

## Empowering the Potential of Local SMEs Based on the SDGs in Pagelaran Village

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### Volume

7

### Issue

1

### Edition

May

### Page

282-288

### Year

2026

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### Article History

Submission: 08-05-2026

Review: 10-05-2026

Accepted: 23-05-2026

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### Keyword

MSMEs Empowerment;

SDGs;

Digitalization;

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### How to cite

Fahriski, D. W., Imtinan, A. S., Winarno, A., & Hermawan, A. (2026). Empowering the Potential of Local SMEs Based on the SDGs in Pagelaran Village. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, Volume 7(1), 282-288  
<https://doi.org/10.32815/jpm.v7i1.2988>

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** This community empowerment program in Pagelaran Village aims to empower local SMEs, thereby boosting the local economy through the implementation of digitalization in SDGs entrepreneurship to address the challenges of digital economic competition.

**Method:** This program is implemented in five phases: identification, analysis, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

**Practical Applications:** This initiative enhances the image of local SMEs in Pagelaran Village through professional product design and packaging, while marketing capabilities are strengthened through engaging social media content.

**Conclusion:** Community service aimed at empowering local SMEs in Pagelaran Village can strengthen their capacity and competitiveness, thereby having a positive impact on the local economy.



## Introduction

The program of activities for the practical component of the Managerial Insight Development course represents a tangible contribution by students to community empowerment by directly identifying and addressing the challenges faced by local communities. This program is one way in which graduate students from the Faculty of Economics and Business at Malang State University participate in boosting the local economy. Through this activity, students are expected to share the knowledge and experience gained during their studies to support village empowerment and drive regional economic development. At the higher education level, strengthening the managerial capacity of SMEs can be achieved through an experiential learning approach. This approach allows students to engage directly in real world situations, enabling them to understand issues more comprehensively (Kolb, 1984).

In line with the SDGs Goal 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, which highlights a close connection to SMEs by emphasizing the importance of collaboration in driving business growth and sustainability. SMEs cannot develop optimally without support from various parties, such as local governments, academics, and the private sector. Thus, synergy among these parties within the framework of SDGs Goal 8 is key to strengthening the role of SMEs as drivers of the economy and creators of jobs.

Villages play a vital role as centers of economic activity, sources of natural resources, and guardians of local culture. Under Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages, a village is a community legal entity that possesses the rights and authority to manage its own interests based on local traditions and customs. Therefore, efforts to develop the potential of villages are a strategic step toward achieving regional economic self-reliance and contributing to the goals of sustainable development.

Therefore, the primary target of this management program is SMEs operators. MSMEs play a strategic role in driving economic growth and creating jobs. Furthermore, many SMEs still operate under conventional business models and have not yet been able to adapt optimally to changes in the business environment. This results in low business resilience the ability to adapt to economic, social, and environmental dynamics (Howard et al., 2022). However, SMEs continue to face significant challenges, particularly in the areas of product innovation and digitalization. These challenges are also faced by several SMEs such as Soy Milk, Banana Chips, and Rujak Seasoning, located in the village of Pagelaran, Malang Regency. These businesses face obstacles such as a lack of adequate marketing tools, immature marketing strategies, and product innovations they wish to develop. A study conducted by Wahyani et al. (2021) found that for some SME operators in Malang Regency, particularly older entrepreneurs, selling online is not as easy as they had imagined.

By leveraging communication activities aimed at marketing products on social media, a business or enterprise can enhance its marketing efforts such as creating its own brand profile, introducing the quality of its services and available facilities to consumers online, disseminate information about products, and offer special promotions in a simpler, more effective, cost-efficient, and sustainable manner over the long term (Breitsohl et al., 2015).

In addressing these challenges, SMEs are required to adapt to technological advancements and shifts in consumer behavior. One approach that can be used is entrepreneurial marketing, which emphasizes creativity, flexibility, and the ability to capitalize on opportunities with limited resources (Osei et al., 2026). This approach is considered more relevant for SMEs because it does not rely on substantial resources but rather on innovation capabilities and market sensitivity.

