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Strengthening Dasa Wisma Productivity through Home Garden Utilisation to Support Household Food Security

Penguatan Produktivitas Dasa Wisma melalui Pemanfaatan Pekarangan untuk Mendukung Ketahanan Pangan Rumah Tangga

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Abstract

Household food security remains a persistent challenge in dense urban neighbourhoods, where limited yard space and rising living costs constrain families' ability to meet their daily nutritional needs. This community service programme aimed to strengthen the productivity of the Dasa Wisma group in RT 28, Kelurahan Sempaja Utara, Samarinda, through participatory home garden development as a strategy to support household food security. The programme was implemented using a six-stage empowerment cycle need assessment, participatory planning, capacity building, implementation, mentoring, and evaluation involving women members of the Dasa Wisma group from May to August 2026. Activities included socialisation on household food security, group discussion to plan yard utilisation, hands-on cultivation of vegetables using polybags and repurposed tyres, ongoing mentoring, and monitoring of plant development. The results indicate improvement across four dimensions: members' knowledge of food security concepts, their cultivation skills, their level of collective participation, and the physical condition of previously unused yards, which were transformed into productive family food gardens. The programme also strengthened social cohesion through gotong royong (mutual cooperation) and contributed to household savings on vegetable and cooking-spice expenditure. These findings suggest that a participatory, empowerment-based approach rather than a purely technical gardening intervention is central to sustaining community-led household food security initiatives. The programme offers a replicable model for other Dasa Wisma and PKK groups, sub-district governments, agricultural extension workers, and universities seeking to strengthen urban household food resilience through home garden-based empowerment.

Keywords: Household Food Security; Home Garden; Community Empowerment

Abstrack

Ketahanan pangan keluarga masih menjadi tantangan yang persisten di kawasan permukiman perkotaan yang padat, di mana keterbatasan lahan pekarangan dan meningkatnya biaya hidup membatasi kemampuan keluarga untuk memenuhi kebutuhan gizi harian. Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan produktivitas kelompok Dasa Wisma di RT 28, Kelurahan Sempaja Utara, Samarinda, melalui pengembangan pekarangan secara partisipatif sebagai strategi untuk mendukung ketahanan pangan keluarga. Kegiatan dilaksanakan menggunakan siklus pemberdayaan enam tahap: need assessment, participatory planning, capacity building, implementation, mentoring, dan evaluation yang melibatkan anggota perempuan kelompok Dasa Wisma pada periode Mei–Agustus 2026. Kegiatan meliputi sosialisasi mengenai ketahanan pangan keluarga, diskusi kelompok untuk merencanakan pemanfaatan pekarangan, praktik langsung budidaya sayuran menggunakan polybag dan ban bekas, pendampingan berkelanjutan, serta monitoring perkembangan tanaman. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan adanya peningkatan pada empat dimensi, yaitu pengetahuan anggota mengenai konsep ketahanan pangan, keterampilan budidaya, tingkat partisipasi kolektif, serta kondisi fisik pekarangan yang sebelumnya tidak dimanfaatkan menjadi kebun pangan keluarga yang produktif. Kegiatan ini juga memperkuat kohesi sosial melalui semangat gotong royong dan berkontribusi pada penghematan pengeluaran rumah tangga untuk kebutuhan sayur dan bumbu dapur. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan partisipatif berbasis pemberdayaan bukan sekadar intervensi teknis bercocok tanam menjadi kunci keberlanjutan inisiatif ketahanan pangan berbasis masyarakat. Program ini menawarkan model yang dapat direplikasi oleh kelompok Dasa Wisma dan PKK lain, pemerintah kelurahan, penyuluh pertanian, serta perguruan tinggi yang ingin memperkuat ketahanan pangan keluarga perkotaan melalui pemberdayaan berbasis pekarangan.

Kata Kunci: Ketahanan Pangan Keluarga; Pemanfaatan Pekarangan; Pemberdayaan Masyarakat

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INTRODUCTION

Household food security remains one of the most persistent development concerns in both rural and urban settings, as households continue to struggle with adequate and stable access to nutritious food (Otieno et al., 2025). Despite considerable investment in social protection and agricultural programmes, food insecurity is still widespread, and its measurement and underlying drivers vary substantially depending on socio-economic, geographic, and institutional context (Ayele et al., 2025). In many low- and middle-income settings, food insecurity is compounded by unemployment, limited financial inclusion, and reliance on monotonous, starch-dominated diets that heighten the risk of micronutrient deficiency and chronic disease (Ayele et al., 2025).

