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## Local Economic Transformation through International Collaboration: Optimizing the Creative Economic Potential of Edelweiss Flowers Based on Sharia Principles

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### Kata Kunci :

Literasi Keuangan Syariah;  
Suku Tengger; Edelweis;  
Kolaborasi Internasional;  
Ekonomi Kreatif

### Abstrak

Program Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat (PKM) ini bertujuan mendorong transformasi ekonomi lokal masyarakat Suku Tengger melalui optimalisasi potensi ekonomi kreatif berbasis bunga edelweis dengan pendekatan syariah serta kolaborasi internasional antara perguruan tinggi Indonesia yang tergabung dalam APSKPS dan Malaysia. Metode yang digunakan ialah pendekatan partisipatif dengan observasi, wawancara, FGD, dokumentasi, dan edukasi langsung kepada pelaku UMKM lokal. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan peningkatan literasi keuangan syariah, penguatan kapasitas marketing portable berbasis digital, serta bertumbuhnya kesadaran ekologis terhadap konservasi bunga edelweis sebagai komoditas bernilai budaya namun perlu dijaga keberlanjutannya. Melalui kolaborasi dengan USIM, UiTM, dan UKM, terjadi transfer pengetahuan lintas negara yang memperkaya model pemberdayaan dan memperluas orientasi masyarakat pada ekonomi kreatif berkelanjutan. Program ini mengintegrasikan nilai spiritual-ekologis Islam, konservasi lingkungan, dan inovasi digital dalam satu kerangka pembangunan ekonomi kreatif berbasis maqashid syariah. Temuan memperlihatkan bahwa pengembangan edelweis tidak

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harus mengambil tanaman dari alam, tetapi dapat dikembangkan melalui produk turunan non-perusak dan konten kreatif digital berbasis budaya. Model ini menjadi contoh implementasi pemberdayaan masyarakat yang inklusif, berkelanjutan, dan berkeadilan.

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**Keywords :**

Islamic Financial Literacy;  
Tengger Tribe; Edelweiss;  
International Collaboration;  
Creative Economy

**Abstract**

*This Community Service Program (PKM) aims to support local economic transformation among the Tengger Tribe by optimizing creative economic potential based on the edelweiss flower through a sharia-based framework and international collaboration between Indonesian universities that are members of APSKPS and Malaysian universities. A participatory approach was applied through observation, interviews, focus group discussions, documentation, and direct educational mentoring for local micro-entrepreneurs. The findings reveal improved Islamic financial literacy, enhanced portable digital marketing capacity, and strengthened ecological awareness regarding the conservation of edelweiss as a culturally valuable yet environmentally sensitive species. Collaboration with USIM, UiTM, and UKM enabled cross-country knowledge transfer that enriched empowerment strategies and broadened the community's orientation toward sustainable creative economy development. This program integrates Islamic spiritual-ecological values, environmental preservation, and digital innovation into a single framework rooted in maqashid syariah. The results indicate that economic utilization of edelweiss does not require harvesting from natural habitats, but can be developed through non-destructive derivative products and creative digital content grounded in local culture. This model serves as an example of inclusive, sustainable, and socially just community empowerment.*



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## INTRODUCTION

Local economic empowerment is one of the key pillars in realizing community independence and sustainability (Sujianto et al., 2024), particularly in regions with unique cultural heritage and natural resources such as the Tenggerese community on the slopes of Mount Bromo. In this context, the Edelweiss flower is not only a symbol of beauty and resilience in the mountain ecosystem, but also holds great potential to be developed as a high-value creative economic product (Yoni et al., 2022). However, Edelweiss is also a protected plant with significant ecological value (Fahmi et al., 2025), meaning that its utilization must prioritize conservation principles and environmental sustainability.

The development of tourism in the Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park (TNBTS) area has increased the demand for Edelweiss as a souvenir, consequently influencing its economic value (Rahma et al., 2022). Therefore, the development of a

creative economy based on Edelweiss must be framed within a sustainable economic model that supports both nature conservation and the welfare of the local community (Lopang et al., 2025). This goal can be achieved through a collaborative approach involving indigenous communities, academics, and local government, focusing not only on increasing economic value but also on the transfer of knowledge and environmentally friendly innovation..

﴿ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝٦ ﴾  
الاعراف/7: 56)

Translate:

“Do not cause corruption on the earth after it has been set in order. Pray to Him with fear and hope. Truly, the mercy of Allah is very near to those who do good.”  
(Al-A'raf/7:56) (Kemenag, 2019)

Empowering local economies based on Islamic values requires maintaining a balance between utilizing natural potential and ensuring environmental preservation (Qur'an, 2017). This principle aligns with the message of the Qur'an in Surah Al-A'raf verse 56, which warns humankind not to cause destruction on Earth after Allah has set it in order. This moral foundation emphasizes that every economic initiative must safeguard environmental sustainability and uphold the harmony of nature (Azzahra & Masyithoh, 2024). In the context of developing a creative economy centered on Edelweiss flowers, this value highlights the importance of managing natural resources wisely so that economic activities are not merely profit-oriented but also bring blessings, sustainability, and collective well-being.

