

# HALAL CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING FOR BROWN SUGAR BUSINESS OPERATIVES HARGOREJO VILLAGE, KOKAP DISTRICT, KULON PROGO REGENCY

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**Abstract** - *This research aims to empower brown sugar craftsmen in Hargorejo Village, Kokap District, Kulon Progo Regency, to obtain halal certification and increase the competitiveness of brown sugar products through the certification process. This research uses an approach Participatory Action Research (PAR), which involves the active participation of craftsmen in every stage. This halal certification program, which is facilitated by the Halal Center of UIN Sunan Kalijaga, is designed to provide technical and administrative support to coconut and palm sugar craftsmen, as well as increase their understanding of the importance of maintaining halal standards in production. The research results show that this program was successful in assisting halal certification for 11 craftsmen in Padukuhan Gunung Kukusan, as well as providing significant training regarding the latest regulations and good production practices. It is hoped that this program can improve the quality of brown sugar products, open up wider market opportunities, and strengthen the local economy.*

**Keywords:** *Halal Certification, Brown Sugar, Community Empowerment, Hargorejo Village*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, has around 87% of Indonesia's 282 million population (data for the first semester of 2024) adhering to Islam (Muhamad, 2024). This condition creates a very large demand for halal products, considering the importance of products that meet halal standards for the majority of the population. The halal concept is not only a matter of religious observance, but also includes cleanliness, health and ethics in food processing. For this reason, the Indonesian government has issued regulations requiring halal certification for all products sold in Indonesia through Law Number 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Guarantees, which is the legal basis that regulates the obligation of halal certification for products circulating in Indonesia. both food products, drinks, medicines, cosmetics and other consumer goods. This law aims to protect consumers, especially Muslims, in ensuring that the products they consume or use meet halal requirements in accordance with Islamic law (nu online, 2024).

Halal certification is a business ethic that producers should carry out as a halal guarantee for consumers. Business actors have the right to receive (1) Socialization, education and information about the halal product guarantee system, (2) Guidance in the production of halal products, and (3) receive services to obtain halal certificates efficiently, quickly, without discrimination and at affordable costs (Article 23 of the JPH Law). Business actors who actually produce products originating from non-halal materials are not required to apply for halal certification. However, the product must state that it is not halal (Article 26 of the JPH Law). If you do not comply with this regulation, you will be subject to a verbal or written reprimand or warning as well as an administrative fine (Article 27 of the JPH Law) (Republic of Indonesia, 2014). Apart from being a halal guarantee for consumers, the halal label provides economic benefits for producers including: (1) Can increase consumer confidence because it is guaranteed halal, (2) Has a USP (Unique Selling Point), (3) Able to penetrate the global halal market, (4) Increasing product marketability in the market, (5) Cheap investment compared to the revenue growth that can be achieved (Faridah, 2019).

In line with increasing awareness of the importance of halal products, the people in Padukuhan Gunung Kukusan, Hargorejo Village, the majority of whom make their living as brown sugar farmers, are also faced with great opportunities to exploit their local potential. Making brown sugar is a common business among residents because this area has many coconut trees growing in the mountains. Coconut trees, which are often referred to as multipurpose trees because almost all parts of them can be used, are the main source of raw materials for brown sugar production. The potential of coconut and palm sugar needs to be preserved, developed and utilized further to improve the economy of village communities because they have quite high economic value and act as an important source of income in the area.

Based on the results of surveys and interviews that have been conducted, it shows that the community in Padukuhan Gunung Kukusan, especially the farmer group that taps coconut sap, faces challenges in marketing their products. Marketing of products is still

limited, coupled with the existence of collectors who only buy at low prices. One of the reasons is that many farmers do not yet have halal certification for their products, due to limited access to information and assistance in the process of obtaining halal certification. Apart from that, competition with sugar that has been mixed with white granulated sugar is a challenge in itself, because many consumers prefer products with lower prices, even though the quality is lower.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to empower brown sugar craftsmen in Hargorejo Village to obtain halal certification and increase the competitiveness of brown sugar products through this certification. In this way, it is hoped that the awareness and knowledge of craftsmen about the importance of halal certification can increase, so that in the future this research can become a model for local economic empowerment based on sustainable halal products.

