

Building Resilient Ex-Migrant Families in Resapombo Village, Blitar

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Abstract — Family relationship changes occur due to economic and social disruption. The community service aims to empower ex-migrant families in Resapombo Village, Blitar. Resilient families are characterized by strong family bonds, harmonious relationships, and effective communication patterns. Meanwhile, the ex-migrant families have experienced long separations, difficult communication, and financial problems that eventually influenced the family harmony, that included the husband, wife and children, and economic stability. Programs implemented were a family harmony workshop on communication and resilience, a school seminar at SMKN 1 Doko on sexuality and reproduction, and training for cadres. The result of the workshops was creating a cadre team of eleven people by selecting and guiding candidates to assist families in conflict resolution and support. The seminar at school was such a success that the next programs were organized in the future.

Keywords — resilient, ex-migrants, family communication

Abstrak— Perubahan hubungan keluarga terjadi karena adanya gangguan ekonomi dan sosial. Pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk memberdayakan keluarga purna migran di Desa Resapombo, Blitar. Keluarga tangguh ditandai dengan ikatan kekeluargaan yang kuat, hubungan yang harmonis, dan pola komunikasi yang efektif. Sementara itu, keluarga purna migran telah mengalami perpisahan yang lama, kesulitan komunikasi, dan permasalahan keuangan yang pada akhirnya mempengaruhi keharmonisan keluarga, termasuk suami, istri dan anak, serta stabilitas ekonomi. Program yang dilaksanakan adalah workshop keharmonisan keluarga tentang komunikasi dan ketahanan, seminar sekolah di SMKN 1 Doko tentang seksualitas dan reproduksi, serta pelatihan kader. Hasil dari lokakarya tersebut adalah terbentuknya tim kader yang terdiri dari sebelas orang dengan menyeleksi dan membimbing para calon untuk membantu keluarga dalam resolusi dan dukungan konflik. Seminar di sekolah berjalan sukses sehingga direncanakan ada program-program selanjutnya di masa depan.

Kata Kunci— tangguh, purna migran, komunikasi keluarga

I. INTRODUCTION

Resapombo Village in Doko District, Blitar Regency, East Java, is one of the villages with a high level of migrant workers. Data from Dinas Ketenagakerjaan, Blitar Regency revealed that during the 2021-2022 period, there were 145 migrant workers from Doko district, where Resapombo Village as one of the largest contributors [1]. The high migration rate in this village is driven by several factors, including limited employment opportunities, low levels of education, and the lack of skills possessed by the community [2].

Migration of Indonesian migrant workers is generally a family decision in response to urgent economic needs. Many families hope that by working abroad, family members who have migrated can bring success, especially in material

terms. Welianto [2] identified several main factors that encourage migration, such as dissatisfaction with the economic situation in the area of origin due to a lack of job opportunities and high population density which causes discomfort and competition.

However, this migration experience not only affects economic aspects, but also has a significant impact on social dynamics and communication patterns within the family. The departure of a family member, especially the mother, to work abroad can create geographical distance that limits face-to-face meetings and direct communication between parents and children when returning home. The role of mothers as entrepreneurs should receive support from family members [3]. In addition, education for children is not only the responsibility of the wife, but also the husband's. The family will have good resilience if all family members can play an optimal role and work together to realize the potential that exists in the family. Due to the distance, family communication is often limited to digital channels such as telephone or instant messaging via WhatsApp, which can hinder emotional closeness and understanding between family members.

Palindangan [4] notes that this phenomenon causes a transformation in the dynamics of relationships between family members, especially in the context of communication patterns. Physical distance, cultural differences, and changes in life dynamics due to cross-border interactions add to the complexity of the challenges in building family harmony. The return of retired migrants to the village does not immediately restore family harmony. Families of former migrants often face challenges in re-establishing effective communication and harmonizing relationships after the return of family members who previously worked abroad. Therefore, there is an urgent need to provide communication assistance for families of former migrants in Resapombo Village.

From the data obtained by the team during research, this community service program aims to answer these needs by focusing on communication assistance for post-migrant families to increase family harmony. This program is designed to help families understand and carry out optimal family functions, develop skills in managing conflict, and strengthen parenting patterns that are effective in supporting children's development. By providing comprehensive training and assistance, it is hoped that post-migrant families can rebuild emotional closeness and create a harmonious family environment.

