

## Encouraging the Marketing Communication Strategy for UD Sumber Rejeki to Increase Fish-based Food Quality and Income

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### Abstrak

*Tujuan dari program Bakti Inovasi bagi Masyarakat (BIMA) ini untuk mentransferkan pengetahuan dan teknologi kepada mitra Usaha Mikro Kecil Menengah (UMKM) di Desa Tasikmadu, yaitu UD Sumber Rejeki. Metode pelaksanaan kegiatan melalui penyuluhan, pelatihan, dan pendampingan. Tim pelaksana menyebarkan kuesioner dan melakukan wawancara kepada pelaku UMKM di Desa Tasikmadu. Sementara Focus Group Discussion khusus pada UD Sumber Rejeki sebagai mitra untuk mengurai permasalahan. Kegiatan BIMA ini memiliki Tingkat Kesiapterapan Teknologi (TKT) level 5 yang memiliki dasar penelitian sebelumnya tentang produk pangan olahan berbasis ikan dan pendampingan UMKM di Kabupaten Trenggalek. Hasil transfer pengetahuan melalui penyuluhan berhasil meningkatkan pemahaman tentang kualitas bahan baku, resep sehat, variasi cita rasa, pentingnya digital marketing, dan kepemilikan legalitas usaha. Hasil alih teknologi berupa aplikasi pemasaran digital, perbaikan label, kemasan produk baru, dan hibah mesin pendingin berdampak pada peningkatan kualitas produk pangan olahan, perluasan jaringan pemasaran, peningkatan angka penjualan produk, dan meningkatkan kapasitas produksi.*

**Kata Kunci:** UMKM; produk olahan ikan; strategi komunikasi pemasaran

### Abstract

The purpose of the Bakti Innovation for Community (BIMA) program is to transfer knowledge and technology to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (UMKM) partners in Tasikmadu Village, namely UD Sumber Rejeki. The method of implementing activities is through counseling, training, and mentoring. The implementation team distributed questionnaires and conducted interviews with SMEs in Tasikmadu Village. Meanwhile, a Focus Group Discussion was held with UD Sumber Rejeki's members to solve problems. This BIMA activity has a Technology Readiness Level (TKT) level 5, which has the basis of previous research on fish-based processed food products and mentoring MSMEs in the Trenggalek Regency. The results of knowledge transfer through counseling have succeeded in increasing understanding of the quality of raw materials, healthy recipes, variety of flavors, the importance of digital marketing, and ownership of business legality. The results of technology transfer in the form of digital marketing applications, improved labels, new product packaging, and refrigeration machine grants have an impact on improving the quality of processed food products, expanding marketing networks, increasing product sales figures, and increasing production capacity.

Keywords: MSMEs; processed fish products; marketing communication strategy

Submitted: 05/10/2022

Revision: 05/10/2022

Accepted: 10/10/2022



## INTRODUCTION

The Innovation Service Program for the Community (BIMA) is an activity for developing Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (UMKM) UD Sumber Rejeki in Tasikmadu Village, Watulimo District, Trenggalek Regency to increase income and fish-based food quality. This program focused on marketing communication strategy through transferring knowledge, skills, and technology from lecturers and students of Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur. Since UD Sumber Rejeki has a significant problem with decreasing sales and a lack of production capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a group of MSMEs, they are trying to find a suitable store management system and widen the marketing network. As problems concerning sales statistics are declining up to 60 percent, UD Sumber Rejeki needs to increase its income very fast. Moreover, the decline in fishery performance (fish catches and sales of processed fish products) does not only affect fishermen in the Trenggalek regency but takes place on a national scale (Unair News, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has an impact on domestic fish production, lowers the market value of seafood, affects consumer demand, many retail sales of processed marine fish are closed, disrupts trade routes, the potential for damage to stored fish products increases, and the cost of product packaging increases to avoid COVID-19 transmission. The pandemic has reduced the demand for exports of national fishery products by between 40-50 percent. In addition, many small fish entrepreneurs have difficulty implementing social distancing. As a result, the distribution of fish products to consumers is hampered, especially with the decline in demand, resulting in lower fish prices. The level of welfare in the Indonesian fisheries sector is indicated by the fisherman-farmer exchange rate (NTNP). The lowest NTNP occurred in the second quarter of 2020, with a value below 100 (Wiradana et al., 2021).

