



## **Community Empowerment in Preventing Drug Abuse**

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**Abstract:** *This research-based service research departs from the problem of drug abuse in Mulyorejo village, taking into account the strategic geographical location for drug trafficking, the surrounding villages' high drug case rates, and the public's lack of understanding of the dangers of drugs. This drug problem has existed for a long time, but neither the government nor the community has made any effort to address it. The community assistance approach used was Asset-based Community Driven Development (ABCD), a method of community empowerment that draws on the community's strengths, potential, and assets to overcome problems and promote community development. The ABCD approach comprises five stages: inculturation, discovery, design, definition, and reflection. The Women and Children Forum's empowerment process has resulted in several outcomes, including the realization by the assisted community that they have numerous assets/potentials that can be used to develop and solve problems, particularly drug abuse. The assisted community understood the dangers of drugs and was aware of the importance of prevention. The assisted community could identify needs and develop activity plans to address drug abuse issues. The assisted community could also engage in activities such as drug danger socialization, drug alert family strengthening, and drug abuse prevention advocacy with village governments and religious institutions.*

**Keywords:** Community empowerment, drug abuse

**Abstrak:** *Penelitian pengabdian berbasis riset ini berangkat dari permasalahan penyalahgunaan narkoba di desa Mulyorejo yang sangat berpotensi terpapar mengingat letak geografis yang strategis bagi pengedaran narkoba, desa sekitar yang telah banyak kasus narkoba, minimnya pemahaman masyarakat tentang bahaya narkoba. Permasalahan narkoba ini telah lama terjadi namun belum ada upaya yang dilakukan pemerintah maupun masyarakat untuk mengatasinya. Pendekatan pendampingan masyarakat/komunitas yang digunakan adalah Asset Based Community driven Developmen (ABCD) yaitu sebuah pendekatan pemberdayaan masyarakat yang berangkat dari kekuatan, potensi dan asset yang dimiliki untuk mengatasi masalah dan pengembangan masyarakat. Pendekatan ABCD memiliki 5 tahapan yaitu : Inculturation, discovery, design, define dan reflexion. Melalui proses pemberdayaan Forum Perempuan dan Anak menghasilkan beberapa hal yakni : komunitas dampingan menyadari bahwa mereka memiliki banyak asset/potensi yang dapat digunakan*



*untuk dikembangkan dan dapat menyelesaikan masalah khususnya penyalahgunaan narkoba. Komunitas dampingan memiliki pemahaman yang baik tentang bahaya narkoba dan memiliki kesadaran bahwa pencegahan Komunitas dampingan dapat mengidentifikasi kebutuhan dan merumuskan perencanaan kegiatan untuk menyelesaikan masalah penyalahgunaan narkoba. Komunitas dampingan juga dapat melaksanakan kegiatan berupa sosialisasi bahaya narkoba, penguatan keluarga siaga narkoba dan advokasi kepada pemerintahan desa dan lembaga keagamaan terkait pencegahan penyalahgunaan narkoba.*

**Keywords: Pemberdayaan Komunitas, penyalahgunaan narkoba**

## **Introduction**

Drug abuse is a national and global issue that endangers human lives. The phenomenon is becoming increasingly concerning in terms of both quantity and quality. In terms of quantity, the number of dealers and users is growing. Dealers and users are youth, as evidenced by news reports in both printed and electronic media, which contain almost daily news about the arrest of drug users by security forces. Most perpetrators are teenagers, some of whom are still in elementary school.

Drugs (narcotics, psychotropic substances, and other dangerous, addictive substances) are materials/substances that, when ingested orally/drank, inhaled, or injected into the human body, can alter a person's mind, mood, or feelings, as well as their behavior. Narcotics are substances or drugs derived from plants or non-plants, both synthetic and semi-synthetic, that can cause a decrease or change in consciousness, pain relief, and dependence<sup>1</sup>.

Globally, at least a quarter of the world's population aged 15-64 years, or one in every twenty adults, has consumed one type of drug<sup>2</sup>. Nationally, Based on the classification of drug cases in 2015, there is an increasing trend in drug cases overall, particularly narcotics cases, which increased by 23.58% from 23,134 cases in 2014 to 28,588 cases in 2015. The data show that the civil servant users increased from 362 to 453 cases in 2014; private sector users from 18,511 to 20,778 in 2015; self-employed users from 11,430 to 14,357 in 2015; farmer users from 1,551 to 1,869 in 2015; and laborer users from 4,570 to 5.283 in 2015.”<sup>3</sup>

Statistical data about drug abuse in South Sumatra Province show that drug abuse has permeated all levels of society, from low to high economic status, from early childhood (10

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<sup>1</sup> Undang-Undang No. 35 Tahun 2009 Tentang Narkotika

<sup>2</sup> World Drugs Report Tahun 2016. UNODC

<sup>3</sup>BNN, Ringkasan Jurnal Data Pencegahan dan Pemberantasan Penyalahgunaan dan Peredaran Gelap Narkoba (P4GN) Tahun 2015 Edisi Tahun 2016,



years according to the most recent data) to the elderly, from low education to higher education, men and women, unemployed and employed. As a result, continuous and integrated/comprehensive efforts are required to ensure that the community is aware of and immune to drug exposure.