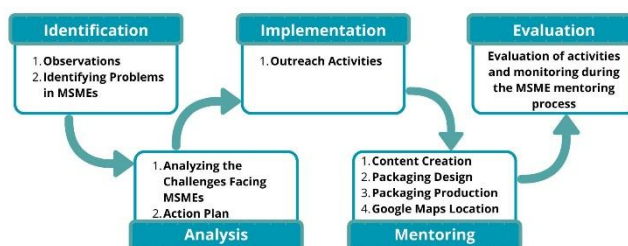
In light of these issues, the SMEs management program implemented by graduate students from the Faculty of Economics and Business at Malang State University seeks to apply knowledge and empower participants through observation and mentoring. The goal is to help local SMEs overcome challenges related to marketing and digitalization, thereby strengthening their capacity and competitiveness within the local economy in the village of

Pagelaran, Malang Regency.

## Method

The implementation method for the community service program was designed to be scientific, systematic, and participatory in order to address the real challenges faced by SMEs operators in the village of Pagelaran. The activity period ran from February through May 2026. In this mentoring activity, the community service team from the Graduate Program of the Faculty of Economics and Business at Malang State University comprising Aurora Sabrina Imtinan and Dimas Wahyu Fahriski conducted mentoring activities to assist SME operators in managing their managerial systems. Effective business management requires adequate managerial skills so that business owners can manage resources, formulate strategies, and make sound business decisions (Hisrich et al., 2020). The methods used in this community service research included outreach, direct mentoring, and evaluation of SMEs in Pagelaran Village, Malang Regency. The stages in the implementation of SME mentoring are presented in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1.** Stages of the Mentoring Process



Source: Author's Work, 2025.

Based on the figure above, the stages or steps involved in providing assistance to MSMEs to resolve the issues faced by SMEs in Pagelaran Village can be explained as follows:

1. The initial identification phase of this community service research involved (a) conducting observations by visiting the locations of the SMEs in Pagelaran Village directly, observing what was happening on-site, and collecting information. (b) then identifying the specific problems faced by the SMEs.
2. The analysis and planning phase for this community service project involves (a) analyzing what solutions are needed by the SMEs to address these problems. (b) planning and drafting a timeline for the activities to be carried out during the mentoring process.
3. During the implementation phase of the community service project: (a) conducting outreach on the basics of digital marketing, as well as the agenda and procedures for leveraging digital platforms such as social media in this context.
4. During the direct mentoring phase: (a) creating marketing content to present information familiar to consumers. (b) Practicing logo and sticker design for rebranding. (c) Creating secure packaging for shipping. (d) Setting up a location on Google Maps.
5. Finally, during the evaluation phase, we observe and monitor changes in the SMEs regarding marketing management and production following the mentoring.

## Result

The implementation of the program activities as part of the practical component of the Managerial Insight Development course in Pagelaran Village, Malang Regency specifically for

the Bumbu Rujak, which specializes in the production of rujak seasoning has yielded a number of tangible results. The outcomes of the training and mentoring activities conducted for the Bumbu Rujak demonstrate improvements in several areas. The implementation team has successfully redesigned the packaging labels to be more modern and informative; this new design provides clear and important information such as ingredients, product details, storage instructions, expiration dates, and marketing contact information. This change aims to build a more professional brand image so that the product will eventually be able to compete in a broader market.

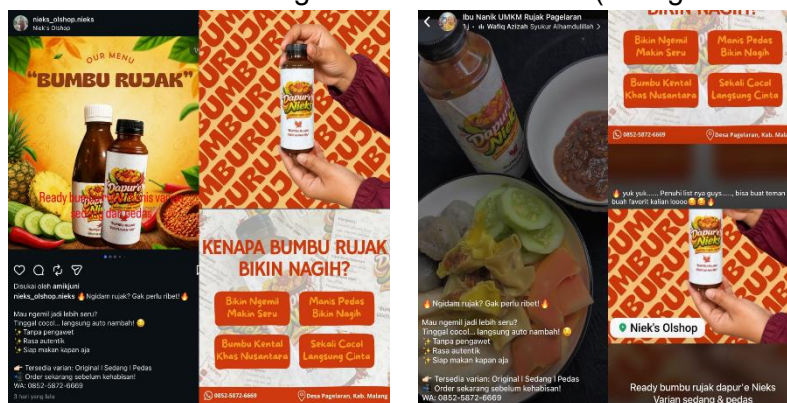
Figure 2. Assistance with Packaging Sticker Design



Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

In addition, training and mentoring activities were also conducted to strengthen digital marketing through the development of more communicative and engaging promotional materials. The implementation team provided assistance in developing promotional content concepts (Instagram feeds), capturing product visuals, and crafting marketing narratives (Instagram caption copywriting) that highlight the products' strengths, such as their distinctive flavor, the absence of preservatives, and a variety of heat levels. The content produced is designed to enhance visual appeal while reinforcing brand identity to make it more recognizable to consumers. Furthermore, these promotional materials are utilized to expand marketing reach through digital platforms, particularly social media (Instagram and WhatsApp).

Figure 3. Assistance with Creating Promotional Content (Instagram and WhatsApp)

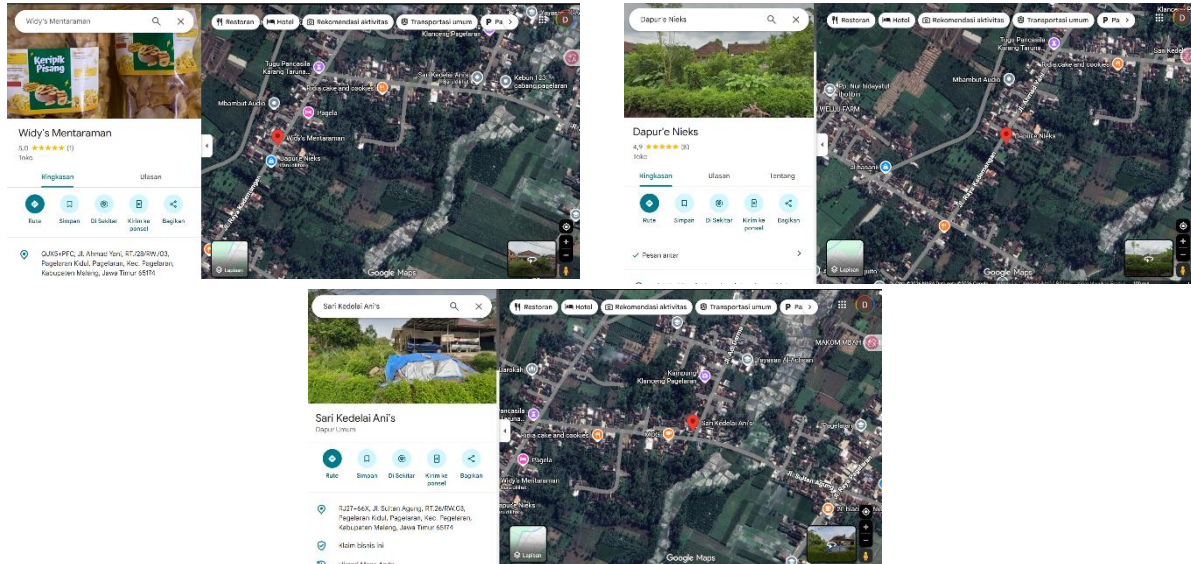


Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

In another aspect, to expand consumer accessibility, the implementation team provided guidance on creating business location coordinates on Google Maps. These business location coordinates enable consumers and potential customers to find product locations more accurately. Additionally, another effort undertaken by the implementation team is the provision of reviews accompanied by representative, high quality product photos, which will ultimately boost potential customers' trust and strengthen the product's image on digital

platforms. Overall, these activities can have a positive impact on the visibility and potential for increased sales of SMEs.

Figure 4. Assistance in Creating Coordinate Points for Business Locations and Posting Reviews with Product Photos



Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

The mentoring program for banana and cassava chip SMEs focused on improving product distribution safety to minimize the risk of physical damage to products during shipping. As part of this mentoring program, the implementation team created product identification stickers for the outer packaging (cardboard boxes) used in the distribution process. These stickers serve as a clear visual indicator that the package contains crispy, easily crushed chips. With this visual information, it is hoped that shipping companies can quickly identify the characteristics of the package's contents, thereby prompting more careful handling of the goods during the product distribution process. In addition to the product identification stickers, the implementation team also provided special tape labeled "Fragile." This tape is intended to further inform shipping companies about the product's fragility in accordance with standard operating procedures for shipping breakable items or snacks.

