



SOCIRCLE:
Journal Of Social Community Services

Journal homepage:

<https://socircle.xjurnal.com/ojs/index.php/socircle/index>



Participatory Branding and Packaging Assistance for PKK Products in Wanakaya Village

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

community empowerment,
women entrepreneurs,
branding assistance,
packaging design,
PKK

ABSTRACT

This community service program addressed weak product identity and basic packaging among members of the Family Welfare Empowerment group (PKK) in Wanakaya Village, Gunung Jati District, Cirebon Regency. The program aimed to develop a practical and affordable visual identity, improve packaging consistency, and strengthen participants' understanding of branding without making unsupported claims about sales or income. Fifteen active PKK members involved in local food production participated in three sequential phases: a baseline review of existing products, a branding and packaging workshop followed by participatory design, and a qualitative evaluation of the resulting prototype. Data were drawn from product observation, participant feedback, program documentation, and informal comments from local consumers and vendors, then organized thematically and summarized through a SWOT analysis. The program produced a shared "Bubur Bayi" logo and label sheet, together with a labeled transparent-container prototype. Compared with the initial unbranded presentation, the output provided clearer product identification and more consistent visual presentation. Participants and local respondents considered the prototype more recognizable and attractive, although concerns remained regarding printing cost, packaging material, label size, product information, and the balance between local identity and contemporary aesthetics. Because the original program records did not contain numerical pre-post scores, evaluator counts, or longitudinal sales data, the verified outcome is limited to visual-identity development and perceived packaging improvement. Continued mentoring, complete label information, and market testing are recommended before wider commercialization.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58468/socircle.v2i2.18>



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1. Introduction

Women-led microenterprises are important not only as sources of household income but also as spaces in which women develop agency, confidence, networks, and decision-making capacity. Evidence from Indonesian women entrepreneurs indicates that education, entrepreneurial capability, and access to appropriate business support are associated with stronger self-direction and business performance (Raspati & Kadiyono, 2023). Digital and marketing capabilities can further extend market access, but the benefits are not automatic; they depend on whether entrepreneurs can translate knowledge into practical tools that fit their resources and customers (Rosepti & Niasari, 2022). For rural community groups, therefore, empowerment programs should move beyond ceremonial training and produce usable outputs that participants can maintain after the facilitators leave.

Branding and packaging are two closely related capabilities for small food businesses. A brand provides an identifiable name, symbol, color system, and visual promise that helps consumers distinguish one product from another. Packaging protects the product, but it also communicates product identity and quality at the point of contact. Recent research shows that visual elements such as color, graphics, logo, typography, and layout influence brand experience and purchase intention, although their effects vary by product and market context (Liu et al., 2025). Packaging material and color also shape perceptions of sustainability, healthiness, and value (Berthold et al., 2024). These findings imply that a small label or container is not a neutral object: it can either clarify the product's identity or reinforce the impression that the product is informal and difficult to recognize.

The practical challenge for community-based microenterprises is that professional design services and customized packaging may be financially inaccessible. Standard packaging is often purchased in small quantities, labels are printed with limited budgets, and producers may lack software skills or design vocabulary. Indonesian community-service programs have therefore used counseling, training, and mentoring to strengthen branding and packaging. Nurmansyah (2023) demonstrated the relevance of brand design as part of a village MSME promotion strategy, while Oktaviani et al. (2024) emphasized the integration of brand names, logos, packaging, and communication. Earlier assistance for women-owned MSMEs similarly showed that mentoring can help participants convert branding concepts into packaging applications rather than stopping at theoretical explanation (Irawan & Affan, 2020). Nevertheless, many program reports still move directly from the production of a logo to claims of increased sales, even when longitudinal market data are unavailable.

A second issue is the degree of partner participation. Packaging developed entirely by external designers may look polished but may not reflect the users' preferences, production constraints, or ability to reproduce it. Consumer co-creation research suggests that involving users in the selection and validation of visual and textual attributes can improve the relevance of packaging decisions (López-Mas et al., 2022). In community service, co-creation also has an empowerment function because participants learn why a design choice is made, compare alternatives, and retain ownership of the final result. A participatory approach is therefore particularly suitable for a PKK group whose members must balance product appeal with affordability, cultural appropriateness, and ease of application.