In dense urban settlements, where access to arable land is scarce, home and vertical gardening have emerged as grassroots strategies for strengthening household food security (Moyo et al., 2026). Demonstrated that vertical gardening in Nairobi's Kibera informal settlement enhanced all four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilisation, and stability, while also fostering gender empowerment and urban resilience (Skhephu et al., 2025). Likewise, improved access to processing infrastructure and diversified production systems has been shown to widen households' access to nutritious diets even in resource-constrained rural contexts (Dar et al., 2026).

In Indonesia, community-based outreach interventions built on partnership with local institutions have proven effective in strengthening rural food security (Agustina et al., 2026), while region-specific adaptive strategies such as adjusting cultivation practices to seasonal and environmental conditions remain essential for sustaining food production in vulnerable landscapes (Cavatassi et al., 2025). At the community level, women-led cooperatives and social movements have also taken an increasingly visible role in managing local food systems, including reducing food waste and strengthening collective food governance (Sidiq et al., 2025).

A growing body of evidence links women's empowerment directly to household food security outcomes. Kota et al. (2025) found that women's empowerment in agricultural decision-making among smallholder households in South Sudan was significantly associated with improved food security status, while (Singh & Yadav, 2026) reported that empowering women within agrifood systems enhances household livelihoods more broadly. Collective, group-based approaches rather than individually targeted interventions appear particularly effective: Lentz et al. (2025) showed that collective action in community seed production in India served simultaneously as a pathway to women's empowerment and a mechanism for community seed security, while Agustina et al. (2026) demonstrated that empowerment indices adapted to local nutrition contexts in Kenya can meaningfully capture the link between women's agency and household nutrition outcomes.

Community-based group interventions elsewhere reinforce this pattern. Wakhungu et al. (2026), in a systematic review of community-based livestock breeding programmes in Ethiopia, found consistent gains in productivity, food security, and women's empowerment, and called for such interventions to be documented more explicitly as replicable models for climate-smart systems (Hussain et al., 2025). In Zimbabwe, structured women's participation in food-security programmes was associated with strengthened climate resilience (Sarma et al., 2025), and a related feminist social-work analysis found that women's involvement in

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state-led agricultural schemes reshaped both household food security and gender relations simultaneously (Ume et al., 2026).

Beyond production-side interventions, dietary diversity and nutrition-specific behaviours remain critical determinants of food security outcomes, particularly for vulnerable groups such as breastfeeding mothers and young children (Schling et al., 2025). At the same time, broader policy evaluations caution that food-related and economic support programmes often fail to address the structural inequalities underlying household food insecurity, including unequal care burdens, restricted labour participation, and limited access to health and social services for women (Bonuedi et al., 2025). Evidence from cash- and food-transfer programmes further shows that resource transfers alone do not automatically translate into safer or more equitable household dynamics (Masamha et al., 2026), and that secure access to productive resources, such as land tenure, is itself a determinant of both women's empowerment and food security (Isaacs et al., 2026).

While this body of research demonstrates that group-based, gender-responsive interventions can strengthen household food security, most existing studies report programme outcomes without documenting the empowerment process that produces them (Handayani et al., 2024). Systematic reviews of food and nutrition programmes similarly conclude that multi-component, community-engaged interventions outperform single-component programmes, yet the specific mechanisms of community engagement remain under-specified (I. Adriansyah et al., 2026). Evidence on structured, staged empowerment processes at the neighbourhood or grassroots-group level, such as Indonesia's Dasa Wisma system, a household-based women's group operating at the smallest administrative unit, remains particularly limited, despite the potential of such groups to mobilise collective action for household food security (Otieno et al., 2025).

RT 28, Kelurahan Sempaja Utara, Samarinda, exemplifies this gap. Although most member households of the local Dasa Wisma group possess yards that could be used for food cultivation, these spaces had largely remained unused, and the group had not yet developed a structured, sustainable plan for pekarangan (home-yard)-based food production. Addressing this gap required more than the technical transfer of gardening skills; it required a deliberate empowerment process capable of building the group's capacity, participation, and sense of ownership over the programme. This community service programme therefore aimed to enhance the productivity of the Dasa Wisma group in RT 28, Sempaja Utara, through participatory home garden utilisation, framed as a strategy to strengthen household food security. Specifically, the programme sought to: (1) improve members' understanding of household food security; (2) encourage productive use of yard space for food and vegetable cultivation; (3) strengthen members' participation in household-based productive activities; and (4) support the development of a sustainable family food garden plan.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The programme adopted a participatory community empowerment approach, in which Dasa Wisma members were positioned as active agents of change rather than passive recipients of technical assistance (Ayele et al., 2025). The initiative targeted women members of the Dasa Wisma group in RT 28, Kelurahan Sempaja Utara, Samarinda City, East Kalimantan, who were directly responsible for managing household yards and family food provisioning. The programme was implemented over four months, from May to August 2026, through a

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structured six-stage empowerment cycle: need assessment, participatory planning, capacity building, implementation, mentoring, and evaluation (Table 1).

