are more likely to participate in collective activities and contribute to

the success of community initiatives.

Furthermore, the collaborative atmosphere observed during the training sessions indicates that participants were willing to adopt new organizational practices in order to improve the effectiveness of their group. The willingness of community members to engage in collaborative learning processes is an important indicator of the success of community empowerment initiatives.

Adoption of Digital Documentation Practices

One of the most innovative aspects of the training program was the introduction of digital documentation practices for managing organizational information. Prior to the training, most documentation within the Women Farmers Group was conducted informally and often relied on handwritten notes or personal records maintained by individual members. As a result, important information regarding organizational activities was not systematically archived.

The training program introduced simple digital tools that could be used to improve documentation practices. Participants learned how to store attendance records, meeting minutes, activity reports, and photo documentation using shared digital platforms. The use of digital documentation tools offers several advantages for community organizations. First, digital archives make it easier to track organizational activities over time. Second, digital records can be accessed by multiple members, which improves transparency and accountability. Third, digital documentation supports the promotion of community activities through online platforms.

The adoption of digital documentation practices reflects the increasing role of digital technology in supporting community development initiatives. Digital tools can significantly enhance the efficiency of organizational management by simplifying information storage and retrieval processes. Research has shown that the integration of digital technologies in community organizations can strengthen knowledge management and organizational learning processes (Lavanti et al., 2023).

Although some participants initially expressed concerns about their ability to use digital tools, the practical demonstrations conducted during the training sessions helped them gain confidence in using these technologies. Participants were encouraged to practice uploading documents and photographs to shared folders, which allowed them to experience the practical benefits of digital documentation.

Indicators of Program Success

The success of the community service program can be evaluated based on several indicators, including knowledge improvement, participant engagement, and changes in organizational practices. The statistical analysis of pretest and posttest scores indicates that the training program significantly improved participants' knowledge regarding organizational management and documentation practices. The average increase in knowledge scores demonstrates that the training intervention was effective in addressing the knowledge gaps identified during the initial needs assessment.

In addition to quantitative indicators, qualitative observations during the training sessions also suggest that the program contributed to strengthening participants' motivation and confidence in managing organizational activities. Participants actively participated in discussions, shared their experiences, and expressed interest in applying the concepts learned during the training.

These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that training-based capacity development programs can significantly improve participants' competencies and organizational practices. For example, research on professional development programs demonstrates that structured training interventions enhance participants' knowledge and encourage the application of new skills in real-world contexts (Siraj & Huang, 2024).

Challenges Encountered During Implementation

Despite the positive outcomes of the training program, several challenges were encountered during its implementation. One of the main challenges was the varying levels of digital literacy among participants. While some participants were already familiar with digital communication tools, others had limited experience using digital technologies.

Another challenge was related to time constraints. Since the training program was conducted within a limited time frame, it was not possible to provide extensive practice sessions for all participants. Some participants expressed the need for additional mentoring sessions to ensure that they could confidently apply the digital documentation practices introduced during the training.

These challenges highlight the importance of continuous mentoring and follow-up activities in community empowerment programs. Capacity-

building initiatives should not be viewed as one-time interventions but rather as ongoing processes that support gradual learning and adaptation among community members (Alamo & Llorent, 2024).

Opportunities for Future Development

The results of this program indicate several opportunities for further development of community-based organizational capacity. One potential area for future development is the integration of digital platforms for marketing urban farming products. By using social media and digital communication platforms, community organizations can expand their market reach and increase the economic value of their products.

Another opportunity lies in strengthening partnerships between community organizations and external stakeholders such as local government agencies, educational institutions, and community development organizations. Partnerships can provide additional resources, training opportunities, and technical support for community initiatives.

Furthermore, continuous training programs focusing on leadership development, financial management, and digital marketing could further enhance the sustainability of the Women Farmers Group. Similar training programs have been shown to strengthen leadership capacity and collaborative decision-making in community organizations (Vatou et al., 2024).

Overall, the findings of this community service program demonstrate that targeted training and mentoring activities can effectively strengthen the organizational capacity of grassroots community organizations. By improving management practices, communication mechanisms, and documentation systems, the Women Farmers Group is better equipped to sustain its urban farming initiatives and contribute to community empowerment and local economic development.

CONCLUSION

The community service program conducted with the Women Farmers Group (Kelompok Wanita Tani/KWT) Puspitasari successfully strengthened participants' knowledge and awareness regarding organizational management, internal communication, and digital documentation practices. The significant improvement in participants' knowledge scores between the pretest and posttest (64.35 to 83.04; $t(22)=16.36$; $p<0.001$) demonstrates the

effectiveness of the training and mentoring activities implemented through the POAC management framework. Practically, the program enabled participants to better understand how to formulate structured work plans, distribute organizational roles more clearly, establish effective communication norms among members, and maintain systematic documentation of organizational activities as a basis for evaluation and partnership development. The program's main strength lies in its participatory training approach that integrates managerial concepts with practical exercises tailored to the needs of a grassroots community organization. However, the relatively short duration of the training and the varying levels of digital literacy among participants represent limitations that may influence the speed of long-term implementation. Therefore, continuous mentoring and follow-up capacity-building activities are recommended to ensure that improvements in knowledge are translated into sustained behavioral and organizational changes. Future programs may also expand the use of digital tools for organizational management, marketing of urban farming products, and collaboration with external stakeholders to enhance the sustainability and economic impact of community-based agricultural initiatives.

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