Despite the abundance of information demonstrating the negative consequences of drug abuse, there has been no significant reduction in the level of drug abuse. Similarly, despite increased drug eradication efforts and widespread public complaints and concerns about drug use, many teenagers and minors remain unsupervised by the surrounding community.

There has been a lot of socialization, information, and education. According to BNN's 2018 research, television mass media is a highly effective channel for disseminating various types of information about drug dangers, as stated by more than 96% of respondents. Newspapers/magazines were the second most effective medium, with 77% reporting them. Radio, posters, and other forms of media are relatively inexpensive. Friends, relatives, teachers/lecturers, and religious/community leaders were among the least reliable sources of information. However, a significant proportion of respondents (25%) stated that they had never received information about the different types and dangers of drugs.

According to the above data, television and newspapers/magazines dominate the drug-related information media. Meanwhile, radio is less accessible to the public, and information via posters is less effective because posters are scarce, particularly in rural areas. Community and religious leaders also have low participation rates.

Given the growing prevalence of drug abuse on a global, national, and local scale, various parties must work together to prevent and eradicate drug trafficking to reduce drug abuse cases. Drug prevention necessitates the involvement of all aspects of the nation, particularly the government and the community.

Articles 104 and 105 of Law Number 35 of 2009 regulate the community's role in overcoming drug abuse. 1) The community has the most significant opportunity to help prevent and eradicate drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotic precursors. 2) The community has rights and responsibilities in the fight to prevent and eradicate narcotics abuse and illicit trafficking.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Undang-Undang Nomor 35 Tahun 2009



To raise community awareness about the dangers of drug abuse, members must increase their knowledge of the risks and proactively cooperate with authorities if there are suspected drug users or dealers in their neighborhood. Furthermore, community and religious leaders must be able to mobilize their citizens' support for drug prevention efforts.

Mulyo Rejo Village is in Musi Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra, and part of the Sungai Lilin sub-district. Geographically, this village is ideal for drug trafficking because it is close to the cross-provincial road that connects South Sumatra and Jambi. The community has easy access to daily mobility because the distance between villages and the sub-district city is short. Mulyorejo village is close to other villages with high drug abuse rates.

Mulyorejo Village is a developed village, as evidenced by the facilities and infrastructure owned by the community, as well as the community's economic strength. There are numerous social institutions ranging from religious institutions, culture, health, agriculture, sports, and arts clubs, including the Women and Children Forum (FPA). However, in terms of drug abuse prevention and control, the various assets owned by religious, educational, and health institutions, including the Women and Children Forum, have not been effective in overcoming and preventing drug abuse. Based on this, community empowerment in drug prevention is carried out, mainly to increase the capacity and independence of the Women and Children Forum, allowing it to mobilize its resources to improve the situation.

## **Research Methods**

The Asset Base Community-driven Development (ABCD) approach was chosen based on the identified problems, current assisted conditions, and expected assisted conditions. An empowerment approach that draws on the community's strengths, assets, and potential assets to solve problems and develop the community itself. The ABCD approach has five stages. 1) The goal of this stage is to ensure that the partner community understands the activity's purpose and objectives, to build trust with the partner community, and to enable community groups to become change agents. 2) Discovery (identifying assets or potential). At this stage, the activities include asset mapping of human, natural, and socio-cultural assets. This stage also reveals the community's successes, the factors contributing to success, and who plays a vital role in that success. This stage also reveals the specific elements and characteristics that emerge from examining the community's stories, which will become future assets. 3) Design (identification



of assets and opportunities). The process of identifying needs in problem-solving, deciding on a priority scale, and then developing a program plan. 4) Define (to assist with implementing the work program). The stage at which the assisted community takes action to carry out activities by previously agreed-upon plans. 5) Reflection. Stages to determine the progression of outcome performance. The extent to which the program has successfully achieved the formulated goals. The evaluation results and reflection can be used as reference material and communicated to the community, allowing them to design and plan the next steps in response to efforts to achieve the forum's ideals. This reflection marks the end of the empowerment program's implementation process.