The partner in this program was a group of 15 active PKK members in Wanakaya Village, Gunung Jati District, Cirebon Regency, who were involved in local food production. The baseline product review found that products were presented in basic, mostly transparent containers and did not use a consistent visual identity. The existing presentation made it difficult to identify the producer and product quickly, while participants reported difficulty in translating ideas about local identity into a simple logo and label. Cost was another concern: a design had to be printable in small quantities and applicable to readily available containers. These conditions established four priority needs: a

recognizable product identity, a repeatable label format, improved participant understanding of branding, and a realistic pathway for low-cost packaging improvement.

The selected intervention combined baseline product assessment, a branding and packaging workshop, participatory logo development, prototype application, and qualitative feedback. Its added value lies in adapting co-design to a small rural women's group and in evaluating the program conservatively by distinguishing activities, outputs, immediate outcomes, and unverified long-term impacts. The program did not treat the logo itself as proof of increased income. Instead, it focused on whether the partner could move from an inconsistent product presentation to a documented, reproducible identity and identify the remaining requirements for market readiness.

Accordingly, this community service program aimed to (1) identify the priority branding and packaging problems experienced by PKK members; (2) facilitate the participatory development of an affordable logo and label that could be reproduced on existing containers; (3) document immediate changes in product identification and perceived packaging appeal; and (4) formulate follow-up recommendations for complete labeling, market testing, and sustainable use. The principal expected output was a finalized visual-identity prototype, while the expected immediate outcome was improved consistency and participant awareness. Sales growth and economic independence were treated as potential future impacts requiring separate longitudinal evidence.

2. Methods

The program was implemented in Wanakaya Village, Gunung Jati District, Cirebon Regency, Indonesia, in 2023. It used a participatory community-service approach rather than a formal community-based participatory research design. The target group consisted of 15 active PKK members who were involved in local food production and were willing to participate in branding and packaging assistance. Participant selection was purposive because the intervention required members who were directly connected to product preparation, presentation, or marketing.

The needs assessment combined product observation, a baseline review, participant discussion, and feedback forms. Facilitators examined the visual consistency of the existing products, the type of container used, the presence or absence of a brand name and logo, and the clarity of product information. Participants were also invited to describe difficulties in presenting the product and their expectations for a new design. The assessment produced four agreed priorities: inconsistent product identity, basic packaging, limited design capability, and concern about the cost and reproducibility of improved packaging.

The intervention was organized into three sequential phases. Phase 1 was preparation and baseline assessment. The service team coordinated with the PKK group, reviewed the existing product presentation, documented the priority problems, and prepared examples of simple food labels. Phase 2 consisted of a branding and packaging workshop followed by participatory design. The workshop introduced the function of a brand, the difference between a product name and a logo, basic principles of color, typography, visual hierarchy, label placement, and the need for clear product information. Adobe Illustrator and editable templates were used by the facilitators to translate participant ideas into design alternatives. Participants contributed to the selection of the icon, wording, color combination, and circular label format. Phase 3 comprised prototype application and qualitative evaluation. Printed label sheets were prepared and one label was applied to the existing transparent container to demonstrate repeatability and fit.

Partner participation was embedded in each phase. PKK members identified the practical problems, explained the intended product users, responded to draft alternatives, and considered whether the design could be applied with available materials. The facilitators acted as technical translators rather than sole decision makers. This division of roles was important because the final

output had to be understandable, accepted, and reproducible by the partner, not merely visually attractive to the service team.

Program evaluation was aligned with the objectives and used the evidence available in the original program records. The success indicators were: participation of the 15 targeted members; identification of priority problems; completion of at least one agreed logo and label; application of the label to a product container; qualitative acceptance of the prototype; and identification of follow-up improvements. Evidence consisted of observation notes, participant feedback, program photographs, the final label sheet, the labeled-container prototype, and informal comments from local consumers and market vendors. The comments were used as contextual feedback rather than as a representative consumer survey because the original record did not preserve the number or sampling procedure of external respondents.

Qualitative data were organized through coding and thematic categorization. Statements and observations were grouped into four themes: product recognition, visual appeal, practicality and cost, and cultural relevance. The service team also summarized internal and external conditions using a SWOT matrix. No inferential statistics or claims of statistical significance were used. Similarly, sales, income, and economic independence were not treated as verified outcomes because no baseline and follow-up transaction data were available.