The existing condition of product marketing in UD Sumber Rejeki, during the COVID-19 pandemic, experienced a decline in sales between 50% and 60%, despite various marketing innovation efforts. The following are the prices of processed fish-based products and the monthly sales results for 2021. (1) Sales of Fish Meatballs reached 65 Kg per month. Or Rp3,900,000, with a selling price of Rp60,000 per kilogram. (2) Sales of Tuna Tofu as many as 175 packs or generate Rp1,750,000 per month, with a selling price of Rp10,000 per

pack. (3) The proceeds from the sale of Fish Nugget are 125 packs or Rp1,250,000 per month, with the selling price per pack of Rp10,000. (4) Sales of Fish Sticks as much as 20 Kg or Rp900,000 per month, with a selling price of Rp45,000 per kilogram. (5) While the sales of Amplang Tengiri are 20 Kg or an income of Rp2,000,000 per month, with a selling price of Rp100,000 per pack. So, the total sales of processed fish products during the COVID-19 Pandemic is Rp9,800,000 per month. The sales statistic in 2020 contrasts the sales results before the COVID-19 pandemic (2018), which reached between 18 million rupiahs to 20 million rupiahs per month.

This community service program is a follow-up to a series of research and community service activities from the Implementing Team. The first research activity was Mapping and Planning for Technology-Based Innovation in Trenggalek Regency from October to November 2018 (Prabowo et al., 2019). Next are community service activities with the Research Results Application for the Community (PIHAT) scheme with the title Fish Meatball Home Industry Assistance in Tasikmadu Village in 2019 (Tranggono, Nuryananda, et al., 2020). Finally, as an application of the benefits of previous research and community service results, the implementing team developed applied research entitled Community Empowerment Models in Developing Innovations in Disadvantaged Areas of Trenggalek Regency in 2021 (Tranggono, Trisna, et al., 2021).

The reason for choosing the location of Trenggalek Regency is based on the previous research and development results using the Katsinov-meter calculation; Trenggalek Regency is still at level two for the readiness to strengthen technological innovation. At least Trenggalek Regency still has weaknesses in community development planning activities and their implementation. The first weakness is that few communities' development plans in Trenggalek Regency consider risk assessments. There are no long-term anti-spatial plans, especially regarding the impact of development on the environment and socio-economics. The second weakness is the strengthening of social organizations in the implementation of development programs. The potential of social organizations in Trenggalek Regency is quite enormous. Community attachment to culture, traditions and religious norms is still very high. Those potentials can be optimal for implementing development programs in the diffusion of innovation. What often happens is that traditional culture is a hindrance to the advancement

of innovation in Trenggalek Regency. The development approach uses the perspective of technical assistance and grants and ignores the transfer of knowledge and technology transfer. The traditional culture of the people of Trenggalek Regency is not yet conducive to creating a social environment that has a view toward technological innovation (Tranggono, Yusuf, et al., 2020).

One of the community groups in Trenggalek Regency that target this BIMA activity is a fishing family in Tasikmadu Village to increase family income. Therefore, the fisherwomen's group is an appropriate development target to support the increasing income of fishermen's families. So far, various businesses of processed fish-based products have developed quite well, and fisherwomen are the backbone of the effort to earn additional income apart from fish catches. Several businesses that have developed well through previous assistance from this implementing team include making fish crackers, fish nuggets, and fish balls.