This approach is considered appropriate because it seeks to realize a social life order in which people become actors and determinants of development efforts in their environment, allowing people to understand their strengths and all of the potential and assets they possess and have the potential to utilize. Knowing the strengths and assets is expected to make people aware of and eager to participate as actors, giving them the initiative in all efforts to improve the environment.

## **Results and Discussion**

Mulyorejo village faces a high risk of drug abuse due to several factors, including 1) the geographical location of Mulyorejo village is close to the cross-provincial road (Palembang-Jambi). It is adjacent to other villages that have allegedly had many drug cases and drug dealers. The village area is surrounded by Palm Oil and Rubber plantations. Therefore, it is conducive to drug abuse; 2) The community's economic level is sufficient to allow them to purchase drugs; 3) There is no/rare drug counseling, so the community is unaware of the dangers of drugs and their mode of distribution.

The Women and Children Forum's village/community assets that can be mobilized to prevent drug abuse include 1) Personal assets are community human resources, which include community leaders capable of leading, mobilizing, and communicating; 2) Institutional assets are community institutions. Community institutions include government institutions such as the Village Consultative Body (BPD), Community Empowerment Agency (LPM), Family Empowerment and Welfare (PKK), Posyandu, Village-Owned Enterprises (Bumdes), Cooperatives, School Committees, Elderly Posyandu, Dasawisma, and Youth Organizations.



Non-governmental community institutions include the Scout Front Group, Village Taklim Assembly, Hamlet Taklim Assembly, RT Taklim Assembly, Village Gathering Group, RT Gathering Group, Yasinan Group, Mosque Youth, Muslimat, Fatayat, Panti Laras, Sinoman, Farmer Groups, and POKTIF; 3) Natural assets include oil palm plantations, rubber plantations, vegetables, and livestock; 4) Physical assets include facilities such as village halls, mosques, halls, and schools. Transportation facilities include good/paved roads and car and motorcycle transportation; 5) Cultural assets include the culture of gotong royong, village meetings/deliberations, and self-help/reliance.

The action strategy is to socialize the dangers of drugs to the community through a home visit approach and the use of majlis taklim media to increase community knowledge and insight into drug types and forms, drug dangers for physical/health, mental and behavioral, drug trafficking modes, and drug addiction characteristics. The next action strategy is family strengthening, specifically drug prevention, beginning with the family in the form of drug alert family training, which focuses on creating a harmonious family environment and encouraging positive communication among family members. The final strategy is to lobby the village government and religious institutions to make drug abuse prevention a part of village policies and religious institutions' programs.

The benefits of empowering the Women and Children Forum to prevent drug abuse include increased community insight and understanding of drugs, as well as the emergence of awareness that drug prevention is a shared responsibility and increased knowledge and awareness of how to build harmonious family relationships by fostering positive communication between husband and wife and parent and child. The empowerment process was also successful in encouraging the village government and religious institutions to play a role in the prevention of drug abuse, namely in the form of regular counseling on the dangers of drugs, adding facilities/suggestions for channeling talents/hobbies for adolescents / young people, such as sports facilities and others, involving religious leaders in drug prevention by including drug prevention material in Friday sermons and lectures at tak The following table describes the results of the action strategy:



Table 1  
Changes in Community Conditions after Assistance Activities

No	Activities	Before	Changes
1	Socialization and learning activities on drugs to increase community understanding of drugs and their problems	Lack of understanding about the drug problem, Lack of initiative to solve the problem, Lack of courage to solve the problem, and Lack of courage to report drug cases to the authorities.	The community has insights and understanding related to drugs and has an awareness that drug prevention is a shared responsibility.
2	Drug Alert Family Strengthening Training	In general, they still develop "old patterns" in the relationship between husband and wife and between parents and children.	Have the knowledge and awareness to build positive relationships between husbands and wives and parents and children.
3	Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fighting drug problems has not been included in village policies.</li><li>- Religious institutions (mosques and majlis taklim) have not played a role in fighting drugs.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Agreed to be included in village policy.</li><li>- Drug problems are to be included in lectures and khutbahs.</li></ul>

### Findings and Discussion

Adult learning theory is one approach used to empower the Women and Children Forum community in Mulyorejo village because the goal of empowerment is to improve human quality rather than simply meet material needs.