Apart from that, this proposed program also highlights the need for more attention to economic development in rural areas such as Resapombo to reduce dependence on migration

as the main option for earning income. Policy makers need to take strategic steps to increase access to job training and education that is relevant to labor market needs so that society can compete effectively. Thus, this program not only focuses on improving family communication, but also contributes to improving the economic welfare of village communities.

During the research, the researchers revealed that the majority of migrant workers returning to Resapombo Village after working abroad generally belong to the low skilled and low motivation group. Although they are often considered materially successful and act as development agents on both micro and macro scales, many of them face serious challenges upon their return. Migrant workers, despite having limited skills, bring home new customs and culture that can influence family dynamics and local communities. One of the valuable assets they often take home is foreign language skills, acquired while working abroad and appropriate to the country in which they work.

However, this condition does not always have a positive impact. Many former migrants face physical and psychological problems caused by experiences of exploitative work abroad. Apart from that, economic challenges also often arise when they return to their home villages, especially if decent work opportunities that match their skills are not available. This situation encourages many returning migrants to consider working abroad again, creating a cycle of migration that continues to repeat itself.

Returning to the same environment as before they left, returned migrants often have difficulty adjusting to their families and communities. There are significant vulnerabilities in family communication, where relationship dynamics between family members can become strained or disrupted due to changes in roles and expectations that occur during the migration period [Utamidewi]. Changes in habits and perspectives that return migrants bring home can also cause incompatibility with other family members, who have not experienced similar changes.

Therefore, it is important to provide special attention and assistance to the post-migrant community in Resapombo Village. This assistance is needed to help them overcome the physical, psychological and economic challenges they face, as well as to strengthen communication and harmony within the family. Programs that support the development of new skills, social adjustment, and increased economic well-being will be of great benefit in helping former migrants rebuild stable and sustainable lives in their homelands. Thus, this support will not only reduce the tendency to return to work abroad but also contribute to strengthening local communities.

II. METHOD

The community service carried out is community service which aims to empower the people of Resapombo Village, especially the families of retired migrants. The service team carries out a community empowerment process using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method [5]. Community service using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method is a research process that is oriented towards empowerment and change [6]. This method focuses on

meeting needs and solving problems that exist in society. The Participatory Action Research (PAR) method is oriented towards the development and mobilization of knowledge in society so that target subjects can become agents of change, not just subjects of service [7]. The service team only acts as a facilitator in conveying knowledge and new things to open and equip the insight of post-migrants in terms of family communication.

In this method, the service team approaches something simple and becomes part of people's lives. Empowerment is an effort to create independence from the nature of dependence on other parties [8]. Whatever potential exists in society should be used as a tool for change. Both cultural potential, human resources through life experience, intelligence and local wisdom, as well as natural resources. Therefore, this community service is carried out in stages: 1) preparation stage, 2) initial mapping stage, 3) stage of building human relations, 4) analyzing problems, 5) developing programs, (6) conducting training, and (7) forming accompanying cadres.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the situation analysis, seven activities were conducted to reach the aims of building resilient families by having family harmony and financial stability. The activities were as follows: (1) program socialization; (2) workshops on family harmony that consists of topics on communication towards a harmonious family; (3) family conflict and resolution; (4) solid parenting; (5) building resilient family; (6) communication on sexuality and reproduction; and (7) train the trainers for cadres.

1. Program Socialization

Program socialization is intended as a process of delivering the program to the people of Resapombo, Doko, Blitar to introduce and provide an understanding of the service activity program which will be carried out for 6 months by the UAJY service team. This socialization process aims to ensure that the activity program designed can meet the needs of post-migrants as part of the Resapombo Community, through the feedback provided. M. Sokeh as Head of Resapombo Village welcomed the service activities that will be carried out. The community supports and provides feedback so that materials for teenagers can be provided as provisions for them in preparing for the future, especially for marriage.



Figure 1. Opening Speech by M. Sokeh

2. Communication towards a Harmonious Family

Family resilience describes the interaction and communication between individuals that are harmonious and physically and psychologically prosperous [3].

Communication towards a harmonious family is the first activity carried out in this service, facilitated by Vita. Family is a space for interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication is the exchange of information, ideas, feelings and opinions between two or more people. This communication can be done verbally or nonverbally. Interpersonal communication can be done face to face or by telephone. This communication can occur in various situations, such as family, organizational, social, national and international.

In this activity, we explored how communication occurs in post-migrant families. This activity is carried out to achieve several goals, including participants can share feelings of disappointment or mistakes, work together to achieve certain goals.