Based on historical records, the village in Tasikmadu Village is one of the largest producers of captured fish. The village can produce processed food products made from fish or fish-based food (Prabowo et al., 2019). Many residents formed joint business groups to develop their businesses, and most businesses are fish-based food home industries. One of the Joint Business Groups that develops its business as a Trading Business is UD Sumber Rejeki. It consists of ten micro and small businesses owned by fisherwomen as homemakers. They have more leisure time than women workers, such as public servants, teachers, and *ustadzah*.

## **MATERIAL AND METHOD**

The BIMA team identifies problems of MSMEs in Tasikmadu Villages by giving questionnaires to 20 owners in Tasikmadu village to get general problems in ruling their businesses. Also, invite the members of UD Sumber Rejeki to a Focus Group Discussion to collect specific problems running MSMEs business during the COVID-19 pandemic. The general problems of MSMEs in Tasikmadu village are a lack of knowledge in producing fish-based food with good qualities, lack of knowledge in producing good packaging, limited rooms or places to store fresh fish at home, lack of skills in building a marketing network, and less understand in mastering digital marketing. The specific problems of UD Sumber Rejeki

are a lack of skills in mastering digital marketing, a lack of knowledge about the impact of packaging quality in selling, lack of knowledge in making various recipes and storing raw material for making fish-based snacks.

Implementing the BIMA scheme service activities involves counseling, training, and mentoring (figure 1).

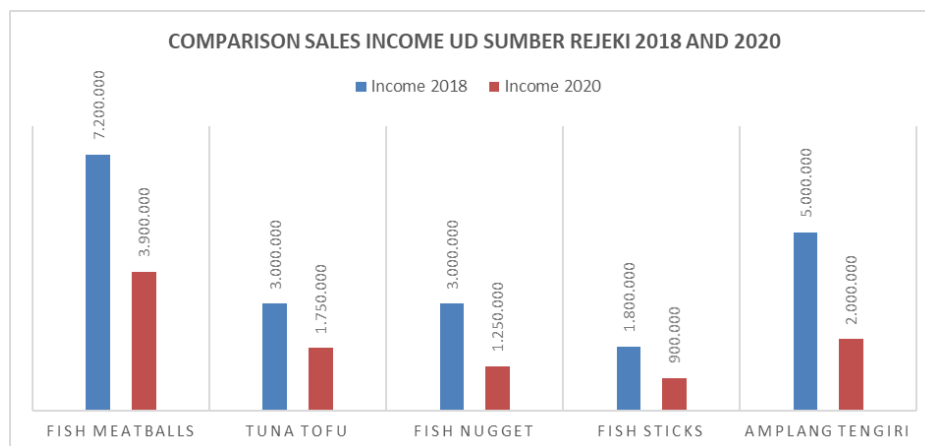


**Figure 1. Situation Analysis and Activities in implementing BIMA program**

### Partner Participation and Integrated Mentoring

During program implementation, UD Sumber Rejeki, as a partner, got to increase knowledge about upgrading product quality and production capacity to develop its business. They need to learn and understand the dough composition, healthy recipes, and variety of flavors so the fish-based food product can compete with other types of processed fish products from many other MSMEs. Moreover, UD Sumber Rejeki is eager to have skills in handling marketing systems. Since UD Sumber Rejeki has a significant problem with decreasing selling and lack of production capacity, as a group of MSMEs, they have been

trying to find a suitable store management system and widening their marketing network. As problems concerning sales statistics are declining to 60 percent (as shown in figure 2), UD Sumber Rejeki needs to increase its income very fast.



**Figure 2. The Comparison sales income of UD Sumber Rejeki between 2018 and 2020**

The BIMA team and partners implemented the marketing channel strategy during community service activities with integrated assistance. The BIMA team did not only conduct counseling but also shared knowledge and skills through training and practice. After passing the training, members of UD Sumber Rejeki then practiced producing all processed fish-based food independently. Furthermore, the BIMA team improved packaging design, assisted product certification (halal certification), made a profile video, published community service activities through online media news, and created digital marketing accounts on Instagram.

