



## ASSISTANCE IN IMPROVING LITERACY AND HALAL CERTIFICATION FOR MSMEs IN KALISALAK VILLAGE

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### ABSTRAK

Desa Kalisalak merupakan salah satu desa di Kabupaten Batang, kenaikan jumlah pelaku UMKM di desa tersebut belum dibarengi dengan upaya yang maksimal dalam peningkatan kualitas dari produk UMKM itu sendiri seperti masih rendah pengurusan izin usaha baik NIB, PIRT, HAKI dan sertifikasi halal oleh para pelaku UMKM. Permasalahan yang dihadapi oleh pelaku UMKM di Desa Kalisalak mengakibatkan kurangnya daya saing dari produk-produk UMKM yang ada, sehingga menyebabkan penjualan yang belum optimal. Pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk menyelesaikan permasalahan yang dialami oleh mitra, yaitu dengan melalui edukasi dan sosialisasi mengenai legalitas usaha, sertifikasi halal pada produk UMKM, serta pendampingan pengurusan sertifikasi halal pada produk-produk yang dimiliki oleh UMKM tersebut. Pengabdian ini membantu terwujudnya Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) terutama nomor 8 yaitu pertumbuhan ekonomi desa merata. Metode Focus Group Discussion (FGD) digunakan untuk mengedukasi penduduk desa tentang cara mendapatkan legalitas usaha dan sertifikasi halal, termasuk persyaratannya. UMKM mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang pentingnya produk halal dan legalitas bisnis melalui pelatihan dan pendampingan UMKM. Secara kuantitatif, tiga UMKM tercatat berencana untuk memulai proses pengelolaan NIB, dan satu orang lain menunjukkan minat serius untuk mengajukan sertifikasi halal.

### ABSTRACT

Kalisalak Village is one of the villages in Batang Regency, the increase in the number of MSME actors in the village has not been accompanied by maximum efforts in improving the quality of MSME products themselves such as low business license management of both NIB, PIRT, HAKI and halal certification by MSME actors. The problems faced by MSME actors in Kalisalak Village result in a lack of competitiveness from existing MSME products, resulting in suboptimal sales. This community service aims to solve the problems experienced by partners, namely through education and socialization about business legality, halal certification on MSME products, and assistance in managing halal certification on products owned by MSMEs. This service helps the realization of the Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs), especially number 8, namely equitable village economic growth. The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method was used to educate villagers on how to obtain business legality and halal certification, including the requirements. MSMEs gained a deeper understanding of the importance of halal products and business legality through MSME training and mentoring. Quantitatively, three MSMEs are planning to start the NIB management process, and one other person has shown serious interest in applying for halal certification.

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## INTRODUCTION

Kalisalak Village is located in Batang District, Batang Regency, Central Java Province. Kalisalak Village has an area of 2.24 km<sup>2</sup> which is inhabited by 3277 residents with a density of 1460 people/km<sup>2</sup>. Geographically, this village borders Warungasem District and several other villages that surround it. Kalisalak Village is divided into 4 villages, 19 Neighbourhoods and 4 Hamlets. The potential of Kalisalak Village focuses on the plantation and agricultural sectors, including the cultivation of grapefruit, rambutan, durian, cassava, sengon forest and rice commodities. These economic activities tend to also be carried out in most villages in the Batang District, Batang Regency, Central Java Province. On the other hand, as an effort to recover the economy after the Covid-19 pandemic, the Kalisalak Village Government innovated through the establishment of culinary tourism destinations in the village.

The Kalisalak Environmental Friends Shopping Center (Pujasalika), which was later known as Pujasalika, began to become one of the growing economic parts in Kalisalak Village. Pujasalika which was established and managed by the community is a form of implementation of Government Regulation Number 38 of 2017 concerning Regional Innovation. Pujasalika carries the theme of culinary tourism by providing a variety of culinary, basic necessities, and creative goods through dozens of tenants/shop stands. As a forum for the local economy, Pujasalika is held every Sunday and is open to tourists in the Batang District, Batang Regency. The various foods marketed in Pujasalika are processed products or products of various MSMEs in Kalisalak village. MSME actors in Kalisalak Village, Batang Regency continue to increase in quantity every

year and spread throughout Kalisalak Village. However, the quantity or number of MSME actors does not seem to be accompanied by maximum efforts in improving the quality of MSME products themselves.