Currently, the economic potential of Edelweiss-based creative products in the Tengger community has not been fully optimized due to limitations in financial literacy, business management, and digital marketing strategies. Therefore, empowerment initiatives must not only focus on income generation but also cultivate ecological awareness, business ethics, and the ability to adopt relevant marketing technologies.

This framework underpins the implementation of the Community Service Program (PKM) entitled *“Local Economic Transformation through International Collaboration: Optimizing the Creative Economic Potential of Edelweiss Flowers Based on Sharia Principles.”* The program was carried out through cross-country collaboration between Indonesian universities under APSKPS (Association of Sharia Finance and Banking Study Programs) and Malaysian partner institutions, including Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). This international collaboration serves as a platform for knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices in economic empowerment grounded in culture and Islamic values.

The program focuses on enhancing Islamic financial literacy and strengthening digital marketing skills (portable marketing), while simultaneously integrating

environmental sustainability principles in the utilization of Edelweiss as an economic commodity and cultural identity. The community is encouraged to develop productive enterprises without exploiting nature, allowing the economic potential of ecotourism to be optimized sustainably.

In addition, the PKM provides a two-way knowledge transfer process, enabling academics and practitioners from Malaysia to share experiences related to the development of Sharia-based creative economies within their local communities. This cross-cultural interaction expands perspectives and strengthens academic solidarity, while enhancing the community's capacity to adapt to global economic dynamics grounded in humane and just Islamic values.

Overall, this program is expected to drive sustainable local economic transformation, where Edelweiss functions not only as a cultural icon but also as a driver of the creative economy that preserves environmental balance and religious values. This international collaboration serves as a model of synergy between universities, government, and society in realizing inclusive development aligned with the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, particularly in preserving life, the environment, and community welfare.

## **METHODS**

This community service program employed a participatory approach with a qualitative descriptive method, emphasizing the direct involvement of local residents throughout all stages of the program. The activities took place in Wonokitri Village, Tosari District, Pasuruan Regency — one of the buffer zones of Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park, known for its rich natural and cultural potential. The subjects of the program included the Tenggerese community, micro-business actors, traditional leaders, and academics from Indonesian universities under APSKPS (Association of Sharia Finance and Banking Study Programs) together with Malaysian partners (USIM, UiTM, and UKM) as part of international collaboration. Data were collected through observation, interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation. The analysis was conducted descriptively by reviewing the program outcomes based on the improvement of Islamic financial literacy, digital marketing innovation, and environmental conservation. The entire process was grounded in the principles of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, particularly in maintaining a balance between economic welfare, spiritual values, and environmental sustainability.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The Community Service Program (PKM) titled "*Local Economic Transformation through International Collaboration: Optimizing the Creative Economic Potential of Edelweiss Flowers Based on Sharia Principles*" was implemented in Wonokitri Village, Tosari District, Pasuruan Regency. The program generated various outcomes that significantly contributed to enhancing the economic, social, and ecological capacities of the Tengger community.

Through the involvement of Indonesian universities under APSKPS (Association of Sharia Finance and Banking Study Programs) and international partners from Malaysia—namely Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)—the program successfully fostered cross-national synergy in strengthening a community empowerment model rooted in cultural heritage and Sharia values.

### **Strengthening Islamic Financial Literacy as the Foundation for Creative Economic Management**

The first outcome of this PKM program is the increased community understanding of Islamic financial literacy. Through interactive workshops, participants learned fundamental principles of Islamic economics such as justice (*al-'adl*), honesty (*al-ṣidq*), and balance (*al-mīzān*) in managing household finances and micro-business operations. This approach instilled awareness that economic activities should not only focus on material profit, but also on *barakah* (divine blessings) and social responsibility.

In the context of managing creative products based on Edelweiss flowers, the community was guided to apply the principle of *ḥalālan ṭayyiban*—using only materials and production methods that do not harm the environment and do not violate moral values. This approach forms the foundation for the development of a creative economic system that is not merely profit-oriented, but ethically grounded and environmentally sustainable.

Figure 1. Islamic Financial Literacy



### **Preserving Edelweiss as a Pillar of Local Economy and Ecology**

One of the most significant outcomes of this PKM initiative is the development of ecological awareness regarding the importance of preserving the Edelweiss flower (*Anaphalis javanica*), widely known as the “eternal flower.” This plant holds deep

spiritual and symbolic value for the Tengger community, as it is traditionally associated with purity, resilience, and eternity. However, Edelweiss is also a legally protected species due to its increasingly threatened existence caused by irresponsible exploitation driven by tourism activities.

Through mentoring and conservation-focused education, the community was guided to understand that preserving Edelweiss does not mean eliminating its economic potential. Rather, it encourages the development of innovative non-destructive derivative products. Examples include handicrafts, synthetic ornaments, herbal aromatherapy, and creative digital products such as photography and educational tourism content that highlight the aesthetic and philosophical values of Edelweiss without harvesting it directly from its natural habitat. This strategy not only protects the ecosystem but also creates opportunities for the community to gain sustainable economic benefits.