Previously, The BIMA team has several research and experiences on the subject of MSMEs development (Achmad, Azhari, et al., 2020; Tranggono et al., 2018), processed food (Sarofa & Wicaksono, 2019), fishing groups (Achmad, Mardiyah, et al., 2020), and digital marketing (Mas'udah et al., 2022; Tranggono, Musicasari, et al., 2021). Therefore, the BIMA team could produce concepts of extension, mentoring, and technology transfer that are feasible to apply. The brief profile of the BIMA Team is as follows (1) Ir. Didiék Tranggono, M.Si., is a Lecturer in the Communication Studies Program specializing in Development Communication and Agricultural Extension. His last education was a Master of Social Sciences, Main Study Area of Communication Science from Padjadjaran University (UNPAD) Bandung. Experience in managing community service grants from the ministry. He had a vital

role in program design and partner selection. (2) Dr. Zainal Abidin Achmad, M.Si, M.Ed, is a Lecturer in the Communication Studies Program. He is a Doctor in Social Sciences from Universitas Airlangga (UNAIR) Surabaya and specializes in Marketing Communication. He plays a role in determining the selection of digital marketing media, improving packaging quality, and digital branding. (3) Ir. Ulya Sarofa, MM, is a Food Technology Study Program Lecturer. She got a Food expert master's from the Bogor Agricultural Institute (IPB). Her expertise and interest are healthy food products and variations of processed food from the agricultural, fishery, and livestock products (Sarofa et al., 2020). She had a role in providing training materials for processed food and healthy recipes. (4) Dr. Wildan Taufik R., SIA, M.PSDM, is a doctor of human resource management. He has experience in the field of stakeholder mapping. He played a role in designing the interaction model and competency of the target audience, as well as identifying business licensing and product certification.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The BIMA program started on 22-24 May 2022 by training UD Sumber Rejeki members and MSME owners in Tasikmadu Village (Tranggono et al., 2022). The training transferred knowledge about making meatballs dough hygienically with various recipes and the importance of digital marketing. Materials given in the training solve general problems of lack of knowledge in maintaining the excellent quality of fish-based food. One easy way to increase sales is by providing food with various recipes or flavors, reasonable prices, and good packaging (Achmad, Tranggono, et al., 2022; Mas'udah, Achmad, Chayani, Multazam, et al., 2021).

Before enrolling in the training, the fisherwomen of Tasikmadu village demonstrated their ability to make dough of fish-based food, such as fish balls and fish sticks, as they usually do with the traditional recipe (figure 3). This process was essential for the BIMA team to observe the dough making-process and to understand the weakness of fisherwomen's dough quality.





**Figure 3. Tasikmadu Village Fisherwomen showed how to make fish balls dough with a traditional recipe.**

Then, the BIMA team provided a counseling session regarding handling the hygienic of raw materials, making dough ingredients with healthy compositions, and various recipes for variations in the taste of fish balls. At the same time, the training material is the practice of making fish meatball dough with a healthy composition of raw materials and adding a variety of spicy flavors using pepper and dry Lombok. As an expert in food technology, Ulya Sarofa (member of the BIMA team) designed a training to increase fisherwomen's knowledge and skills in producing high-quality fish dough hygienically. Ulya Sarofa also showed the process of making various recipes and flavors of fish balls and fish sticks (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. Counseling and training for making hygienic fishball dough with various flavors**



The results of the evaluation of the BIMA implementation team on the processing of foodstuffs are as follows: (1) The knowledge of partners regarding the manufacture of processed fish products is only based on their understanding or habits. The meatballs' taste does not taste like fish because the composition of the ingredients is less balanced. (2) Storage of ingredients for fish, meat, and spices is not hygienic and mixed with other food ingredients. Storage Fresh fish meat is not put in a tightly closed container so that the smell of other foods contaminates the original aroma of fish meat. (3) The limitation of the cooling room as a means of storing processed materials and products. (4) There are only two types of meatballs, namely, large and small. There are no fiber differences (coarse and fine) variations in taste based on the type of fish and no variations in spicy taste. Evidence shows that more flavors and healthy recipes of fish-based food products can increase sales because consumers have more choices for buying good quality food (Achmad, Tranggono, et al., 2022).