Figure 5. Assistance in Creating Product Identification Stickers and Product Safety Labels



Source: Private Documentation, 2025.

### Discussion

The empowerment program implemented for MSMEs in Pagelaran Village has yielded tangible results in enhancing the managerial and digital marketing capabilities of local business owners. Through a series of activities such as guidance on packaging redesign, brand identity development, and digital marketing optimization positive changes in the autonomy and professionalism of SMEs are evident. This approach aligns with SDGs Goal 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, which emphasizes the importance of improving

business productivity and cross-stakeholder collaboration.

Packaging redesign and the creation of more informative promotional content (on Instagram and WhatsApp) have proven to play a crucial role in building brand image and enhancing product competitiveness, in line with Prof. Agung Winarno's view that marketing innovation is a key factor in strengthening SMEs market position. Additionally, the use of digital platforms such as Google Maps and product reviews indicates increased business visibility and consumer accessibility. This supports Prof. Agus Hermawan argument that digital marketing can expand market reach and boost consumer trust, despite the ongoing challenge of limited digital literacy among business owners.

However, the mentoring process faces several limitations, including low digital literacy among some business owners, limited technological resources, a short mentoring period, and a tendency to rely on outdated practices in traditional management. These factors underscore the importance of ongoing training and program sustainability so that the resulting impact can be effectively measured and is long-lasting.

### **Conclusion**

The implementation of the SMEs capacity-building program in Pagelaran Village has successfully achieved its primary objective: empowering the local community and strengthening the capacity of SMEs, particularly those specializing in local products such as Rujak Sauce (Ms. Nanik), Banana Chips (Ms. Tutik), and Soy Milk (Ms. Ani). The program addresses the fundamental challenges faced by business owners, including branding, marketing, and production. These include the creation of product stickers, Google Maps listings, and improvements to production systems. Additionally, the integration of digital marketing through social media and online marketplaces has expanded market reach beyond the local area, equipping SMEs with valuable knowledge regarding promotion and consumer engagement in the digital age.

From a social perspective, the program implemented by students of the Faculty of Economics and Business at Malang State University also strengthens social bonds through activities organized for students. Although the local SMEs development program has yielded impactful results, there are still some limitations, particularly regarding the sustainability of digital marketing practices and consistent application in product sales. These limitations highlight the need for ongoing mentoring and further training. Future research and community service initiatives should focus on developing long term digital marketing strategies, expanding product innovation, and building stronger networks with external stakeholders. In conclusion, the program to develop local business potential in Pagelaran village not only enhances the capacity of local SMEs but also contributes to strengthening the economic value of the local community. This study emphasizes the importance of integrating technology, innovation, and community participation to accelerate local economic development.

### **Acknowledgements**

The researchers would like to express their deepest gratitude to all parties who have provided exceptional contributions and support to the success of this community service program, particularly the Graduate Program of the Faculty of Economics and Business, which has provided opportunities and facilities for students to carry out the "Managerial Insight Development" course as a tangible contribution to the community. Gratitude is also extended to Prof. Agung Winarno and Prof. Agus Hermawan, as advisors who provided guidance, in-depth insights into marketing innovation, and technical guidance throughout the MSME mentoring process.

The researchers also extend their gratitude to the Village Government of Pagelaran, Malang Regency, for their permission, cooperation, and warm welcome in facilitating the students during the activity period from February to May 2026. We also thank the local SME operators in Pagelaran Village, particularly the owners of the Rujak Spice business (Mrs.

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Nanik), the Banana Chip business (Mrs. Tutik), and the Soy Milk business (Mrs. Ani) for their active participation, openness, and collaborative spirit throughout the observation and direct mentoring process.

In addition, we would like to extend our gratitude to our fellow students and everyone else too numerous to mention by name who assisted with technical coordination, media coverage, and moral support, ensuring that this SDGs empowerment program ran smoothly and had a positive impact on the local economy.

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