Table 1. Stages of the Community Empowerment Cycle

Stage	Main Activities	Timing
Need Assessment	Field visit and direct observation of yard conditions; focus group discussion with the Dasa Wisma board to identify needs, land potential, and preferred plant types	May 2026
Participatory Planning	Group discussion to agree on planting sites, plant varieties, task allocation, and a cultivation schedule	June 2026
Capacity Building	Socialisation on household food security concepts; hands-on training in polybag- and repurposed-tyre-based cultivation techniques	June 2026
Implementation	Land preparation, planting of seedlings, and establishment of the shared home garden	July 2026
Mentoring	On-site assistance with watering, pest management, and plant maintenance; troubleshooting members' cultivation problems	July–August 2026

During the need assessment stage, the team conducted a field visit and held a focus group discussion with the Dasa Wisma board to identify existing challenges, the extent of unused yard space, and members' preferences regarding plant types. Findings from this stage directly informed the participatory planning stage, in which members collectively agreed on planting locations, selected low-maintenance vegetable varieties suited to limited space, and assigned rotating tasks for planting, watering, and maintenance.

The capacity building stage combined socialisation on the concept and dimensions of household food security with hands-on demonstration of low-cost cultivation techniques using polybags and repurposed vehicle tyres media chosen for their suitability to the limited, irregularly shaped yards typical of dense residential settlements (Ayele et al., 2025). During implementation, members prepared the soil, planted seedlings, and established the shared home garden, with university-affiliated facilitators and volunteers providing on-site technical support. The mentoring stage extended across the implementation period and involved regular monitoring visits to assist with watering schedules, pest management, and troubleshooting of cultivation problems, ensuring that skills introduced during the workshop were correctly and consistently applied.

Data were collected through a combination of direct field observation, structured group discussion, participation attendance records, and photographic documentation of yard conditions before and after the programme (Bainus et al., 2025). Evaluation was carried out in two forms: formative evaluation during the workshop and mentoring stages, focusing on members' comprehension and cultivation practice, and summative evaluation at the end of the programme, focusing on the sustainability of the garden and the collective participation of the group. This qualitative, document- and observation-based evaluation approach was chosen to capture the empowerment process itself, rather than relying solely on production output as an indicator of success (Calderon et al., 2025).

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RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Need Assessment and Participatory Planning

The need assessment revealed that although most Dasa Wisma households in RT 28 had yards of varying size, the majority of these spaces were either unused, used for non-productive purposes, or planted inconsistently without a shared plan. Members reported limited prior exposure to structured information about household food security and expressed uncertainty about which plants were suitable for their limited space. In response, the participatory planning stage produced a consensus plan: members agreed to cultivate fast-growing, everyday use vegetables including chili, spring onion, kale, and other leafy vegetables using polybags and repurposed tyres, and to rotate responsibility for daily maintenance among households located near each planting cluster.



Figure 1. Community Coordination and Participatory Planning with Dasa Wisma Members for Home Garden Development

Capacity Building and Implementation

The capacity-building workshop introduced members to the concept of household food security and its practical relevance to their everyday lives, followed by direct demonstration of soil preparation, seedling transplantation, and watering techniques appropriate for container-based cultivation. Members were guided to prepare their own polybags and repurposed tyres, reflecting the principle that home garden interventions must be adapted to local resource constraints and settlement density rather than transplanted directly from rural, land-abundant cultivation models (Dar et al., 2026). During implementation, members actively participated in soil preparation, planting, and the initial establishment of the shared garden area, working in small groups organised around the planting clusters agreed upon during the planning stage.

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Mentoring and Monitoring

Mentoring visits during July and August 2026 focused on reinforcing correct watering frequency, identifying early signs of pest damage, and helping members solve practical problems as they arose. These visits also functioned as informal evaluation checkpoints, allowing the facilitation team to observe whether skills introduced during the workshop were being applied consistently. Members reported that the ongoing presence of mentors, rather than a single one-off training session, was instrumental in sustaining their motivation and confidence in managing the garden independently.