Before carrying out activities, the facilitator prepared training modules and materials which are then discussed with the team for improvement. The activity began with ice breaking, group discussion and presentation of material. In this activity, the village secretary, known as Carik, attended the activity and gave a speech.

3. Family Conflict and Resolution

The better the family resilience, the better the family's ability to face changes due to the social and economic challenges [3]. The right action can prevent harmonious families from being in a crisis situation while ensuring that family resilience remains strong.

In moving towards a harmonious family, the presence of conflict is inevitable. There was a significant difference between men and women in terms of the conflict resolution styles [9]. A harmonious family does not mean no conflict, but how the family can face and resolve these conflicts. This material was presented by Vita. The material conveyed that conflicts in the family need to be resolved quickly and precisely so as not to trigger rifts in the household. Several ways that can be done to resolve conflicts in the family:

1. Identifying the root of the problem, participants are asked to find out the real cause of the problem that occurs.
2. Open communication, participants are asked honestly and honestly, use positive language, and avoid hurtful or degrading words.
3. Be empathetic: in the family it is necessary to see other people's perspectives and avoid being blamed.
4. Look for solutions together and focus on the problems being faced and find a way out together.
5. Avoid bringing up the past so that the situation doesn't get worse by throwing insults or blaming you.
6. In the end, you need to say "sorry" and give yourself a chance to improve, you need to admit your mistake and apologize.

Vita asked participants to practice good communication between husband and wife, between mother or father and children.

4. Solid Parenting

Factors that influence adolescent sexual behavior are knowledge, increased sexual libido, information media, religious norms, parents, and free socialization [10]. Although famous saying states that "it takes a village to raise a kid," parenting is one of the most significant and challenging responsibilities in life. It involves raising and nurturing children to become responsible, independent, and emotionally healthy individuals. The concept of equal parenting, as it is important in modern society, promotes the psychological well-being of children, improves the stable-emotional state of parents and creates a harmonious family environment [11]. Good parenting requires love, patience, guidance, and consistency. This becomes a huge challenge when the family has only one single parent, or even both parents are away, and the children stay with their grandparents.

Solid parenting is one of the requirements to have a harmonious family. A child's overall development is influenced by the type of parenting that shapes their emotional, social, cognitive, and moral growth. Nobertus started the workshop by asking a question, "Who should raise the children?" As patriarchal family, this is answered by "the mother". However, the workshop highlighted that the father should attend and be involved in the process of the child's growth. When the mother goes overseas to work, parenting should be replaced by the father's role [12].

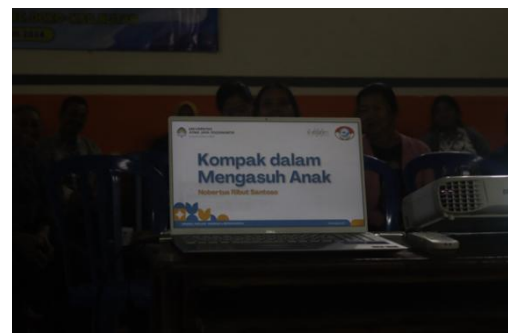


Figure 2. Slideshow on solid parenting

The workshop introduced four types of parenting, i.e. wise, authoritative, permissive, or ignorant. The most important element of a relationship is communication. The participants learned to listen empathetically, to use positive words, and they also practiced giving correct compliments. Participants practiced listening with empathy using cases, such as a situation when the child comes home and when the child tells his/her conflicts with friends. Using positive words was exercised by a situation when the child draws on walls and makes it dirty and when the child got bad marks on mathematics. Practicing giving the right compliment was conducted in the contexts when the child wins as the first winner in his/her class and when the child can cook properly.

The solid parenting was also exercised in the activity of making sentences: "If mother ..., father will ...," vice versa.

This exercise was to confirm how the parents relate to each other and how they build a solid and harmonious parenting.

In the case of mothers as the migrant workers, leaving the family behind for working overseas, fathers should be able to exchange roles with mothers to become caregivers for early childhood and adulthood [13]. Gender roles are supposed to be something that can be exchanged and are more fluid, especially in families of female migrant workers. However, the idealization of traditional gender construction is still quite strong. Migrant women are still interpreted as secondary breadwinners even though they are actually the main breadwinners. Early childhood care is important, especially the concept of fostering and forming character in a child [13].

