

Community Service Through The Indonesian Red Cross Volunteer Corps (KSR PMI) Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara, Fifth Cohort

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Abstract

This community service program was conducted by the Indonesian Red Cross Volunteer Corps (KSR PMI) Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara in 2022, focusing on the 5th cohort. The initiative aimed to enhance students' practical skills in emergency response, disaster management, and health services while fostering social responsibility and community engagement. Through training and direct participation in humanitarian activities, students developed critical competencies in first aid, logistical support, and emotional care for disaster victims. The program also strengthened the bond between the university and the local community, contributing positively to societal well-being. This community service project not only provided immediate benefits to those in need but also enriched the students' educational experience, preparing them to be more empathetic and professional in real-world situations.

Abstrak

Program pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini dilaksanakan oleh Unit Korps Relawan Palang Merah Indonesia (KSR PMI) Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara pada tahun 2022 dengan fokus pada angkatan ke-5. Inisiatif ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan praktis siswa dalam tanggap darurat, manajemen bencana, dan layanan kesehatan sambil mendorong tanggung jawab sosial dan keterlibatan masyarakat. Melalui pelatihan dan partisipasi langsung dalam kegiatan kemanusiaan, siswa mengembangkan kompetensi penting dalam pertolongan pertama, dukungan logistik, dan kepedulian emosional terhadap korban bencana. Program ini juga memperkuat ikatan antara universitas dan masyarakat setempat, sehingga memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap kesejahteraan masyarakat. Proyek pengabdian masyarakat ini tidak hanya memberikan manfaat langsung kepada mereka yang membutuhkan tetapi juga memperkaya pengalaman pendidikan siswa, mempersiapkan mereka untuk lebih berempati dan profesional dalam situasi dunia nyata.

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Penanggulangan Bencana
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1. INTRODUCTION

Community service is one of the core pillars of higher education, embodying a profound and essential meaning in the effort to shape students who are not only excellent in education and research but also possess a high level of social awareness to contribute directly to society. Community service activities serve

as a tangible reflection of students' social responsibility and concern for the various social issues present in the community. Through these activities, students can apply the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom to real-life situations while also enhancing their social and emotional skills in interacting with the broader society. One form of community service that is particularly relevant and beneficial, especially in the context of responding to emergency situations, is student participation in humanitarian activities, such as those carried out by the Indonesian Red Cross Volunteer Corps (KSR PMI) Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara (Pratiwi, D., & Wijaya, R. 2022).

The KSR PMI Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara, as an integral part of the Indonesian Red Cross, plays a crucial role in providing humanitarian aid and social services to the community, particularly during natural disasters, mass accidents, or other emergency situations that require a rapid and effective response. In 2022, the KSR PMI Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara conducted community service activities for the fifth cohort, specifically designed to enhance students' awareness and skills in health and disaster management. This program aims not only to prepare students to face emergency situations but also to strengthen the relationship between the university and the community by implementing concrete actions that have a positive impact and make a significant contribution to the well-being of the communities served (Setiawan, R., & Pratama, A. 2023).

More than just a social activity, this community service initiative also functions as a practical learning platform, allowing students to apply the theoretical knowledge they have acquired during their studies in real-life field situations. The activities provide students with the opportunity to hone their skills in health, disaster management, and humanitarian services while also fostering social consciousness and solidarity among fellow students. Additionally, active participation in these activities plays a crucial role in shaping students' character, nurturing empathy, and illustrating how even small contributions can have a significant impact on the lives of others who are in emergency situations (Siregar, M., & Ramadhan, S, 2022).

In the context of this community service, training and participation in humanitarian operations become the primary focus, adding significant value to the personal development of students. Students are trained to respond quickly and appropriately to emergency situations such as natural disasters, accidents, and other crises, with skills that include first aid, logistical support, and emotional care for victims. The skills they acquire not only prepare them to provide direct assistance to communities in need but also offer valuable experiences that will be beneficial in their future social and professional competency development. Consequently, this community service activity not only benefits the recipient communities but also provides a profound educational experience, shaping students into more responsive, empathetic, and professional individuals in various social contexts (Ramadhan, Y., & Fitriani, A, 2023).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The younger generation is the spearhead of a nation's progress, and volunteers are the frontline "Garuda" of the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI), playing a crucial role in the organization's journey. The Indonesian Red Cross Volunteer Corps (KSR PMI) Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatra Utara embodies this younger generation, who, as citizens, are required to serve with a strong sense of responsibility, a voluntary spirit, and the ability to formulate their actions based on the 7 Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, while adhering firmly to the Tri Dharma of Higher Education.