Furthermore, this conservation-oriented approach has fostered a collective ecological consciousness among the Tengger community. The cultivation of Edelweiss around the Wonokitri area became a symbol of collaboration between indigenous communities, academics, and local government in safeguarding environmental sustainability. This cultivation initiative is not merely symbolic, but part of a long-term plan to establish the area as an “Edelweiss Conservation Village,” envisioned as an educational destination as well as a center for conservation-based creative economic activities.

Figure 2. Conservation Education Assistance



### **Digital Innovation in Marketing and Edelweiss Product Branding**

In addition to the conservation aspect, another important outcome is the improvement of the community's ability to digitally market Edelweiss-based products. Through portable marketing training, participants were taught how to

utilize simple technology to create promotional content that is both attractive and ethically aligned with local values. The community was trained to develop online product catalogs through social media platforms such as Instagram and community-based marketplaces.

This training produced several concrete achievements: a number of micro-enterprise actors successfully created digital business accounts and began marketing synthetic Edelweiss souvenirs, herbal beverages, and handcrafted products reflecting Tengger cultural identity. With guidance from lecturers and students of partnering universities, the community gradually developed an understanding of the importance of branding, product photography, and promotional narratives that highlight the spiritual value of the Edelweiss flower. This not only enhanced the competitiveness of local products but also strengthened the identity of Wonokitri Village as a center for nature-based and culture-driven creative economy.

Figure 3. Digitalization of Marketing and Branding



### **International Collaboration and Cross-Cultural Knowledge Exchange**

This activity also demonstrated success in building an international academic network. The involvement of partners from Malaysia enriched the program through a sharing session in which guest lecturers shared their experiences in developing Sharia-based creative economy initiatives within rural communities. This cross-country discussion opened new perspectives for the Tengger Tribe community, showing that a Sharia-based creative economy has global potential as long as it is carried out with principles of sustainability and strong ethical values.

This collaboration also encouraged the transfer of social technology, namely the exchange of ideas, approaches, and empowerment practices that are relevant to the local context. With international support, the community gained confidence that their cultural products and natural potential have value in the eyes of the world, provided they are managed with sustainability principles and proper ethical production standards.

Figure 4. Cross-Cultural Knowledge Exchange



### Social, Economic, and Environmental Impact

Socially, this community service program strengthened relationships between the indigenous community, the village government, and higher education institutions. Joint activities such as edelweiss planting, digital training, and intercultural discussions fostered a sense of ownership toward the program and nurtured intergenerational collaboration. Economically, the community began to develop a new perspective that independence is not only achieved through selling products, but also through creative innovation and the management of cultural values.

From an environmental perspective, the program succeeded in building new awareness regarding ecological ethics within Sharia economics. The community recognized that every economic activity must maintain *mizan* (balance) between humans and nature. This principle aligns with the objectives of *Maqashid Sharia*, particularly in the aspects of *hifdzul bi'ah* (environmental preservation) and *hifdzul maal* (safeguarding sustainable wealth). Thus, the development of a creative economy based on edelweiss flowers becomes a tangible manifestation of the integration of Islamic values, environmental conservation, and community welfare.

Figure 5. Social, Economic, and Environmental Impact



## Program Implications and Sustainability

The results of the program demonstrate that local economic transformation based on conservation and international collaboration can serve as an effective and sustainable community engagement model. Through the synergy between academics and the community, the idea of establishing a “*Sharia Edelweiss Education and Creative Economy Center*” emerged, functioning as a platform for continuous training, research, and promotion of local products. Moving forward, online support and follow-up activities are expected to expand the program’s reach to other communities surrounding the Bromo area.

Thus, this community service initiative not only generated economic benefits for the local population, but also built a new paradigm: that the edelweiss flower is not merely a symbol of natural tourism, but an icon of spiritual–ecological economic transformation. Through the integration of Islamic values, digital innovation, and international collaboration, the Tengger community is now embarking on a path toward economic independence that is just, sustainable, and in harmony with nature.

## CONCLUSION

The Community Service Program (PKM) titled “*Local Economic Transformation through International Collaboration: Optimizing the Creative Economic Potential of Edelweiss Flowers Based on Sharia Principles*” has demonstrated that community empowerment can be carried out holistically by integrating spiritual, economic, social, and ecological dimensions. This initiative not only improved Islamic financial literacy and digital skills among the Tengger community, but also fostered awareness of the importance of conserving edelweiss flowers as a natural heritage and cultural symbol with high economic value.

Through international collaboration between universities in Indonesia and Malaysia, the program showed that cross-country knowledge exchange enriches empowerment strategies and opens opportunities for the development of a globally competitive sharia-based creative economy. The sharia approach serves as an essential foundation to ensure that every economic innovation upholds the principles of justice, sustainability, and social responsibility toward nature.

The program also generated significant social impact, as local communities, cultural leaders, and regional governments engaged actively in building an independent local economic ecosystem. Meanwhile, environmental conservation was realized through edelweiss planting activities and the development of non-destructive derivative products, which introduced the concept of a “sharia-based green economy.” Therefore, this PKM initiative stands as a practical model of integrating economic empowerment, environmental conservation, and Islamic spirituality—strengthening community independence in the Bromo highland region.

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