Figure 1. Kalisalak Village Hall

According to the 2023 Batang Regency Micro and Small Industry Profile data published by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), overall 24,079 out of 27,405 businesses do not have certificates. There are 61 types of certificates certified by Indonesian National Standards and 3,265 MUI/BPOM/PIRT Halal Certificates. One aspect of licensing that is still very low in Kalisalak Village MSME products is halal certification licensing. The fulfillment of halal certification permits for MSME products in Kalisalak Village occupies the lowest position among the fulfillment of other aspects of business legality (Rahman et al., 2022). Where only 0.1% of MSE products have been certified halal. This means that there are still 99% of MSME products that have not been halal certified. This number indicates the extreme urgency of the problem in partner regions. The lack of legality and certification results in low competitiveness of MSME products, which ultimately hinders sales optimization on local platforms such as Pujasalika and digital markets. Meanwhile, previous studies have generally focused solely on halal certification, without

deeply integrating the strengthening of basic legality (NIB) as a key prerequisite. Therefore, this research aims to address this issue through an integrated and participatory mentoring approach.

In fact, the fulfillment of halal certification for MSME products is very important and is needed to improve the brand image and marketability of these MSME products. Considering that the halal lifestyle has now become a trend among the public, especially Muslims, they are more wary of consuming products without halal certification/including non-halal categories. HAS 23000 is a halal certification standard set by the Institute for the Assessment of Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics of the Indonesian Ulema Council (LPPOM MUI) to ensure the halalness of a product (Putro et al., 2022). This document outlines the criteria for the Halal Assurance System (SJH) along with other requirements that include policies and procedures related to halal certification. HAS 23000 includes 11 SJH criteria, namely: (1) halal policy, (2) halal management team, (3) training, (4) materials, (5) products, (6) production facilities, (7) written procedures for critical activities, (8) traceability, (9) handling of products that not included in the criteria, (10) internal audit, (11) management review.

All of these criteria are absolute requirements that must be met by companies seeking to obtain halal certification for their products. The fulfillment of this criterion significantly improves the quality and quality of the product, while strengthening the integrity of the business unit in the eyes of consumers. So based on this background, which is the basis for the service team to carry out this service activity in an effort to help increase literacy and marketability in MSME

products in Kalisalak Village, Batang Regency. Although many assistance programs focus on halal certification (Self-Declare or Regular schemes), this program integrates a comprehensive two-stage approach: 1) Strengthening basic legality (NIB) through the OSS system, which is an absolute prerequisite, and 2) FGD for internalization of the Halal Assurance System (SJH) based on 11 HAS 23000 criteria.

## **METHOD**

The implementation of community service activities in Kalisalak Village is carried out by the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a qualitative research technique in which a small group of participants (generally 6-12 people) with similar backgrounds or experiences are involved in a guided discussion (Wiratama et al., 2024). The FGD aims to explore in depth the information, views, opinions, attitudes, and experiences of participants through a dynamic discussion process. The use of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in community service programs to assist in improving legal literacy and halal certification in MSMEs in Kalisalak Village is a very relevant and effective approach. The FGD not only allows for the collection of rich and in-depth data on the needs and challenges of MSMEs, but also facilitates participatory learning processes, information exchange, and sustainable solution development. The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method used in community service to assist in increasing legal awareness and halal certification of MSMEs in Kalisalak Village is an effective and relevant approach. In addition to producing in-depth data on the obstacles and needs of MSMEs, the FGD is also a means of interactive education, open discussions, and the development of sustainable solutions. This activity uses training

methods and questions and answers with community service participants. The implementation of community service activities was held at the Kalisalak Village Hall. The following are the stages of implementing community service activities in Kalisalak Village :