3. METHODS

KSR PMI Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatra Utara serves as a haven for young volunteers dedicated to social and humanitarian causes. Established in 2012, the KSR PMI Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatra Utara currently has 16 members. The enthusiasm of young people eager to join the KSR PMI Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatra Utara is evident. Therefore, regeneration within this organization is essential for its continuity and development. Currently, 18 individuals are registered to participate in the second basic training (Diklatsar) with the hope that these new prospective members will provide even better service. Given that the prospective members and existing members are still active students, the training is conducted on Saturdays and Sundays, with a duration of 10 hours per day.

Activity Structure

a. Recruitment:

This is the initial stage where new members are recruited into the organization.

b. Orientation:

New recruits are introduced to the organization, its structure, mission, and the expectations of their role within the Indonesian Red Cross Volunteer Corps (KSR PMI) Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatra Utara.

c. Basic Classroom Training (Diksar Ruangan):

At this stage, the prospective members undergo basic education and training on various topics, including the history of the Red Cross movement, first aid, and other relevant subjects that support the recruitment process and are related to the organization. In addition to theoretical knowledge, they are provided with practical exercises that align with the materials presented.

d. Field Basic Training (Diksar Lapangan):

This final stage must be completed by prospective members before they become official members of the KSR PMI Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatra Utara. During this activity, prospective members are exposed to simulated natural disaster scenarios that require them to engage their humanitarian spirit to help others. This stage also fosters a sense of brotherhood, solidarity, and teamwork, instilling in them the 7 Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Unity, Voluntary Service, and Universality.

e. Member Assembly (MUSANG):

This is a decision-making process where members come together to reach a consensus on organizational matters.

f. Inauguration:

The inauguration is the formal process of officially recognizing and inducting an individual into a position or organization.

g. Work Assembly (MUSKER):

In this stage, the organization holds its highest authority to determine its strategic direction and make decisions on its future actions.

4. RESULTS

The community service activities conducted by the Indonesian Red Cross Volunteer Corps (KSR PMI) Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara, particularly focusing on the 5th cohort, yielded several impactful results across various dimensions, including skill development, organizational growth, and community engagement.

Enhanced Skills and Knowledge:

Participants of the 5th cohort demonstrated significant improvements in their knowledge and practical skills related to disaster response, first aid, and humanitarian assistance. Through a combination of classroom training (Diksar Ruangan) and field exercises (Diksar Lapangan), they were able to gain a deeper understanding of the core principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as hands-on experience in managing emergency situations. This training also emphasized the importance of teamwork, leadership, and quick decision-making under pressure, which are critical in real-world disaster response scenarios.

Strengthened Organizational Cohesion:

The activities fostered a strong sense of unity and collaboration among the members. The training sessions, particularly the field exercises, required participants to work closely with one another, promoting a spirit of solidarity and mutual support. The process of going through rigorous training together helped to build trust and camaraderie, ensuring that the members could rely on each other during actual humanitarian missions.

Successful Recruitment and Orientation:

The recruitment and orientation phases were highly successful, with 18 new members completing the basic training. The structured orientation program ensured that new recruits were well-integrated into the organization, understanding their roles and responsibilities within KSR PMI. This phase also allowed the organization to convey its values and expectations clearly, ensuring alignment between the members and the organization's mission.

Effective Simulation and Practical Application:

The field training provided a realistic simulation of disaster scenarios, allowing participants to apply their theoretical knowledge in a controlled yet challenging environment. These simulations tested the participants' abilities to remain calm under pressure, make critical decisions, and implement effective disaster response strategies. The practical application of skills in such simulations also prepared the members to handle real emergencies with greater confidence and competence.

