

STRATEGY OF COMMUNITY SOCIAL CARE MANAGEMENT (PPKM) IN IMPROVING COMMUNITY WELFARE IN SENGON SARI VILLAGE, AEK KUASAN DISTRICT, ASAHAN REGENCY

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Abstract

Improving rural community welfare does not depend on government policy alone. It requires the active role of communities through community-based social initiatives. One such initiative is the PPKM Al-Ikhlas (Pengurus Peduli Kesosialan Masyarakat) programme in Sengon Sari Village, Aek Kuasan Sub-district, Asahan Regency. This programme reflects social solidarity in supporting villagers facing social and economic difficulties. The study aims to analyse the strategies of PPKM Al-Ikhlas in improving community welfare, to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors of programme implementation, and to describe the contribution of the programme to community welfare in the village. A qualitative descriptive method was used. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. Informants comprised PPKM Al-Ikhlas committee members, village officials, community leaders, and beneficiary residents. Data were analysed through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that the strategies adopted by PPKM Al-Ikhlas rely on participatory approaches, community deliberation, and direct service to those in need. Supporting factors include strong values of mutual cooperation, community-level social concern, and trust in the committee. Inhibiting factors include limited financial resources, simple administrative management, and uneven community participation. The programme has contributed positively to community welfare, both through the fulfilment of basic needs and the strengthening of social solidarity. PPKM Al-Ikhlas thus functions as a community-based social initiative that complements the role of village government in advancing rural welfare.

Keywords: Strategy; PPKM; Community Welfare; Social Initiative; Sengon Sari Village

INTRODUCTION

The welfare of village communities is a primary development goal that cannot be achieved solely by village governments. The concept of social welfare positions communities as active subjects of development, so efforts to improve their welfare require the active participation of residents themselves. In the Indonesian context, Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages opens up ample space for communities to develop community-based social initiatives (Republic of Indonesia, 2014). These initiatives are an important complement to the role of village governments, particularly in addressing socio-economic issues that are difficult to reach through formal programs.

At the rural level, social capital in the form of mutual cooperation, solidarity, and caring among residents has long been a force for community resilience (Dinata, Yulia, & Pratiwi, 2024; Marlina, Saputra, & Hidayah, 2024). This social capital acts as a lubricant for social organizations: reducing transaction costs and coordination, strengthening trust, and enabling residents to act collectively without over-reliance on formal bureaucracy. Previous studies have shown that village community well-being improves when social program governance combines formal policy

support with community initiatives (Wahyu, Susanti, & Rahmat, 2024; Anisa, Noor, & Nugroho, 2024).

The Al-Ikhlas PPKM (Community Activity Restrictions) program is a community-based social initiative in Sengon Sari Village, Aek Kuasan District, Asahan Regency. It is important to emphasize that PPKM, in the context of this research, does not refer to the Enforcement of Community Activity Restrictions as stipulated in the COVID-19 policy, but rather to a local acronym for "Pengurus Peduli Kesusialan Masyarakat" (Community Social Care Management). This organization was established in March 2022 through a village meeting involving the Village Consultative Body (BPD), Community Empowerment Institution (LPM), religious leaders, community leaders, and community representatives. Its purpose is to become an independent, participatory social organization to assist residents experiencing social and economic challenges.

Most previous studies on community-based social programs have focused on traditional institutions, religious institutions, or cooperatives (Sembiring & Lubis, 2024; Putra, Hasibuan, & Lubis, 2025). Studies examining the strategies of non-formal social organizations, which emerged from village deliberations and operate as independent partners of the village government, are still limited, particularly in the context of North Sumatra. This study contributes to filling this gap by examining the Al-Ikhlas Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) as a case study of social initiatives that complement formal village governance.

Based on this background, this research has three objectives. First, to analyze the Al-Ikhlas PPKM strategy in improving community welfare. Second, to identify supporting and inhibiting factors in program implementation. Third, to explain the program's contribution to village community welfare. The novelty of this study lies in its empirical analysis of non-formal social organizations based on village deliberations in rural Asahan, North Sumatra.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The qualitative approach was chosen because the focus of the study was an in-depth understanding of the strategies, dynamics, and perceptions of PPKM Al-Ikhlas implementers and their beneficiaries (Nurhayati, Apriyanto, Ahsan, & Hidayah, 2024; Mulyana et al., 2024). The research location was purposively selected in Sengon Sari Village, Aek Kuasan District, Asahan Regency, North Sumatra Province. The village administrative map is presented in Figure 1. The research was conducted from March to May 2025.