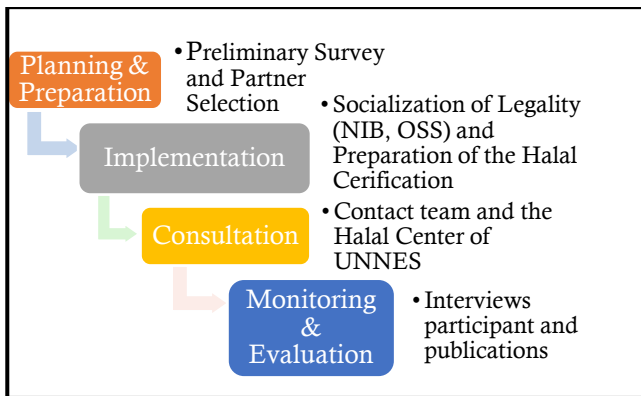


Figure 2. Community Service Flow Chart

### 1. Planning and Preparation of Community Service Activities

Conducting an initial survey in coordination with the Head of Kalisalak Village and representatives of MSMEs in Kalisalak Village. The goal is to identify the extent of MSMEs' understanding of business legality and halal certification. Exploring the obstacles they most often face in taking care of legality and halal certification, such as lack of information, costs, or complicated procedures. Identify the dominant types of MSME products in the village, as this will affect the relevance of certification needs. Based on the results of the needs analysis, the drafting team developed a comprehensive and easy-to-understand training module. Then, form a team consisting of lecturers, students, or practitioners who have expertise in the fields of business law, administration, and halal food. Distribute the duties and responsibilities of each team member, such

as coordinators, facilitators of business legality materials and halal materials, minutes, and logistics teams. Prepare a budget for the activities needed, a convenient location for activities and provide activity completion.

### 2. Implementation of Community Service Activities

The official opening ceremony was attended with remarks from representatives of the service team and the village. Re-explain the purpose, benefits, and expectations of the activity. The legality material presented includes the importance of business legality, types of permits such as NIB, individual companies, and brand certificates, online management requirements and procedures, for example through the OSS and AHU websites, and their benefits for business development. Furthermore, the delivery of Halal Certification material includes the urgency of halal certification, especially the basic principles of halal, cost, duration of issuance of halal certificates, mandatory halal product categories, the process of applying for certification through SIHALAL and examples of necessary documents. After the delivery of the material, it was continued by assisting MSMEs face-to-face in the process of registering NIB, legal entities and halal certification online.

### 3. Consultation of Community Service Activity Participants

In the consultation session, the team provided an opportunity for MSMEs to



consult personally about their specific cases or obstacles (Pramesti & Mawardi, 2024). The team will provide direction and solutions tailored to the needs of each MSME. MSME actors who find obstacles in the process of applying for business legality and halal certification after the implementation of this activity can contact the Halal Center of Universitas Negeri Semarang for further consultation.



Figure 3. Socialization of Business Legality and Halal Certification

#### 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The evaluation was conducted through interviews with participants at the end of the activity. Then the preparation of the final report of service in the form of activity reports and publications both in the mass media and nationally reputable journals.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

MSMEs in Kalisalak Village mostly use local natural products such as agriculture, plantations, livestock, culinary, and other natural products to make their products. However, they often struggle in marketing, including product innovation and business legality. On the other hand, Kalisalak Village MSMEs are a group of young women who are tech-literate and eager to find opportunities to increase family income. For them, halal certification is a great opportunity to develop products and market them digitally, for example through online platforms. This halal label will be an added value in the digital marketing strategy so that it has the potential to attract more buyers, especially from those who prioritize halal products. Given the importance of business legality and halal certification, the material presented by the speakers explained the following points :