Inauguration and Formal Induction:

The culmination of the training was the official inauguration of the new members, marking their formal induction into the KSR PMI Unit. This ceremony not only recognized their efforts and commitment but also solidified their status as active contributors to the organization's ongoing humanitarian mission.

Collective Decision-Making and Organizational Development:

The Member Assembly (MUSANG) and Work Assembly (MUSKER) provided platforms for collective decision-making, allowing the members to participate actively in shaping the direction of the

organization. These assemblies ensured that decisions were made democratically, reflecting the collective will of the members and fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the organization's future.

Positive Impact on Community Engagement:

Through these activities, the KSR PMI Unit strengthened its relationship with the local community. The training sessions and simulations often involved collaboration with local authorities and community members, enhancing the unit's visibility and reinforcing its role as a key player in community-based disaster management and humanitarian assistance.

Sustainability and Future Prospects:

The successful completion of the 5th cohort's training and the integration of new members into the KSR PMI Unit have laid a strong foundation for the organization's future growth. The process of regenerating the volunteer base ensures that the organization remains dynamic and capable of adapting to new challenges. The skills and experiences gained by the members during this cohort will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the KSR PMI Unit and its continued ability to serve the community effectively.

5. DISCUSSION

The community service project undertaken by the Indonesian Red Cross Volunteer Corps (KSR PMI) Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara, focusing on the 5th cohort, presents a comprehensive approach to integrating educational objectives with practical humanitarian service. This section discusses the broader implications, challenges, and successes observed during the implementation of the program.

1. Integration of Educational and Humanitarian Objectives: The program successfully blended the academic goals of Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara with the humanitarian mission of KSR PMI. The Tri Dharma of Higher Education, which emphasizes education, research, and community service, was effectively manifested in this project. The students not only gained theoretical knowledge but also applied it in real-world scenarios, aligning with the educational philosophy that learning should extend beyond the classroom. The incorporation of the 7 Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement into the training curriculum ensured that the students' activities were guided by universal humanitarian values, further enriching their educational experience.

2. Practical Skill Development and Real-World Application: One of the key successes of the program was the practical skill development observed in the participants. Through Basic Classroom Training (Diksar Ruangan) and Field Basic Training (Diksar Lapangan), the students were equipped with essential skills in first aid, disaster management, and emergency response. These skills are not only critical in the context of humanitarian service but also valuable in their personal and professional lives. The simulations provided during field training were particularly effective in helping students translate theoretical knowledge into actionable skills, preparing them for actual emergencies.

3. Fostering a Sense of Responsibility and Solidarity: The program emphasized the importance of responsibility, solidarity, and teamwork among the participants. These values were instilled through both the content of the training and the collaborative nature of the exercises. By working together in high-pressure situations, students developed a strong sense of camaraderie and mutual reliance, which is essential for effective disaster response. The program also nurtured a sense of duty and accountability, as students were encouraged to think critically about their roles in society and their potential impact on the lives of others.

4. Challenges in Balancing Academic and Service Commitments: A notable challenge encountered during the program was balancing the academic commitments of the students with their involvement in community service activities. Given that many of the participants were active students with demanding schedules, the program had to be carefully planned to avoid conflicts with their academic responsibilities. The decision to conduct training sessions on weekends with a duration of 10 hours per day was a practical solution, but it also required a significant commitment from the students, who had to manage their time effectively to fulfill both their academic and service obligations.

5. Recruitment and Regeneration within the Organization: The recruitment process for the 5th cohort was successful, with 18 new members completing the program. This highlights the effectiveness of the organization's outreach and training strategies. However, the discussion also raises the importance of continuous regeneration within the organization to ensure its sustainability. As existing members graduate and move on to other pursuits, the organization must consistently recruit and train new members to maintain its operational capacity. The program's structure, which emphasizes both orientation and intensive training,

appears well-suited to this need, ensuring that new recruits are adequately prepared to take on the responsibilities of the organization.

6. Impact on the Local Community: The community service activities had a positive impact on the local community, particularly in terms of disaster preparedness and response. By involving local authorities and community members in training exercises, the program not only improved the students' skills but also raised awareness about the importance of disaster readiness among the broader population. This collaborative approach strengthens the community's resilience to disasters and reinforces the role of KSR PMI as a trusted and capable organization in times of need.