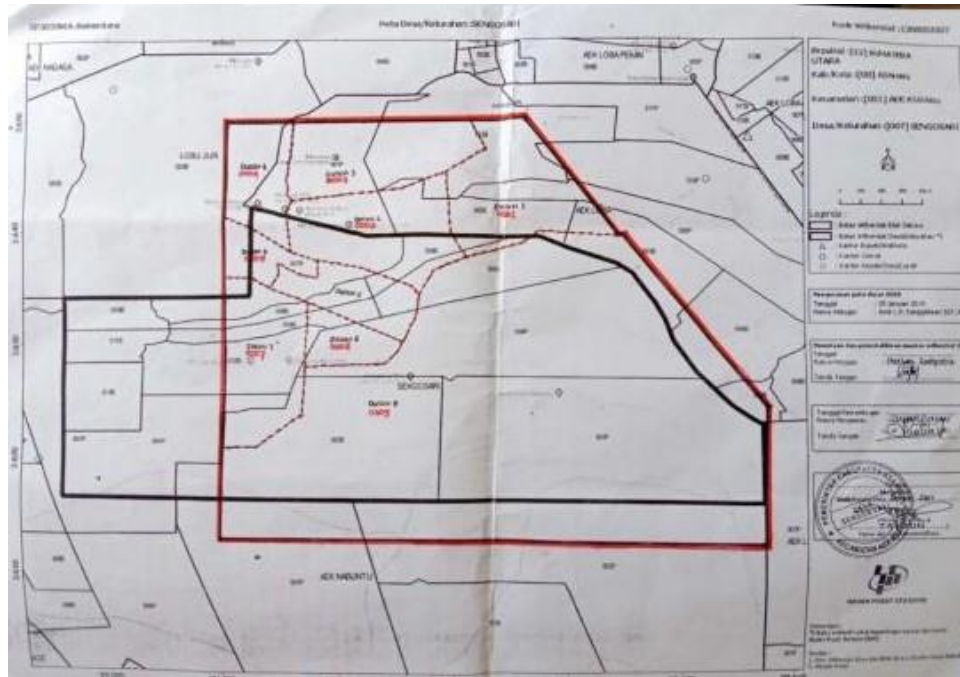


Figure 1. Administrative map of Sengon Sari Village, Aek Kuasan District, Asahan Regency

Eight informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the program. The composition of the informants is presented in Table 1. Data collection was conducted through three complementary techniques: in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation (Sari, Aprisilia, & Fitriani, 2025). Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, encompassing data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation by comparing information between informants.

Table 1. Composition of Research Informants

No	Informant Group	Role in PPKM Al-Ikhlas
1	Head of Al-Ikhlas PPKM	Strategy coordinator and social program decision-maker
2	Secretary and Treasurer	Administration, finance, and documentation manager
3	Hamlet Volunteers	Field implementer and hamlet liaison
4	Sengon Sari Village Head	Policy facilitator and institutional partner
5	Community and Religious Leaders	Guardian of the program's social and moral legitimacy
6	Beneficiaries	Program impact assessor

Source: Processed by researchers (2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History and Organizational Structure of PPKM Al-Ikhlas

The Al-Ikhlas Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) was established in March 2022 through a village meeting led by the Sengon Sari Village government. The meeting involved the Village Consultative Body (BPD), Community Empowerment Institution (LPM), religious leaders, community leaders, and community representatives. The meeting resulted in the establishment of an independent, community-based social organization to address residents' social and economic challenges. The village government acts as a facilitator, while the PPKM operates independently with the moral support of other village institutions.

The organizational structure of the Al-Ikhlas PPKM is simple, consisting of a Chairperson (Asnanum Damanik), a Secretary (Wagiyem), a Treasurer (Msrinatun), and members and volunteers from each hamlet. This division of roles is functional and collective. Although not yet outlined in written articles of association (AD/ART), the division of tasks is based on consensus among the management, based on the principles of family and mutual trust. This flexible work pattern allows the management to assist each other in times of resource constraints.

Al-Ikhlas PPKM Strategy for Improving Welfare

Based on interviews and observations, the Al-Ikhlas PPKM strategy can be grouped into three main approaches. First, a participatory approach through discussions between administrators and residents to determine priority aid recipients. This approach ensures that decisions are not centered on a single figure but instead accommodate the voice of the community. Second, direct services to residents in need, namely distributing aid to underprivileged families, disaster victims, and residents experiencing urgent economic difficulties. Third, collective social and religious activities, such as orphanages, fundraising, and commemorating major holidays, simultaneously strengthen community solidarity.