Evaluation

The evaluation stage compared conditions before and after the programme across four dimensions: knowledge, skills, participation, and the physical condition of the yard environment (Table 2). Across all four dimensions, group reflection at the end of the monitoring period indicated a clear shift from limited awareness and individual, sporadic yard use toward collective, informed, and sustained engagement in home garden cultivation.

Table 2. Comparison of Conditions Before and After the Programme

Dimension	Condition Before the Programme	Condition After the Programme
Knowledge	Members had limited understanding of the concept of household food security and the role of pekarangan in supporting it	Members understood the importance of pekarangan utilisation as a strategy to strengthen household food security
Skills	Members had little to no practical experience in managing home garden cultivation	Members were able to independently cultivate vegetables using polybags and repurposed tyres
Participation	Yard-based food activities, where they existed, were carried out individually and sporadically	Activities were carried out collectively through gotong royong (mutual cooperation) among group members
Environment	Household yards were largely unused, bare, or occupied by non-productive space	Yards were transformed into productive family food gardens using low-cost planting media

Beyond these four dimensions, members also reported that the shared garden strengthened everyday social interaction within the group and, in several households, reduced routine spending on fresh vegetables and cooking spices. These outcomes were achieved primarily through the structured empowerment process rather than through the provision of planting materials alone, underscoring that the sustainability of home garden initiatives depends on how the process is facilitated, not merely on what is planted.

DISCUSSION

The results of this programme affirm that community empowerment operates through a combination of capacity building, participation, and social capital accumulation, rather than the simple transfer of technical skills (Endeshaw et al., 2026). The shift observed among Dasa Wisma members from individual, sporadic yard use to collective, gotong-royong-

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based cultivation mirrors patterns documented in women-led cooperative food initiatives elsewhere, where shared governance strengthens both social cohesion and programme sustainability (Dar et al., 2026). It is also consistent with evidence that collective, group-based mobilisation, rather than individually targeted assistance, more effectively sustains community-led production activities over time (Cavatassi et al., 2025).



Figure 3. Hands-on Training and Home Garden Cultivation Activities Using Polybags and Recycled Tires

The staged structure of the programme moving from need assessment through participatory planning, capacity building, implementation, mentoring, and evaluation appears to have been central to this outcome (Lokot et al., 2025). Similar staged, community-based interventions have been found to generate measurable gains in productivity, food security, and women's empowerment when they are systematically implemented and sustained beyond a single training event (Cavatassi et al., 2025). Likewise, evidence from Zimbabwe shows that structured, ongoing women's participation in food-security programmes is closely associated with strengthened resilience to environmental and economic shocks (Sidiq et al., 2025), reinforcing the value of the mentoring stage adopted in this programme.

From the perspective of household food security theory, the transformation of previously unused pekarangan into productive gardens can be understood as strengthening multiple dimensions of food security simultaneously: availability, through direct household production; access, through reduced dependence on market purchase of vegetables and spices; utilisation, through more consistent access to fresh, diverse produce; and stability, through a recurring, self-managed source of food supply (Tesfa et al., 2025). This pattern echoes Kota et al. (2025) finding that vertical and home-based gardening strengthens all four dimensions of food security in dense urban settlements. It is also consistent with the broader recognition that food security should be assessed multidimensionally rather than through a single production-based indicator Singh and Yadav (2026), and that unaddressed structural drivers such as household income, expenditure, and employment status continue to constrain both rural and urban household food security (Lentz et al., 2025).

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Figure 4. Monitoring, Group Reflection, and Evaluation of the Family Food Security Programme with Dasa Wisma Participants

The programme's choice of low-cost, space-efficient cultivation media polybags and repurposed vehicle tyres reflects the principle that home garden interventions must be adapted to local resource constraints and settlement density (Agustina et al., 2026), and it parallels evidence that improving physical access to affordable cultivation and processing methods meaningfully widens households' access to nutritious food (Wakhungu et al., 2026).

Because Dasa Wisma is a women-centred institution, the programme also carries gender-related implications. The findings are broadly consistent with evidence that empowering women within household and agrifood systems enhances broader household livelihoods Wakhungu et al. (2026) and that women's empowerment in agricultural decision-making is closely linked to improved food security status Sarma et al. (2025). At the same time, the caution raised by Ume et al. (2026) that support programmes risk being superficial unless they also address underlying inequalities in care work, labour participation, and access to services is instructive: sustaining the gains observed in RT 28 will require continued attention to the time and labour burden that garden maintenance places on women members, alongside the productive benefits it generates (Kawira et al., 2026).