The activity was coordinated with the PKK group and local stakeholders. Reporting used aggregate participant information and did not include names or sensitive personal data. The revised manuscript uses product-focused documentation rather than identifiable participant photographs. For sustainability, the program recommended retaining the editable design file, appointing a group member responsible for label reproduction, reviewing the label after market feedback, and gradually adding complete product information and more suitable packaging materials.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Baseline Conditions and Priority Problems

The baseline review confirmed that the partner's main constraint was not the absence of a product, but the absence of a consistent market-facing identity. The food product was already being prepared and placed in a functional container, yet the packaging did not clearly communicate what the product was, who produced it, or how it differed from similar products. The visual presentation therefore limited recognition even before broader promotional activities were considered. Table 1 summarizes the initial conditions and the agreed priorities.

Table 1. Baseline conditions and agreed program priorities.

Observed aspect	Baseline evidence	Priority response
Product identity	No consistent logo or repeatable visual identity was documented.	Develop one recognizable logo and label format.
Packaging presentation	A basic transparent container was used with limited visual information.	Apply a low-cost label to the existing container as an initial prototype.
Design capability	Participants experienced difficulty converting ideas into a simple market-facing design.	Provide workshop-based explanation and facilitator-assisted co-design.
Cost and reproducibility	Professional design and customized packaging were perceived as potentially expensive.	Use an editable design and sticker format that can be printed in small quantities.
Market evidence	No structured baseline sales, consumer-score, or income data were available.	Limit evaluation to documented outputs and qualitative immediate outcomes.

3.2 Participatory Branding and Packaging Implementation

The intervention translated the baseline findings into a concrete design process. The workshop first established that branding is more than decoration: it allows repeated identification across containers, printed materials, and future digital promotion. Participants then discussed the product

name and the type of symbol that would be understandable to local buyers. The facilitators converted these preferences into a circular label design using Adobe Illustrator and reusable templates.

The finalized label displayed the words “Bubur Bayi” and used a smiling baby icon as the central recognition cue. Pink and blue accent lines created a friendly border, while the circular format matched the available round container. The design was reproduced as a label sheet, demonstrating that the same identity could be printed and applied consistently. A label was then attached to the transparent lid to form a product prototype. Figure 1 presents the two most relevant documentary outputs.

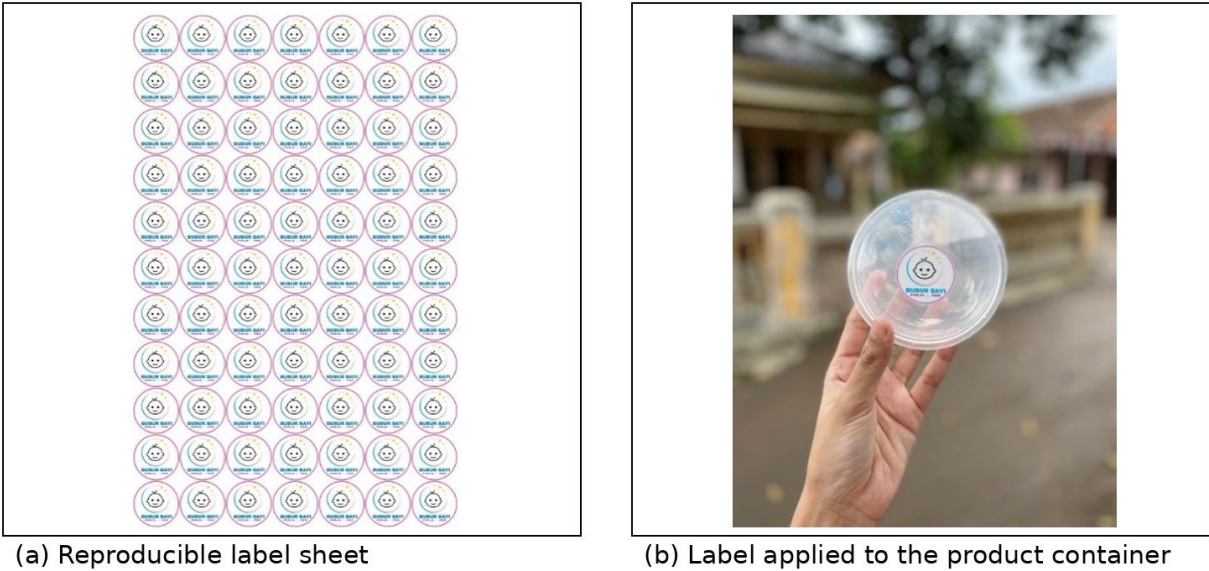


Figure 1. Reproducible “Bubur Bayi” label sheet and its application to the existing container.