## **2. METHOD**

This research uses the Participatory Action Research method or *Participatory Action Research* which is a research approach that places active participation from parties involved and directly affected in the research process (Pain *and all*, 2011). PAR is not just a research method, but an approach that prioritizes collaboration between researchers and participants to understand and overcome problems faced by certain communities or groups (Rahmat & Mirnawati, 2020). In this case, it is to empower a group of brown sugar craftsmen in Hargorejo Village to obtain halal certification. This method was chosen because it allows active involvement of craftsmen and related parties in all stages of research and program implementation, from planning to monitoring. With this approach, research aims not only to collect data but also to generate benefits for local communities.

The research began with an exploration stage to understand the needs of the local community. The research team conducted observations and interviews with several community leaders and craftsmen to identify the problems and potential that existed in the village. From the results of this exploration, it was found that the majority of the residents of Hargorejo Village work as brown sugar craftsmen, both coconut sugar and palm sugar. Even though brown sugar is the village's flagship product, most craftsmen do not yet have halal certification, which is a major obstacle in expanding the marketing of their products.

Based on these initial findings, the research team designed a halal certification program in collaboration with the Halal Center of UIN Sunan Kalijaga. This program is designed to facilitate craftsmen in obtaining halal certification for free and aims to increase the competitiveness of brown sugar products in the wider market. In designing the program, the research team involved representatives of craftsmen, village government, and the Halal Center to ensure that the program was designed according to needs and field conditions.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Halal Coconut Sugar and Palm Sugar Certification Program implemented in Hargorejo Village is a collaborative effort involving the Halal Center of UIN Sunan Kalijaga and various local stakeholders to improve the quality and competitiveness of local products. This program provides free halal certification to coconut and palm sugar craftsmen in several villages, including Mount Kukusan. This program is designed not only to facilitate halal certification, but also to provide education and training to craftsmen regarding the importance of maintaining halal standards and hygiene in the production process. This initiative aims to ensure that the products produced comply with established halal standards, as well as providing opportunities for craftsmen to expand their markets.

#### **Socialization Stage**

Before implementing halal certification, the socialization stage of this work program was carried out through the Hamlet Deliberation in Padukuhan Gunung Kukusan which was used as a KKN location by researchers. In this forum, information was presented regarding the importance of halal certification for food products, especially coconut sugar and palm sugar, as well as how this certification process will be carried out. This outreach is very important because it provides craftsmen with a basic understanding of the benefits and procedures for halal certification. By providing clear and comprehensive information, this program has succeeded in attracting craftsmen who do not yet have halal certification to participate in registering their brown sugar business products for halal certification.

#### **Halal Certification Program Implementation Stage**

The implementation stage involves direct visits to craftsmen who have met the halal test requirements but do not yet have a halal certificate. According to PPH Companion Guidebook: Halal Product Process (2023), the requirements that must be met before registering a business product for Halal Certification are as follows:

1. The product is not risky and uses ingredients that are already guaranteed halal.
2. The production process is simple and halal.
2. Annual turnover is not more than IDR 500 million, and business capital is a maximum of IDR 2 billion.
3. Have a Business Identification Number (NIB).
4. Separate halal production locations and equipment from non-halal ones.
5. Have the appropriate distribution permit and Sanitation Hygiene Eligibility Certificate (SLHS) if required.
6. Have production facilities in one location only.
7. Active production for at least one year before submitting certification.
8. The product is in the form of goods and does not contain service elements.
9. Using halal and harmless ingredients.
10. Verified as halal by the halal product process assistant.

11. Do not use advanced production technology or ingredients from animal sources that are not halal certified.
12. Does not use advanced preservation methods such as radiation or genetic engineering.