#### 1. Improving Understanding of Business Legality

Mentoring activities begin with training and practice that focuses on business legality. The material presented includes important aspects that must be met by business actors in order for their business to be legitimate and in accordance with applicable legal regulations. The material on business legality is submitted at the beginning before the halal certification material because business legality is a required document that must be met. Registration of a Business Identification Number (NIB) is easier because it can be done online through the Online Single Submission (OSS) system. This integrated platform was deliberately created by the Indonesian government to simplify business licensing, so business people no longer need to take care of various agencies. At the time of NIB registration, MSME actors can choose the type of business actor for individuals and business entities (Putri et al., 2023). The process of forming a legal entity, which can include a PT, CV, or cooperative, begins with the submission of the name of the legal entity and the simultaneous execution of the deed of incorporation in

collaboration with a notary (Erni & Silviani, 2022). Legal entities can also be registered online for a legal entity of PT Perorangan through the website, without a notary deed and a minimum capital with a fee of IDR 50,000 (PNBP) through the <https://ahu.go.id/> website (Arum, 2023).

After completing the deed of incorporation, the applicant can use the OSS system for the purpose of uploading the required documents and entering the necessary information. All submitted data undergoes a rigorous digital verification process, and if all the set conditions are met, the NIB will be created automatically. The NIB serves as the primary identifier and basic authorization requirement for conducting business activities. With the issuance of NIB, entities are allowed to obtain additional permits including, but not limited to, product dealer licenses, halal certifications, and environmental permits through an integrated system (Pramesti & Mawardi, 2024). This accelerated and efficient interaction with the OSS system greatly accelerates the formalization of business operations, encourages the transition of many SMEs to the formal sector, and as a consequence, contributes positively to the progress of the national economy.

## **2. Implementation of Halal Certification Submission**

Furthermore, the resource person explained the requirements for applying for a halal certificate and simulated the application process through the <http://ptsp.halal.go.id> website. Business actors are required to ensure the readiness to submit requirements on the

Halal Assurance System (SJH) in their business which includes the entire raw materials, production processes, facilities, and final products. Halal certification registration in Indonesia, which is regulated by the Halal Product Assurance Agency (BPJPH), has two main schemes are Self-Declare and Regular (Faranita Ratih Listiasari et al., 2024). Both aim to obtain a halal certificate, but have significant differences in the process, requirements, and type of business that can apply for it. Products that can be submitted through the self-declare route are those that are not at high risk of halal and use ingredients that have been confirmed to be halal, for example: simple processed food or beverage products, herbal products without animal ingredients, or products with a simple and easily verified production process (Laila & Alim, 2024). Meanwhile, regular scheme products with high risk or use animal-processed ingredients (for example, chicken, beef, or their derivatives), as well as products with more complicated processes. It also applies to the service sector, such as slaughterhouses, restaurants, catering, slaughter services, and logistics services. There is no limit to the number of types of products/menus. Furthermore, registration is carried out through the online Halal PTSP portal, where business actors must provide detailed company information, product or service specifications, and upload the necessary documentation, which must include business legality, a complete list of materials used, a production process flow diagram, and proof of SJH implementation.

After the documents are submitted, BPJPH is in charge of verifying the completeness of the material provided. If the documentation is considered complete, the next stage involves an inspection or audit conducted by the appointed Halal Inspection Agency (LPH). A group of auditors from LPH will visit the production site to ensure alignment between the submitted documentation and actual practices, ensuring that there is no contamination from non-halal materials and that all procedures comply with halal standards. The findings of this audit will then be submitted to the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) for deliberation on the fatwa. MUI will evaluate the results of the audit and make a decision on the halal status of the product. If the product meets the criteria, the MUI will issue a halal decision in accordance with the halal regulations set by the MUI, BPJPH will issue a Halal Certificate. These certificates are marked by a specified validity period, usually four years, which requires renewal before the expiration of their validity. The possession of a halal certificate increases the credibility of a product or service among Muslim consumers and facilitates the expansion of its market share, both domestically and internationally. This certification process not only fulfills religious obligations but also serves as a substantial competitive advantage for business actors.