7. Ethical Considerations and Adherence to Humanitarian Principles: Throughout the program, there was a strong emphasis on ethical conduct and adherence to the 7 Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This focus on ethics is crucial in humanitarian work, where the stakes are often high, and decisions can have profound consequences. The program's commitment to these principles ensured that all activities were conducted with respect for human dignity, impartiality, and neutrality, fostering a culture of ethical responsibility among the participants.

8. Long-Term Benefits and Sustainability: The long-term benefits of the program extend beyond the immediate skills and experiences gained by the participants. By embedding the values of humanitarian service and ethical responsibility in the students, the program contributes to the development of future leaders who are not only professionally competent but also socially conscious. The sustainability of the organization is also enhanced by the continuous influx of new members, trained to uphold the same standards of excellence and dedication.

In conclusion, the 5th cohort of the KSR PMI Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara successfully achieved its objectives of skill development, organizational cohesion, and community impact. The program serves as a model for how educational institutions can integrate academic learning with community service, fostering a generation of young leaders equipped to address the challenges of the future with compassion, responsibility, and professionalism. While challenges such as balancing academic and service commitments remain, the overall outcomes demonstrate the value of such initiatives in building both individual capacities and community resilience.

6. CONCLUSION

The community service initiative conducted by the Indonesian Red Cross Volunteer Corps (KSR PMI) Unit at Universitas Haji Sumatera Utara for the 5th cohort has proven to be a highly successful and impactful program. The detailed training and practical exercises provided to the participants resulted in significant enhancements in their skills and knowledge related to disaster response, first aid, and humanitarian assistance. The program effectively integrated educational objectives with real-world application, demonstrating the value of combining academic learning with community service. The training sessions, which included both classroom instruction and field exercises, not only equipped the participants with essential competencies but also fostered a strong sense of responsibility, solidarity, and teamwork.

The positive impact on the local community, through improved disaster preparedness and increased awareness, highlights the broader significance of the program. By engaging with local authorities and community members, the KSR PMI Unit strengthened its role as a key player in humanitarian efforts, enhancing both its operational effectiveness and community relations.

7. SUGGESTION

- 1. Expand Training and Simulation Scenarios:** To further enhance the preparedness of new members, consider incorporating a wider range of disaster simulation scenarios. This could include both natural and man-made emergencies to provide a more comprehensive training experience. Diversifying the scenarios will help participants develop a broader skill set and better prepare them for a variety of real-world situations.
- 2. Integrate Academic and Service Commitments More Effectively:** Addressing the challenge of balancing academic responsibilities with community service is crucial. It may be beneficial to develop a more flexible training schedule or explore options for integrating service activities into academic coursework. This could involve partnerships with academic departments to create service-learning opportunities that align with students' studies.

3. **Strengthen Mentorship and Support Systems:** Establishing a structured mentorship program where experienced members guide new recruits could improve the onboarding process. Mentors can provide ongoing support, share their experiences, and help new members navigate their roles within the organization, enhancing their overall effectiveness and integration.
4. **Enhance Community Outreach and Engagement:** To build on the positive impact made on the local community, consider expanding outreach efforts to include more community-based initiatives. This could involve organizing public awareness campaigns, workshops, and collaborations with other local organizations to further enhance community resilience and engagement.
5. **Evaluate and Adapt Training Methods:** Regularly assess the effectiveness of training methods and materials through feedback from participants and evaluation of outcomes. Adapting training approaches based on these evaluations will ensure that the program remains relevant and effective in meeting the needs of both the volunteers and the communities they serve.
6. **Promote Long-Term Volunteer Retention:** To sustain the organization's growth and impact, develop strategies to retain volunteers over the long term. This could include offering advanced training opportunities, recognizing and rewarding contributions, and providing clear pathways for career development within the organization.
7. **Facilitate Cross-Regional Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration with other KSR PMI units and similar organizations in different regions to share best practices, resources, and experiences. Cross-regional partnerships can enhance the overall effectiveness of the organization and provide additional support to local efforts.

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DOCUMENTATION