The direct service strategy is considered effective because the social closeness between administrators and the community facilitates the identification of real problems. The flexibility of activity implementation also allows PPKM to respond quickly to urgent issues. These findings align with a study by Marlina, Saputra, and Hidayah (2024), which stated that community-based social organizations are most effective when they maintain structural agility and social closeness with residents.

Supporting Factors for Program Implementation

Supporting factors for the implementation of the Al-Ikhlas PPKM come from three areas. The first is social capital. The values of mutual cooperation and social awareness within the Sengon Sari Village community are the primary assets that encourage residents to contribute selflessly. This social capital reduces transaction costs and facilitates coordination between the management and village volunteers. The second area is community trust in the management. This trust is built on the management's strong social track record and adherence to the principle of trustworthiness in managing donated funds.

The third area is moral support from the village government and community leaders. This support provides social legitimacy for the Al-Ikhlas PPKM, even though the

organization operates as an independent entity outside the formal village government structure. The synergy between the village government and the PPKM positions the organization not as a mere independent initiative but as a strategic partner for the village government in social services.

Inhibiting Factors and Challenges

The implementation of the Al-Ikhlas PPKM (Community Activity Restrictions) faces several challenges. First, limited financial resources. PPKM funding still relies on community self-help and voluntary donations. Consequently, the reach of assistance is limited, and funding uncertainty can impact program sustainability. Second, administrative management remains rudimentary. Although the Secretary maintains basic record-keeping, the documentation system is not fully organized, and financial accountability does not adhere to formal reporting standards. A similar study by Subhi, Kurniawan, and Tanjung (2024) confirmed that administrative capacity is a critical variable for the sustainability of non-formal social organizations.

Third, community participation is unequal. The involvement of youth groups in particular is still limited, so activity implementation tends to rely on adult groups. This situation poses a sustainability risk, particularly when there is no regeneration of administrators and volunteers from the younger generation. Fourth, the lack of written Articles of Association (AD/ART). Although the division of roles is well-established through informal agreements, the lack of formal documentation can create vulnerabilities in the event of changes in the board composition or internal disputes.

Impact of the Program on Community Welfare

The impact of the Al-Ikhlas PPKM (Community Activity Restrictions) was observed in two areas. The first area was meeting the basic needs of underprivileged residents, disaster victims, and families experiencing urgent difficulties. The aid distributed was well-targeted because administrators had close social ties with the community and could directly verify needs. These results reinforce the findings of Wahyu, Susanti, and Rahmat (2024) that community-based social programs have a high potential to reach their targets due to the low social distance between administrators and recipients.

The second area was strengthening social solidarity and a sense of togetherness. The Al-Ikhlas PPKM activities fostered social cohesion among residents, maintained the tradition of mutual cooperation, and strengthened community identity. These intangible impacts are difficult to measure with economic indicators, but are crucial for the long-term social resilience of the village. From the perspective of Putnam's social capital theory (Yulianto & Pratama, 2024), the strengthening of community ties generated by PPKM forms the foundation for broader village development.

The synthesis of the discussion indicates that the Al-Ikhlas PPKM complements, not replaces, the role of the village government. This organization identifies gaps in social services that are difficult to reach through formal programs and fills them through community-based approaches. PPKM's contribution extends beyond material assistance

to strengthening social capital, which serves as the foundation for more participatory village governance.

CLOSING

Conclusion

The Al-Ikhlâs Community Activity Restrictions (PPKM) strategy to improve the welfare of the Sengon Sari Village community is implemented through three approaches: a participatory approach based on deliberation, direct services to residents in need, and collective socio-religious activities that strengthen solidarity. Key supporting factors include the social capital of mutual cooperation, community trust in the administrators, and moral support from the village government. Inhibiting factors include limited financial resources, rudimentary administrative management, unequal community participation, especially among youth, and the absence of written articles of association (AD/ART). The PPKM program has made a positive contribution to meeting residents' basic needs while strengthening social solidarity, thus complementing the village government's role in welfare services.

Suggestion

The Al-Ikhlâs PPKM administrators need to strengthen organizational governance by establishing simple articles of association (AD/ART), developing a more orderly financial and activity recording system, and developing medium-term program planning to ensure activities do not become incidental. The administrators also need to expand youth involvement by establishing a youth volunteer division and engaging with younger generations. The village government is advised to continue providing mentoring and facilitation, including opening opportunities for cross-village collaboration so that PPKM can interact with government programs in an integrated manner. Village communities are encouraged to increase volunteer participation so that programs are not dependent on specific administrators. Further research is recommended using comparative studies across several villages with similar social organizations to map best practices in the governance of community-based social initiatives.

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