The process achieved the immediate output more clearly than the original manuscript reported. Rather than claiming a general transformation of multiple local products, the available evidence supports one shared label design and one applied prototype for a baby-porridge product. This narrower description improves the verifiability of the article. It also shows the value of working from an actual container: participants could directly assess size, placement, legibility, and printing practicality rather than discussing branding only in abstract terms.

Table 2. Program stages, partner participation, outputs, and evidence.

Stage	Partner participation	Documented output	Evidence
Baseline review	Explained existing presentation and practical constraints.	Priority-problem list.	Observation and participant feedback.
Branding workshop	Discussed product identity, logo function, and visual preferences.	Shared understanding of branding principles.	Workshop record and participant responses.
Co-design	Responded to icon, color, wording, and format alternatives.	Final circular “Bubur Bayi” label.	Editable design and printed label sheet.
Prototype application	Considered label fit and practicality on the available container.	Labeled transparent-container prototype.	Product photograph.
Evaluation	Provided comments on appeal, cost, culture, and continued use.	Improvement and follow-up recommendations.	Feedback forms and thematic summary.

3.3 Immediate Outcomes and Achievement of Indicators

The most defensible immediate outcome was improved visual consistency. Before the program, the product lacked a repeated identity; after the intervention, the same logo could be reproduced from a label sheet and applied to the container. This change supports product recognition because the product name, icon, shape, and colors appear as a coherent unit. The finding is consistent with Liu et al. (2025), who showed that logo, color, graphics, and layout operate together in shaping brand experience. At the

same time, the result should be interpreted as a packaging-identity improvement, not as proof of consumer purchase or sales growth.

Participant and informal local feedback indicated that the labeled prototype was easier to recognize and appeared more attractive than the unbranded container. This qualitative response is plausible because packaging provides an immediate communication surface and because a recognizable icon can reduce the effort required to identify the product. Comparable Indonesian community-service programs have reported that logo and packaging assistance improves product presentation and gives microentrepreneurs a more systematic basis for promotion (Nurmansyah, 2023; Oktaviani et al., 2024). The present program adds a conservative evaluation boundary: positive comments are reported as perceived appeal, while marketability is not equated with measured sales.

Several indicators were only partially achieved. The prototype label was small and focused almost entirely on the product name and icon. It did not visibly include ingredients, net weight, producer contact, production date, expiry or best-before information, storage instructions, or applicable licensing and certification information. The transparent container was inexpensive and showed the product, but participants and respondents also raised concerns about material, size, sustainability, and printing cost. Packaging material can influence perceived value and sustainability (Berthold et al., 2024), so a later market-ready version should evaluate both the label and the container rather than treating the sticker as the final solution.

Table 3. Achievement of immediate success indicators.

Indicator	Status	Interpretation
Participation of 15 targeted PKK members	Achieved	The program involved the identified active members.
Priority branding and packaging problems identified	Achieved	Four practical priority areas were documented.
At least one agreed logo and repeatable label produced	Achieved	A circular “Bubur Bayi” label and label sheet were completed.
Label applied to the existing product container	Achieved	A photographed prototype was produced.
Structured pre–post knowledge or skill improvement	Not verified	No numerical instrument results were preserved in the original record.
Representative consumer acceptance	Partly achieved	Informal positive feedback was available, but respondent numbers and sampling were not documented.
Increase in sales, income, or economic independence	Not assessed	No longitudinal transaction or income data were available.
Sustainable independent reproduction	Partly achieved	A repeatable label format exists; responsibility, budget, and follow-up monitoring require formalization.

3.4 Challenges, SWOT Analysis, and Sustainability

The design process revealed a tension between simplicity, cultural relevance, and modern market expectations. The smiling baby icon was immediately understandable for the baby-porridge product, but it was generic rather than strongly rooted in a distinctive Wanakaya cultural symbol. Adding too many local motifs, however, could reduce legibility on a small sticker. The appropriate solution is not to force cultural ornamentation into the logo, but to build local identity through supporting elements such as a producer statement, short brand story, color rationale, or secondary pattern that can be used on larger communication media.