The BIMA program continued in June 2022 by observing the legal aspect of business and product certification, storage capacity and managing foodstuff, quality of product packaging, and marketing system of UD Sumber Rejeki. Regarding business legality and product certification, UD Sumber Rejeki has two documents: (1) Business Registration Number (NIB) 9120206731754 for Micro Business on behalf of Susanti, as the owner of UD Sumber Rejeki. (2) Halal certificate No. 07100033450416, which has expired (29 April 2016-28 April 2018) for Snack food products, with the product names of Fish Sticks "Renita" and Fish Amplang "Renita." (3) Halal Certificate No. 07030025490315 has expired (11 March 2015-10 March 2017) for the type of Processed Fish product, with the product names Fish Meatballs "Sumber Rejeki" and Fish Shredded "Sumber Rejeki." The BIMA team gave solutions to business licensing by submitting a new halal certification for micro-business products and ready-to-eat snacks on behalf of Susanti (UD Sumber Rejeki owner). Application letter Number 173026 dated 28 June 2022.

Regarding the problem of processing and storing foodstuffs, the BIMA team gave counseling, training, and grants on Appropriate Technology (TTG). Since UD Sumber Rejeki has a limited storage capacity, Chest Freezer is a suitable, appropriate technology to increase the storage capacity. UD Sumber Rejeki does not have any spare room for storing raw materials and processed products, which is why the chest freezer functions as a cooling

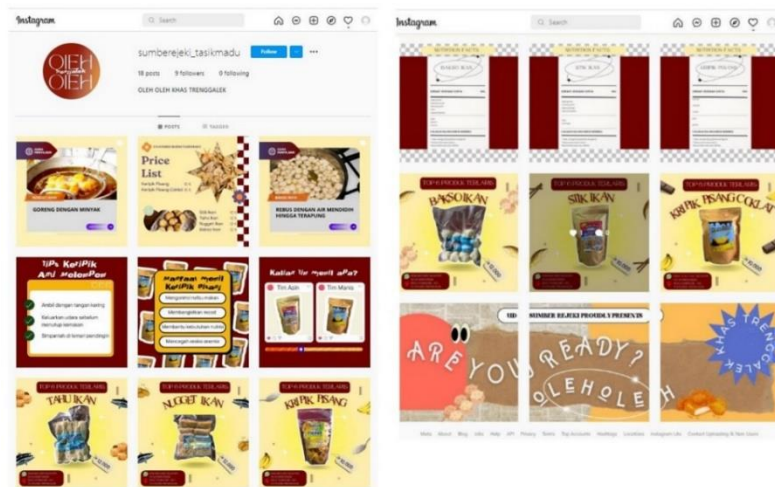
machine to store food and drinks in cold temperatures. The function of this cooler is to store fresh fish, the dough of fished-based food, seasonings, and packaged food. Among the various brands of chest freezers on the market, the Sharp FRV-300 is the most suitable choice (figure 5). In addition to having a large capacity of up to 300 liters and weighing only 55 kilograms, this freezer requires 100 watts of electrical power for daily use.



**Figure 5. Chest Freezer SHARP FRV-300**

The findings from the product packaging and marketing system of UD Sumber Rejeki are (1) processed products in the form of packaged products stored in the refrigerator as product displays, then the seller waits for the buyer. (2) Sales only rely on word-of-mouth marketing. The weakness of this marketing model is the limited reach marketing. (3) There are no aggressive marketing activities, such as cheap local radio advertising or placing giant banners in UD Sumber Rejeki's storage area. (4) There is no creative product promotion for restaurants and hotels in Trenggalek Regency. (5) This impacts the quantity of production, which has not increased in the last five years. Those facts define that UD Sumber Rejeki manages the business in a traditional marketing system.