The programme's combination of socialisation, hands-on training, mentoring, and monitoring also reflects the broader finding that multi-component interventions rather than single-component programmes tend to be more effective in improving household food security and nutrition outcomes (Schling et al., 2025), and that diversified, self-produced vegetables can support dietary variety for vulnerable household members such as breastfeeding mothers and young children (Schling et al., 2025), whose nutritional vulnerability has been documented in comparable contexts elsewhere (Bonuedi et al., 2025).

Looking beyond the immediate programme period, sustaining the Dasa Wisma home garden will require continued attention to seed availability, plant variety diversification, and ongoing technical support (Kawira et al., 2026). Evidence from women-led seed networks and locally adapted crop varieties elsewhere suggests that such mechanisms are critical for the long-term viability of community food initiatives once external facilitation ends (Masamha et al., 2026), and that secure, continuous access to productive resources remains a key determinant of whether empowerment gains are sustained over time (Isaacs et al., 2026).

Practical and Academic Implications

Practically, the participatory empowerment model developed in this programme can be replicated by other Dasa Wisma and PKK groups, sub-district governments, agricultural extension workers, and universities seeking to design similarly staged, low-cost home garden interventions in dense urban settlements (Onyimadu & Adetutu, 2026). Academically, this programme contributes an applied example of how a structured, staged empowerment process rather than a purely technical gardening intervention can be documented and evaluated as a replicable model for strengthening household food security through neighbourhood-level women's groups, addressing a documented gap in the community empowerment and household food security literature (Sassi, 2026).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Participatory empowerment approach encompassing need assessment, participatory planning, capacity building, implementation, mentoring, and evaluation can meaningfully strengthen the productivity of a neighbourhood-level women's group in managing home gardens to support household food security. The programme improved Dasa Wisma members' understanding of household food security, built their practical cultivation skills, shifted their engagement from individual and sporadic activity to collective participation grounded in gotong royong, and transformed previously unused yards into productive family food gardens. For future initiatives, it is recommended that similar programmes incorporate a longer-term monitoring period and a more systematic method for tracking household-level outcomes, such as changes in food expenditure and dietary diversity, to assess the sustained impact of pekarangan-based empowerment on family food security. This programme implies that contextually adapted, empowerment-centred community service models offer an effective and replicable strategy for strengthening urban household food resilience at the neighbourhood level.

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ETHICS APPROVAL

The community service program engaged adult participants from the Dasa Wisma group in education, participatory planning, cultivation, mentoring, and evaluation activities. No clinical intervention or biological sampling took place, and there was no collection of personal information on health. Voluntary participation in discussions, observations, and evaluation of the program was done, and the participants were fully aware of what the program entailed. Personal information and photography were collected for purposes of documenting the program. For that reason, ethics approval for human subjects research was not necessary for this community service program.

STATEMENT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they do not have any financial, professional, or personal interests that may have affected the execution of the community service program and interpretation of the findings.

TRANSPARENCY OF DATA

The data used in this study as support for its findings are based on observation in the field, discussion groups, activity participation records, program documents, and pre- and post-program evaluations. Since there may be some program documentation that might include information about the individual participants and activities within the community, the data are not deposited in a public open-access data repository. However, reasonable requests for access to the supporting data may be made to the corresponding author.

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USAGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE STATEMENT

In the writing of this paper, artificial intelligence (AI) was employed only to assist in improving language, grammar, translation, and overall academic writing. AI was not used to create any research data, participant data, findings, citations, or empirical findings. Any findings, interpretations of programmatic outcomes, methodology, references, and conclusions were all critically reviewed and checked by the authors themselves. The authors themselves are fully responsible for the accuracy, authenticity, and integrity of the manuscript.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE AUTHORS

The contributions made by Jamiah included the following areas: conceptualization, methodology, investigation, implementation of the community program, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript writing. The contributions made by Diana involved the following: conceptualization, project administration, community engagement, supervision, and critical revision of the manuscript. Maya Preva Biantary was involved in the following contributions: methodology, facilitation of training, investigation, mentoring, and documentation of the

community program. The following were some of the contributions of Salasiah: community engagement, data collection, monitoring, evaluation, and documentation. Lastly, Wulan Sari was involved in the following areas: data collection, field observation, documentation of the program, evaluation, and manuscript review.

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