The theory of andragogy (community learning) contains several principles.<sup>5</sup> :

- a. The relationship between the subject of empowerment and the community is under consideration. To achieve the desired results in development activities, the developing subject should not act as a teacher who teaches specific subjects to students, which is the community, but rather as a guide who assists the developed subjects in solving critical problems. However, despite efforts to avoid patronization during implementation, the community remains hesitant and regards the assistants/facilitators as people who know better or are smarter. Furthermore, the assisted community acknowledges the facilitator as a lecturer, specifically the Women and Children Forum. This causes the community to adopt a "just go along" attitude.
- b. Arranging development resources. When organizing community development materials, it is essential for the communities undergoing development to utilize the knowledge and expertise of already developed communities. This involvement should extend to formulating objectives and methods for developing activities. Through their extensive expertise, the advanced individuals will have the capacity to instruct one another in a multidirectional exchange. By actively engaging in developing development goals, they are expected to cultivate a collective sense of accountability for development initiatives.
- c. Consequently, this is anticipated to yield favorable outcomes collectively. Incorporating the participants who have undergone development into the process of formulating development activities will enhance their accomplishments and sense of unity. Attaining success in development activities naturally elicits a feeling of contentment, enjoyment, and joy. According to the psychological expert Abraham Maslow, self-actualization represents the highest level of human well-being in his hierarchy of human needs. This principle is put into action, and the community recognizes that drug abuse is a prevalent issue and a collective responsibility, specifically the community itself. To ensure that the planned activities are executed with a sense of unity and great enthusiasm.
- d. Choosing and employing techniques for empowerment. Various methodologies can be employed in community development endeavors. However, the paramount consideration is determining the most suitable approach for disseminating community development

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<sup>5</sup> Aplikasia, Pendekatan Andragogi dalam Pengembangan Masyarakat, *Jurnal Aplikasi Ilmu-ilmu Agama*, Volume VI, Nomor 1 (Juni 2005):1-13.





materials to accomplish the desired objectives. Regardless of the approach employed in the subject of development, the activity must focus on addressing the specific issue of drug abuse among adolescents, which is a problem faced by the community. Community development that aligns with the genuine needs of the community will yield prompt benefits for the community. The community under development is facing a setback due to limited access to advancements, causing a state of backwardness. Consequently, they are eagerly anticipating a prompt resolution to this issue. (2) Urging and motivating the established community to actively participate. The drug abuse prevention efforts utilize various community learning methods, including dialogue, discussion (FGD), simulation, visualization, and lecture. These methods are highly effective in enhancing individuals' understanding of the perils of drugs and can evoke their emotional consciousness to avoid drug exposure. The efficacy of education is contingent upon the community's cognizance and comprehension of the tangible issue of drug abuse within their community. Furthermore, there has been a lack of drug counseling services, prompting the community to recognize the need for comprehensive and current information on drug-related matters.

Adult learning theory is highly suitable for explaining the process of community empowerment, which is focused on achieving significant improvements in quality. Nevertheless, the emphasis on quality is also the cause for the lower-than-anticipated level of community involvement. The nature of empowerment varies depending on whether it is focused on material aspects, such as economic empowerment, creating a healthy and clean environment, developing art, or other tangible outcomes. Due to the immediate visibility of the changes, the level of participation is correspondingly high.

The Women and Children Forum in Mulyarejo village utilizes the Asset Based Community Driven Development (ABCD) approach to prevent drug abuse. This approach involves several stages of empowerment in community empowerment activities. An approach that diverges from the benefits, resources, and potential held by the community. Regarding the achievement of program activities and the efficiency of activities, it can be affirmed that the ABCD approach is highly effective. Nevertheless, based on the presumptions of the facilitator. The future sustainability of the program remains uncertain. The ABCD approach directly stems from assessing the community's capacity to address and resolve issues. The ABCD approach lacks sufficient capacity to thoroughly investigate, dissect, and analyze problems, thereby



hindering the community's comprehensive understanding and recognition of the issues they encounter, specifically drug abuse in this instance. It is crucial to disseminate this knowledge within the community to empower them to independently address their issues without relying on external assistance.

## Conclusion

Community empowerment can yield two outcomes. In community organizing and self-sufficiency, the empowerment process can enhance the community's ability to take action, mainly by providing firsthand exposure to the framework's effectiveness in addressing problems, mobilizing resources, and fostering progress. Regarding drug abuse prevention, it has effectively enhanced the community's comprehension and awareness of drugs, as well as the recognition that preventing drug abuse is a collective obligation. It has also heightened knowledge and consciousness about cultivating harmonious family relationships by promoting positive communication between spouses, parents, and children.

The empowerment process has effectively motivated the village government and religious institutions to actively participate in preventing drug abuse. This includes conducting regular counseling sessions to educate individuals about the dangers of drugs, providing facilities and suggestions for adolescents and young people to engage in productive activities such as sports, and involving religious leaders in drug prevention efforts by incorporating drug prevention material in Friday sermons and lectures at *Majlis Taqlim*.

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