Regarding marketing system issues, the BIMA team conducted digital marketing training and assisted in creating an Instagram account @sourcerejeki\_tasikmadu ([https://instagram.com/sourcerejeki\\_tasikmadu?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=](https://instagram.com/sourcerejeki_tasikmadu?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=)) as a digital marketing tool. UD Sumber Rejeki got assistance with creating an account, managing accounts, and posting content. Including tips for making product photos and content design ready for Instagram (figure 6).



**Figure 6. Instagram account @sumberejeki\_tasikmadu with an initial post of processed products with the assistance of the BIMA team.**

After counseling and training (making processed fish balls and digital marketing) on 22-24 May 2022, the BIMA team handed over the TTG cooling machine and assessed the impact of selling processed products using new packaging sent on 1-3 June 2022. Several packaging variations with new labels made by the BIMA Team are for processed products, including fish balls, nuggets, sausages, and sticks. The monitoring and evaluation visit assessed UD Sumber Rejeki's production progress. The involvement of the village head also encourages other MSMEs in the Tasikmadu Village to learn from the success story of UD Sumber Rejeki.

The monitoring and evaluation results are (1) the application of digital marketing using Instagram has shown promising results with several purchase orders from outside Trenggalek Regency. (2) Changes in eye-catching packaging with hygienic materials affect increasing demand and production capacity. The following are UD Sumber Rejeki products before and after the package (Figures 7, 8, and 9).



Figure 7. Unpackaged Fish Sticks (left) and in new packaging (right)



Figure 8. Fish Meatballs before packaging (left) and in new packaging (right)



Figure 9. Amplang Fish before packaging (left) and in new packaging (right)



Before the COVID-19 pandemic, UD Sumber Rejeki sold large quantities of products. However, the condition of the COVID-19 pandemic has sunk the efforts of the Watulimo Village community, and the sales statistic of food and beverages in Trenggalek Regency declined very fast (Eferyn et al., 2022). In this condition, a reliable strategy is needed to build good relationships to achieve group goals. When a group of people always considers the environmental constraints that will inevitably be faced, a good strategy is needed (Siagian, 2014). Strategy in a competition is a method or tactic of a comprehensive basic plan of a series of actions carried out by a relationship to achieve a goal or several suggestions (Rahim & Radjab, 2016).

The communication strategy is an essential stage of the decision-making process to act on a development program to implement. The communication strategy will determine the practical steps for how to do it. Each strategy requires a different emphasis on critical processes, intervention objectives, and approaches. Strategy is essentially planning and management to achieve a goal. However, to achieve this goal, the strategy does not function as a road map that shows only the direction but must show the operational tactics (Achmad, Wuryandari, et al., 2022; Imaduddin et al., 2022; Melewar et al., 2017). Communication strategies must be structured flexibly so that operational communication tactics can immediately adjust to the influencing factors (Santoso et al., 2021). Effective communication can be achieved by changing attitudes, how to change opinions, and how to change behavior (McKay et al., 2018).

The BIMA program target is fisherwomen, namely women with fisher husbands who earn income from catching fish. Meanwhile, fisherwomen work as fisher laborers or homemakers. Fisherwomen are interesting to study because women have leverage on economic resilience and social resilience (Achmad, Mardiyah, et al., 2020; Tranggono et al., 2017). Moreover, the role of women is enormous in capital accumulation because they have the potential to generate additional income for the family (Bisowarno & Untari, 2019; Tjahjono, 2021).

Identification and mapping of personnel in the social groups of fisherwomen is an anticipation of the vulnerability of women's psychological conditions. Vulnerabilities arise if each participant in counseling, training, and mentoring is open to new ideas. For this reason,

the BIMA Team, including students, must interact directly with the target group and local leaders. Personnel mapping for all BIMA program mentoring participants includes educational background, economy, marital status, number of children, monthly expenses, and motivation for participation. These data generally influence the psychological condition of the participants in counseling, training, and mentoring. The readiness of the psychological condition of the target group is one indicator of readiness to accept innovations and openness to make changes (Alamiyah, Arviani, et al., 2021; Alamiyah, Kusuma, et al., 2021; Juwito et al., 2022; Magner, 2016; Mas'udah, Achmad, Chayani, Multazam, et al., 2021; Mas'udah, Achmad, Chayani, Nathania, et al., 2021; Tranggono, Pramitha, et al., 2021).