Because the process of making coconut sugar or palm sugar is very simple and only uses sap as raw materials and accompanying ingredients such as lime water, this product generally meets all the requirements for halal certification. Production is carried out in the traditional way, where the sap is cooked for a long time using a frying pan on a traditional stove, then molded in coconut shells. This process ensures that there is no contamination with non-halal ingredients or the use of prohibited advanced technologies.

By following these traditional methods, coconut and palm sugar craftsmen can ensure that their products still meet strict halal standards. However, it is important for every business actor to keep their production environment clean and free from things that could cause illegality, such as the presence of dogs roaming around the house or production site. If there are dogs around the production area, then the business cannot be registered for halal certification because dogs are considered unclean in Islam, and their presence can contaminate the product. Therefore, ensuring a clean production environment that complies with halal standards is an important step that craftsmen must take to ensure their products can be recognized as halal.

In implementing this halal certification program, researchers collaborated with the Halal Center of UIN Sunan Kalijaga to ensure the suitability of coconut sugar and palm sugar products in obtaining halal certification. The Halal Center of UIN Sunan Kalijaga is represented by Dwi Otik Kurniawati, M.Eng., as manager, who is directly responsible for the data collection and verification process in the field. This activity is carried out by visiting each sugar production site one by one, to ensure whether the product meets the requirements to be submitted for halal certification.

During the visit, the team took various important steps, such as taking photos of the business actor's ID card, documenting the product and its production process, and taking photos with the business actor and the halal supervisor, namely Mrs. Otik, at the production location. This documentation not only serves as proof that the business actor has been verified but also as part of the administrative procedures required for halal certification registration.

Apart from that, this visit was also used to provide direct guidance to craftsmen on how to improve the production process so that it complies with established halal standards. This guidance includes explanations about cleanliness in the production process, selecting raw materials that have been confirmed to be halal, and best practices that need to be followed to maintain the halal integrity of their products.

This direct approach through field visits has many benefits. Apart from facilitating the administration and verification process, this approach also builds closer relationships between craftsmen and the halal certification team. As a result, in Gunung Kukuhan Padukuhan itself there are eleven (11) business actors who meet the requirements to be registered for halal certification.

**Table 1**

Data on Business Actors Registered for Halal Certification Padukuhan Gunung Kukusan

| No. | Name of Business Actor | Business Products |
|-----|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1.  | Mujiyanti              | Coconut Sugar     |
| 2.  | Suyitno                | Coconut Sugar     |
| 3.  | Supriyanti             | Palm Sugar        |
| 4.  | Subiyem                | Coconut Sugar     |
| 5.  | Satinah                | Coconut Sugar     |
| 6.  | Tri Murniasih          | Coconut Sugar     |
| 7.  | Istiqomah              | Palm Sugar        |
| 8.  | The picture            | Coconut Sugar     |
| 9.  | Ida Nurtanto           | Coconut Sugar     |
| 10. | By pony                | Coconut Sugar     |
| 11. | Susiati                | Coconut Sugar     |

Apart from the data above, there are business actors from other districts who are still within the scope of the Hargorejo sub-district. The total number of business actors is 45 coconut and palm sugar business actors.

In implementing this halal certification program, the Halal Center of UIN Sunan Kalijaga will not immediately ignore its responsibilities after the certificate is given. On the other hand, monitoring continues to be carried out to ensure that craftsmen who have obtained halal certification continue to comply with the established standards. This is important to maintain product quality and increase competitiveness in the market. Halal certificates are valid for only four years, so they need to be renewed periodically to ensure continued compliance with halal standards.

### **Implementation of Workshops**

In an effort to improve the quality, safety and competitiveness of coconut sugar products in Hargorejo Village, a program in the form of halal certification workshops or training was carried out. This workshop aims to provide craftsmen with an understanding of the importance of halal certification, the latest regulations, and good production practices, so that they can meet halal standards, improve product quality, and expand the market.

