







# Local Flavor, Global Spirit: Traditional *Rujak Serut* Training for UMKM With *Dharma Wanita Universitas Terbuka* Medan

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## Abstract

**Background of study:** This community service initiative seeks to enhance the abilities and inventiveness of members of the *Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP) Universitas Terbuka (UT) Medan* in the culinary domain, particularly in the preparation of traditional *rujak serut*.

**Aims and scope of paper:** The main objective for Participants is to get expertise on selecting high-quality ingredients, employing appealing presentation tactics, and implementing basic marketing strategies to enhance the product's economic value.

**Methods:** The methodologies employed encompass counselling, direct demonstrating, individual practi, and interactive conversations.

**Result:** The activity's outcomes demonstrated significant enthusiasm among participants and enhanced proficiency in processing and turning *rujak serut* into commercially viable dishes.

**Conclusion:** This program can be the initial step in strengthening the creative economy leveraging local potential for members of DWP UT Medan and also implementation of Tri Dharma University.

## A. Introduction

Community service is a form of implementation of the *Tri Dharma* of Higher Education which aims to make a real contribution in improving the welfare and capacity of the community (Riady, 2014). In this context, the development of skills based on local potential is one of the relevant and sustainable approaches. One of the local potential that still has high economic and cultural value is traditional culinary (Karim et al., 2024; Ossowska et al., 2024).

*Rujak Serut* is a traditional Indonesian food consisting of a variety of fresh fruits that are shaved and served with peanut seasoning with sweet, sour, and spicy flavors. In addition to being favored by various circles, *rujak serut* also has the potential to be a promising small business product if packaged attractively and hygienically (Putri et al., 2024). Seeing these opportunities, this training activity was designed to provide

education as well as practical skills to members of *Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP) Universitas Terbuka Medan* in processing, creating, and developing *rujak serut* products (Budiman et al., 2024).

The purpose of this activity is to empower DWP UT Medan members through applicable training, increase creativity in traditional food processing, and open up small business opportunities that can support the family economy. It is hoped that through this activity, the participants will not only have technical skills, but also be able to develop competitive product innovations in the local market.

## **B. Methods**

This training activity was carried out with a participatory and applicative approach, which aims to ensure the active involvement of participants in the entire learning process (Sofyan, 2025). The methods used in this activity include several stages as follows (Purnomo, 2025):

### **1. Preparation of Activities**

This stage included coordination with the management of *Dharma Wanita Persatuan UT Medan*, preparation of training materials, and procurement of materials and equipment needed for demonstrations and practices of making *rujak serut*. In addition, an initial survey was also carried out to find out the needs and potential of the participants.

### **2. Counseling and Education**

The initial session of the activity was filled with the provision of material on the importance of preserving traditional culinary, the economic potential of local food products, as well as the principles of cleanliness, sanitation, and food safety. The materials were delivered interactively using visual media.

### **3. Demonstration of Making Rujak Serut**

The implementation team conducted a direct demonstration of how to make *rujak serut* starting from fruit selection, making spices, to presenting it attractively. In this session, various creations for the presentation of *rujak serut* were also shown so that they have aesthetic value and selling appeal.

### **4. Independent Practice and Mentoring**

Participants were divided into several small groups to carry out the practice of making *rujak serut* independently with assistance from the implementation team (Muhaimin et al., 2023). During the practice, participants were directed to try to innovate in terms of ingredient composition, taste, and appearance.

### **5. Evaluation and Discussion**

At the end of the activity, an evaluation was carried out through group discussions and filling out a short questionnaire to find out the extent to which participants understood the material and mastered the skills given. Participants were also given the opportunity to share experiences and ideas for business development based on *rujak serut* (Putri et al., 2024).

This method was designed so that the activity is not only one-way, but also encourages active interaction, creativity, and collaborative spirit between participants, so that the results of the training can be sustainable and applicable in daily life.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

The training activity on making *rujak* shaves carried out with the *Dharma Wanita Persatuan UT Medan* showed positive results, both in terms of participation and improving the skills of the participants. All participants seemed enthusiastic about participating in every stage of the activity, ranging from counseling, demonstrations, to independent practice. This shows that the participatory approach used in the training is quite effective in encouraging active participation of participants.