Cost was another inhibiting factor. Sticker labels on existing containers offer a practical entry point because they reduce the need for custom packaging. Yet the recurring cost of printing, minimum order quantities, resistance to moisture, and consistency of placement can affect continued use. The label also needs scalable files and simple printing specifications. These issues confirm the importance of mentoring beyond a single workshop. Irawan and Affan (2020) found that assistance is valuable when participants are supported in applying branding to real packaging, while Hardilawati et al. (2021) linked packaging renewal with broader marketing development. A sustainable approach should

therefore combine design ownership, clear technical specifications, budgeting, and periodic market feedback.

Table 4. SWOT analysis of the branding and packaging output.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Simple, recognizable icon; repeatable circular format; compatible with existing container; participant involvement.	Limited mandatory product information; generic cultural identity; small label area; no quantified market evaluation.	Use on social media and point-of-sale materials; addition of brand story and contact details; consumer testing; gradual packaging upgrade.	Printing and material costs; inconsistent use; moisture or handling damage; design imitation; unsupported sales claims if monitoring is absent.

The program's sustainability strategy should proceed in three steps. First, the PKK group should keep the editable file, color codes, font information, label dimensions, and a print-ready PDF so that the design can be reproduced consistently. Second, the label should be revised to include complete product and producer information, followed by a small consumer test using a documented rating form. Third, the group should monitor simple business indicators for at least three months, including units produced, units sold, repeat orders, printing cost per unit, and participant use of the agreed label. Only after such follow-up would claims about marketability, sales, or economic empowerment be justified.

3.5 Discussion of Practical Contribution and Limitations

The practical contribution of this program is a low-cost pathway from an unbranded presentation to a reproducible visual identity. The intervention did not require participants to purchase customized containers immediately; it used the available container as a learning and prototyping surface. This adaptation is relevant for small community enterprises that need to test identity and consumer response before committing to higher packaging costs. The co-design element also gave participants a role in selecting the visual components, which is consistent with evidence that consumer and user participation can improve the appropriateness of packaging attributes (López-Mas et al., 2022).

From an empowerment perspective, the output should be understood as capacity building rather than economic independence. Women's empowerment involves the ability to make informed choices, use resources, and develop competencies over time (Raspati & Kadiyono, 2023). Producing a label can contribute to that process when participants understand and control its use, but it is only one component of business development. Product quality, food safety, costing, legality, promotion, distribution, and financial management remain necessary for sustainable enterprise growth. The revised interpretation therefore avoids overstating the contribution of a short branding intervention.

The program has four main limitations. First, the original records did not preserve exact session duration, individual attendance by phase, or participant demographic characteristics. Second, no numerical pre-post knowledge instrument was available. Third, external feedback was informal and the number and profile of consumers or vendors were not documented. Fourth, there was no longitudinal record of sales, income, or repeat orders. These limitations prevent statistical or causal conclusions. Nevertheless, the visual outputs and qualitative documentation are sufficient to demonstrate that a participatory branding and packaging prototype was completed and to identify the next steps required for a stronger follow-up program.

4. Conclusions

The community service program responded to the PKK group's immediate need for a recognizable and affordable product identity. Through baseline review, workshop-based learning, participatory design, and prototype application, 15 active members contributed to the development of a circular "Bubur Bayi" logo and label that could be reproduced and attached to the existing transparent container. The verified achievement was a shift from an inconsistent, minimally identified presentation to a coherent label sheet and product prototype. Qualitative feedback indicated improved recognition

and visual appeal, while the intervention also clarified unresolved issues related to label information, packaging material, cost, cultural distinctiveness, and sustainable reproduction.

The available evidence does not support claims of statistically significant marketability, increased sales, higher income, or economic independence. Future assistance should complete the product label, document participant learning with pre–post instruments, conduct consumer testing with a defined sample, and monitor sales and cost indicators over time. With these additions, the prototype can become the first stage of a broader market-readiness and women’s enterprise-development program rather than an isolated design activity.

5. Acknowledgment

The authors thank the PKK members of Wanakaya Village for their participation and practical input during the program. Appreciation is also extended to the Wanakaya Village stakeholders and the STIE Cirebon community-service team for facilitating coordination, documentation, and branding assistance.

6. Authors Note

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirm that the manuscript is original, has not been published elsewhere, and has been checked for plagiarism. The authors are responsible for confirming permission to use all program documentation and for completing the author identity, affiliation, correspondence, and exact implementation-date information before resubmission.

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