This workshop or training was attended by business actors from several Padukuhan in Hargorejo sub-district, such as Padukuhan Sangkrek, Krengseng, Anjir, and Gunung Kukusan. This workshop began with a welcome and introduction from Dwi Otik Kurniawati, M.Eng., as manager of the Halal Center at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. He emphasized

the importance of halal certification in ensuring the quality and safety of coconut sugar products, and explained the latest regulations regarding halal certification that craftsmen need to know. This presentation covers the various stages that craftsmen must follow, including the documents that need to be prepared, which provides practical guidance for those who wish to obtain halal certification.

Savira Dwi Cahyani, S.Pd., MM., as Ulu-ulu of Hargorejo Village also played an important role in this workshop by providing material regarding the important role of coconut sugar business actors, especially in the context of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Savira highlighted the contribution of coconut sugar business actors to improving the local economy, empowering communities, preserving culture and strengthening food security. This material provides artisans with insight into the importance of their role in local communities and how to increase the appeal of their products in the wider market.

Furthermore, Suparmanto, S.K.M., from the Kulon Progo District Health Service, conveyed the importance of hygiene in the process of making coconut sugar. He provides guidance on best practices at every stage of production, from sap selection and harvesting to final packaging. This material aims to ensure that the coconut sugar products produced are not only safe for consumption but also meet high quality standards. This is very important in maintaining consumer trust and ensuring products remain competitive in the market.

Eni Hidayati, S.P., from the Kulon Progo Regency Cooperatives and MSMEs Service, also provided material regarding “MSMEs Upgrading.” He discussed various aspects that entrepreneurs need to pay attention to to increase the scale of their business, such as increasing production scale, strengthening organizational structure, product development and innovation. This material provides guidance for coconut sugar craftsmen to develop their business to a higher level, with the aim of increasing income and expanding market access.

### **Program Impact and Benefits**

The implementation of the halal certification program and workshops in Hargorejo Village has had a significant positive impact on coconut and palm sugar craftsmen. This program helps eleven craftsmen in Padukuhan Gunung Kukusan to obtain halal certification for free. Apart from that, this halal certification also requires an important document, namely the Business Identification Number (NIB). Most business actors previously did not have an NIB, so this program not only provides halal certification, but also facilitates the issuance of an NIB for those who need it.

The NIB certificate and halal certificate will be given to the respective Padukuhan hamlet heads after the registration and issuance process, which is expected to take around one month. The issuance of this certificate will increase consumer confidence in coconut sugar and palm sugar products, as well as open up wider market opportunities.

The workshops held provide additional benefits by educating craftsmen about the latest regulations, good production practices and the importance of hygiene. This knowledge allows them to improve the quality of their products, increase their

competitiveness in the market, and adapt to the needs of consumers who increasingly prioritize food safety standards. Apart from that, training on “Upgrading MSMEs” provides insight into business development which can help craftsmen expand their production scale and increase their income.

More broadly, this program also contributes to local economic empowerment by strengthening the MSME sector in Hargorejo Village. By increasing product quality and production capacity, craftsmen can play a more active role in improving the village economy, creating jobs and preserving local culture. Through a participatory approach involving various stakeholders, this program not only supports the success of halal certification but also builds capacity and stronger relationships between craftsmen and their communities.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The halal certification program implemented in Hargorejo Village, Kokap District, Kulon Progo Regency, has had a positive impact on brown sugar craftsmen, both those producing coconut sugar and palm sugar. By using a participatory approach, this program not only succeeded in helping 11 craftsmen in Padukuhan Gunung Kukusan obtain halal certification, but also provided knowledge about the importance of cleanliness and halal standards in the production process. The training held helps craftsmen understand the latest regulations and improve the quality of their products, so that they have competitiveness in the wider market. With this halal certification, it is hoped that brown sugar products from Hargorejo Village will be well received by Muslim consumers, which will ultimately encourage the improvement of the local economy. This research emphasizes the importance of collaboration between craftsmen, village government and related institutions such as the Halal Center of UIN Sunan Kalijaga in empowering local communities and increasing the competitiveness of superior regional products.

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