In the counseling stage (Karim et al., 2024), participants gained a new understanding of the importance of preserving traditional culinary as part of cultural identity, as well as its economic potential if managed properly (Ossowska et al., 2024). Participants also began to realize that simple foods such as *rujak serut* can be created and packaged more attractively so that they have a high selling value (Agu et al., 2024; A. M. A. Ausat et al., 2023).



**Figure 1.** Participants of *Dharma Wanita Persatuan UT Medan* practicing the preparation of *rujak serut*

During the demonstration and practice sessions, participants learned firsthand how to choose quality ingredients, make *rujak* seasonings that are balanced in taste, and serve products aesthetically. Some participants showed creativity by adding modern toppings such as roasted beans, sesame seeds, and the use of local fruits typical of the North Sumatra region (Riady, 2014). This innovation is an indicator that participants are not only imitating, but also starting to develop new ideas from the training results.

In terms of technical skills, most of the participants managed to make *rujak serut* with a fairly good taste and appearance (Riady et al., 2023). The results of the evaluation showed that the majority of participants felt more confident to try to produce *rujak* shavings independently at home, and some even expressed interest in making it a small business opportunity.



**Figure 2.** Discussion and evaluation session with participants after the practice

The activity aimed at strengthening the friendship between members was filled with demonstrations on how to make a simple but refreshing *rujak* draw. Various types of fresh fruits such as mango, pineapple, jicama, and young papaya are finely shaved using a special grater, then mixed with typical spices consisting of sugar, cayenne pepper, salt, and passion fruit syrup (Metcalf et al., 2021).

The Chairman of DWP UT Medan, Dwi Rahmadhani and the Daily Chairperson of DWP UT Medan, Sondang Pakpahan, strongly support this activity in addition to being a gathering place, also as an effort to preserve traditional culinary that is rarely made at home and can be used as one of the ingredients for doing business.



**Figure 3.** Creative variations of *rujak serut* using local fruits

This activity also opened a discussion space regarding the development of traditional culinary-based home businesses. Participants are encouraged to start paying attention to aspects of packaging, branding, and marketing, especially through social media and community networks (Budiman et al., 2024; Riady et al., 2022). This is important as the first step in building family economic independence through simple but potentially sustainable activities.

Overall, this training not only succeeded in improving the culinary skills of the participants, but also sparked the spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship (A. Ausat et al., 2023). It is hoped that similar activities can continue to be carried out with a variety of other local products to expand the impact of empowerment. The participants also seemed enthusiastic about following every stage of creation, from slicing fruit, mixing various parts, to tasting the results of their creations together. Even some members immediately shared their secret tips to make the taste of *rujak serut* more robust. The event ended with a meal together and the distribution of *rujak serut* recipes in the style of DWP UT Medan. Many hope that similar activities can be held regularly with other traditional menus.

The inaugural activity of DWP UT Medan proves that behind the daily busyness, the women of DWP UT Medan remain compact and creative in maintaining traditions while strengthening the bond of friendship and always supporting the Open University of Medan.

#### D. Conclusion

The *rujak serut* training activity carried out with the women of *Dharma Wanita Persatuan* (DWP) UT Medan has succeeded in achieving its goal, which is to increase the knowledge and skills of participants in processing traditional food into products with economic value. Through counseling, demonstration, and hands-on practice methods, participants were able to understand the technique of making *rujak serut* well, as well as show creativity in presenting and developing recipes. The enthusiasm and active participation of the participants showed that this training was very beneficial, not only as a means of preserving local cuisine, but also as an effort to empower women's economy. This training also opens opportunities for participants to make *rujak serut* as a potential home business product, while maintaining local cultural values. This activity shows that simple but focused training, if carried out in a targeted and participatory manner, can have a real positive impact on society. It is hoped that similar activities can continue to be developed and expanded by involving more communities and variations of other local products.

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#### F. Author Contribution Statement

All authors presented the manuscript, particularly participating in the program, and supervised the program from the beginning until the end of the program.

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