Figure 4. Kalisalak Village Community Service Participants

The mentoring program that focuses on increasing the understanding of business legality and halal certification in Kalisalak Village has an impact on the understanding and awareness of MSME actors on the importance of aspects of business legality and halal certification. Prior to the mentoring program, most MSMEs in Kalisalak Village had minimal knowledge of business licensing procedures (NIB) and requirements to obtain halal certification. many MSMEs in Kalisalak do not know much about how to take care of business licenses (NIB) or halal certification requirements. In fact, some of them don't realize that their products actually need special permits and certifications in order to expand and reach a wider market. After a series of activities such as socialization, training, and technical guidance, there has been a clear improvement on several important points:

1. **Improving Understanding of Business Legality**

MSME actors understand the importance of Business Identification Numbers (NIB) and how to take care of them. This is evident from their enthusiasm when asking questions and discussing how to apply for NIB through

the OSS (Online Single Submission) system. The existence of business legality for MSMEs can provide legal protection for business actors and their products, which in turn increases the confidence of business actors. This contributes to sustainable business development, better competitiveness in the market, and increased consumer confidence (Farida et al., 2023).

## **2. Increasing Awareness of Halal Certification**

The participation of MSMEs in this mentoring program has shown a significant increase in their awareness of the urgency of halal certification for food and beverage products. MSME actors now understand that halal certification not only functions as a fulfillment of sharia obligations, but also as a provider of competitive added value for their products in the eyes of consumers, especially in the broad Muslim market segment.

## **3. Interest and Submission Efforts**

This mentoring program has yielded concrete results in encouraging legality and halal certification among MSMEs. It was recorded that three of the 15 MSME actors who were accompanied intend to start the process of managing the Business Identification Number (NIB). In addition, one other MSME person showed serious interest in applying for halal certification in the near future. Before the program, the majority of MSMEs in Kalisalak Village had limited understanding of business licensing procedures (NIB) and halal certification requirements. In fact, some were unaware

that their products required special permits and certification for market expansion. Internal Document Preparation MSMEs need an NIB to obtain halal certification. Only one MSME participating in the program that had an NIB was ready for halal certification. This interest is evident from their active participation in the simulation sessions of filling out forms and preparing the necessary documents.

## **4. Mindset Change**

Qualitatively, there has been a significant change mindset among MSME actors, from an orientation of just selling to a more professional approach in running a business (Salsabila et al., 2024). In this context, the legality and halal assurance aspects of products have been fundamentally integrated into their business development strategy.

## **CONCLUSION**

The mentoring program that focuses on increasing legal literacy and halal certification among MSMEs in Kalisalak Village has shown significant and positive results. Prior to this initiative, the majority of MSMEs had a limited understanding of business licensing procedures (Business Identification Number/NIB) and halal certification requirements. In fact, some MSME actors have not realized the importance of legality and special certification to develop their businesses. After a series of socialization, training, and technical guidance, there has been a real increase in understanding and awareness among MSME actors. Quantitatively, three MSMEs were recorded as intending to start the NIB management process, and one other person showed serious



interest in applying for halal certification, as evidenced by their active participation in the simulation and preparation of documents. From a qualitative perspective, this program has succeeded in encouraging the transformation of the mindset of MSMEs from just selling to a more professional entrepreneurial approach. The aspects of business legality and product halal assurance have now been integrated as an essential part of their business development strategy. This emphasizes that mentoring not only increases knowledge, but also changes the mentality of MSMEs towards sustainability and stronger competitiveness in the market. Based on these successes, it is recommended to continue technical assistance to overcome potential obstacles during the legality and certification application process. In addition, similar programs can be replicated in other villages with similar characteristics of MSMEs, adjusting the scale of the program to the needs and resources available. In order to expand market reach, further assistance in marketing digitalization, including through e-commerce and social media, is also highly recommended.

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