5. Building Resilient Family



Figure 3. Participants of workshop

Having a harmonious family can lead to a resilient family. Nobertus started the workshop by asking questions to the audience consisting of parents, such as "Have you ever experienced stress, and how do you respond to it?". The discussion was then followed by a presentation on recognizing emotions and characteristics of unhealthy individuals mentally and physically. The participants were invited to practice how to face problems, how to use logical thinking, how to ask for help from others or the support system.

A harmonious family, apart from the relationship between husband and wife, a harmonious family also has a good relationship between parents and children (14). Children are God's trust in a family that is highly anticipated. When a family has children, there needs to be cohesiveness in parenting. The expected objectives of this material, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Understanding the four parenting styles according to Diana Baumrind's theory [15][16] and their impact on child development.
2. Identify the importance of co-parenting in the family, including the division of duties and responsibilities between father and mother.
3. Apply effective co-parenting principles to create a harmonious and conducive family environment for children's development.
4. Develop communication strategies and conflict management in childcare.

Participants practiced how to respond to their children to each other. They learned to complete a sentence in the format: "If ..., then" The facilitator gave an example: "If

the child comes home late, then both parents would talk it out together." The workshop ended with a summary of comparison on how to deal with stress, between unhealthy responses versus healthy responses. Healthy responses were as follows, being proactive, finding solutions, finding support system, managing emotions, accepting, and responding with positive attitudes.

6. Communication on Sexuality and Reproduction



Figure 4. Facilitators and female students

The team and the leaders of Resapombo Village believe that a family can build their resilience when each member of the family has the same ideas of how good communication is. The children should understand how to build relationships and knowledge of the meaning of healthy reproduction. However, several families consider that a discussion on reproductive health is inappropriate [17]. Adolescence is the most vulnerable period for the impact of early sex, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases and early marriage. Health preparation before marriage is generally not considered too much because the couples who are going to get married assume that they are already physically and mentally healthy [18]. One of the focuses to prevent free sex and early marriage is knowledge of reproductive health [19]. In Resapombo, there is a vocational school, SMKN 1 Doko, that the team collaborates with to have a seminar for the students.

The provision of material on sexuality and reproductive health aims to provide education to students at SMK N 1 Doko. The students at SMK N 1 Doko are in their teens. Adolescence is a crucial age considering that at this age adolescents experience growth both physically, psychologically and mentally. Teenagers are prone to being carried away by the flow of promiscuity and things that deviate if preventive efforts are not taken.

The material provided in this activity contains an understanding of adolescents physically and psychologically [20]. Material was also given about promiscuity and its impact on the future of adolescents [21]. Adolescents must try to take care of themselves, strive for education to get a good future, especially if they are going to build a household with an established situation.

Unfortunately, the participants available at the assigned time were only female students. Therefore, in the next program, the team and the school are going to assure that the male students will have the opportunity to attend the seminar.

7. Train the Trainers for Cadres



Figure 5. Meeting with the cadres

The challenge is whether the result of the workshop will continue to run when the project implementation has ended. When the coaching is no longer there, it becomes a concern whether the community able to manage and maintain such a large asset so that it is not lost. The answer can be yes or no, depending on how the village leaders respond to this condition, including by increasing community empowerment by forming village cadres [5].

After a series of activities carried out, the final stage is to select several people from the participants to be used as harmonious family cadres. Eleven people were selected as Resapombo Village harmonious family cadres. In this activity, the service team provided a briefing on understanding what a cadre is, how to become a cadre, and what things must be done while being a cadre. The cadres were very enthusiastic and asked questions so that there was an in-depth discussion regarding the role of cadres for retired migrants and the Resapombo community in general.

IV. CONCLUSION

It takes a village to build a resilient family. The UAJY team which consists of lecturers of Communication and Law Departments has been successfully conducted workshops on how to build a resilient family. This program could not have accomplished the objectives without the collaboration between the team, the village leaders, and the ex-migrant worker families of Resapombo Village as the participants.

The community service program in Resapombo Village, Blitar, successfully addressed the challenges faced by ex-migrant families due to economic and social disruptions. Through workshops on family harmony, communication, and resilience, as well as a school seminar on sexuality and reproduction, the program effectively strengthened family relationships and provided essential knowledge. A significant outcome was the formation of an eleven-member cadre team trained to assist families in conflict resolution and support. The success of the school seminar also paved the way for future initiatives, demonstrating the program's positive impact on fostering resilient and harmonious family dynamics.

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