For this reason, the BIMA team acted as extension workers, presenters, and instructors who needed to understand the condition of UD Sumber Rejeki and Tasikmadu villagers' social environment and situations. An understanding of the individual, socio-cultural, and social environment can direct the BIMA team in preparing the program, delivering innovation techniques, choosing training methods, and even using language (Aditama et al., 2021; Arviani et al., 2021).

Zainal Abidin Achmad, an expert in Marketing Communication, and Wildan Raharja, an expert in Human Resources management, need to record the words, attitudes, and actions of UD Sumber Rejeki during counseling, training, and mentoring session. The BIMA team needs to understand how the audience (1) pays attention to material delivery, (2) responds to questions, (3) expresses ignorance, and (4) expresses enthusiasm and motivation with facial mimic and body language. The purpose of the recording is to determine the ability of each individual in readiness to accept the diffusion of innovations, mapping the roles of leaders, early adopters, influencers, and followers (Arviani & Febrianita, 2020; Nurjannah et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2020; Rochmana et al., 2022; Sukarno et al., 2019; Tranggono, Putri, et al., 2020).

In the preparation stage, the BIMA team leader mapped the capacity of members (lecturers and students) and discussed with the team to determine the program's type and technical implementation. The next stage is the division of job descriptions and roles. For example, who play a role as extension workers and instructors (food processing and digital marketing), drafters and designers (labels and packaging), photographers and videographers,



business and product legality assistants (licensing and certification documents), mapping individual data of target group members, writing scientific articles, preparation of activity reports, and presenters at seminar forums (dissemination of results). The objectives of the division of labor and role strategies are to (1) ensure an ongoing understanding of responsibilities, resulting in mutual openness and acceptance, (2) ensure the growth of mutual trust in fellow team members, (3) foster motivation to work to the best of their ability, (4) encourage action to complete tasks and responsibilities satisfactorily. Finally, (5) opening opportunities for collaboration in other programs.

After implementing the BIMA Program, the team completed the monitoring and evaluation stages. This stage is critical because it aims to observe the development of UD Sumber Rejeki in maintaining business consistency and continuity. Primarily regarding product quality (hygiene, recipe, and taste), production capacity, sales quantity, and profit growth. Product quality affects increasing sales of MSME products and production capacity, thereby affecting members of UD Sumber Rejeki's income. More broadly, it is to affect the improvement of the welfare of the Tasikmadu villagers.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The BIMA Program successfully encouraged a marketing communication strategy for UD Sumber Rejeki by transferring knowledge, skills, and appropriate technology. In addition, the BIMA team managed a series of community service activities through counseling, training, and mentoring to (1) upgrade the skills of UD Sumber Rejeki members to produce hygienic fish-based food, (2) improve the quality of fish-based food recipes with a variety of flavor, (2) upgrade the quality of product packaging, (3) widened marketing channel with digital marketing, (4) increase production capacity with a bigger cooling machine as product storage, and (5) strengthen the branding of UD Sumber Rejeki with the halal certificate, news, and video profile.

The BIMA team of LPPM UPN Veteran Jawa Timur suggested the local government could intensify its involvement to empower fishery community income by assisting fisheries-based MSMEs in Trenggalek Regency. In the future, UD Sumber Rejeki can upgrade its

business into technology-based business groups through advanced assistance from LPPM UPN Veteran Jawa Timur.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The BIMA team would like to thank the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) of the Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur, which gave grants to manage this community service activity. We also thank the reviewers and editors of the PLAKAT Journal.

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