

PROFICIENT Community Service

Building an Entrepreneurial Mindset among Inmates of Salemba Prison in Jakarta: A Community Service

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ABSTRACT

Keyword: Entrepreneurship, Inmates, Community Empowerment, Social Reintegration Accepted : July 28, 2025 Approved: July 30, 2025 Published: August 13, 2025 Publisher: Perbanas Institute International. To view a copy of this license, visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/	<i>This community service aims to empower inmates by equipping them with practical entrepreneurial skills as part of social reintegration efforts. The training program was held in Class IIA Salemba Prison on June 18, 2025, targeting inmates who have an interest and experience in entrepreneurship. The method used was participatory training and group discussions across four business sectors: trade-based, skill-based, food-beverage-based, and service-based enterprises. Additional sessions included startup development fundamentals, digital economy exposure, and basic business modeling (e.g., Business Model Canvas, marketing mix). The results indicated increased awareness and confidence among participants to start small-scale businesses using minimal capital and accessible skills. The training also promoted a positive mindset, introduced legal business aspects, and highlighted the importance of support from community or NGOs. The conclusion suggests that entrepreneurship education is a viable reintegration strategy for inmates and may reduce recidivism by fostering financial independence post-release. Recommendations include continuous mentoring and access to microfinance for ex-inmates.</i>
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I. INTRODUCTION

Salemba Prison is a detention center owned by the Directorate General of Corrections, Ministry of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia. The Salemba Class IIA Prison is a division of the Salemba Class I Prison Correctional Unit (UPT) into two work units: the Class I Prison in Central Jakarta and the Class IIA Prison in Jakarta, in 2007. The prison, located at Jl. Percetakan Negara No. 88A, Central Jakarta, houses approximately 1000 inmates (LPKA, 2025).

Perbanas Institute had the opportunity to conduct Community Service activities at the Salemba Class IIA Prison as a manifestation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education. This Sustainable Community Service activity will be held between June and November 2025. This program provides materials needed by inmates, including entrepreneurship and digital marketing. This program is expected to improve inmates' skills and can be implemented upon release and integration into society.

The objective of the program is to empower inmates by providing them with practical entrepreneurial knowledge and digital marketing skills that can be utilized after release to build independent businesses or engage in meaningful economic activities. By equipping participants with these competencies, the program aims to enhance their self-reliance, reduce dependency on limited job opportunities, and support their reintegration into society.

The process of reintegrating former prisoners into society is not a recent development. Most inmates eventually return to their communities, where they must navigate the difficulties of newfound freedom, social pressures, responsibilities, and everyday struggles. In Indonesia, reintegration continues to pose significant challenges. Former inmates often encounter societal stigma, a lack of practical skills, and scarce employment opportunities, factors that heighten the likelihood of reoffending. This issue is further exacerbated by the growing number of annual releases, many of whom have served longer prison terms and had limited access to education or vocational training that could ease their re-entry into society.

Individuals with restricted access to job opportunities are at a higher risk of engaging in criminal activities. Having a criminal record further reduces both the number and quality of job prospects, creating a persistent cycle involving unemployment, criminal behaviour, and imprisonment. Former prisoners often struggle to find employment because of their low educational attainment, limited job experience, and employers' reluctance to hire them. Inmates have more probability to be violence to those who have a younger age range, and no education record (Camlibel & Can, 2021). There is also a gap among the inmates such as some inmates having a higher status than others, which is linked to the type of crime committed, years of imprisonment, previous imprisonment, relations to male gang members, and charisma (Lindberg, 2005).

Entrepreneurship is considered an effective approach for economic empowerment and self-sufficiency. It is increasingly viewed as an innovative pathway for individuals after incarceration, especially given the significant barriers they face in securing stable employment. By developing entrepreneurial skills, former inmates can create their income-generating opportunities, reduce dependency on traditional labour markets, and build confidence and resilience in rebuilding their lives.

The primary objective of this Community Service initiative is to equip inmates with foundational entrepreneurial knowledge and digital marketing skills that can be leveraged for small business development upon release. Through structured training sessions and practical modules, the program seeks to foster a mindset of independence, creativity, and financial literacy among inmates. The goal is to support their successful reintegration into society, reduce recidivism rates, and contribute to broader social and economic development.

II. METHODS

The community service activity was conducted on June 18, 2025, at the Class IIA Salemba Prison. The location of the community service partner is Jl. Percetakan Negara No. 88A 12, RT.12/RW.4, Rawasari, Cempaka Putih District, DKI Jakarta 10570. The main partners involved in this activity were prison officers and selected inmates who participated as trainees. The activity was designed to be interactive and educational, to equip participants with entrepreneurial skills and business insights that could support their reintegration into society post-incarceration. This research proves that education, such as socialization, open libraries, and access to books, would promote positivity within society, reduce criminal and immoral acts (Hussain, Batool, Soroya, & Warraich, 2019).

The program was structured into two main sessions. A presentation session and a discussion session, each serving a complementary role in the overall learning process. The first session was led by lecturers and focused on introducing fundamental concepts of entrepreneurship. The materials included practical and context-relevant topics such as trade-based businesses (e.g., selling phone credit, small grocery stores), skill-based enterprises (e.g., woodworking, tailoring, welding, electronic repair), food and beverage businesses (e.g., street food stalls, homemade catering), service-based businesses (e.g., cleaning services, barbershops), and environmentally oriented businesses (e.g., mushroom farming, household gardening, recycling through waste banks). The session also presented real-life case studies, startup ecosystem overviews, and innovative startup models, including digital entrepreneurship, creative industries, and various funding options such as bootstrapping, angel investors, venture capital, and crowdfunding. Advanced topics such as the Business Model Canvas, SWOT analysis, Total Quality

Management, and emerging technology in business (e.g., AI, blockchain, fintech) were briefly introduced to inspire participants toward scalable and sustainable ventures.

The second session is a discussion. Participants were encouraged to engage actively by asking questions and sharing their thoughts on the presented material. The facilitators provided personalized advice and clarified participants' doubts regarding starting and managing small-scale businesses post-incarceration. The discussion allowed for deeper reflection on feasible business ideas tailored to the inmates' skills, interests, and available resources. It also served as a platform to reinforce positive mindsets, entrepreneurial motivation, and awareness of community support systems, including NGOs, legal assistance, and marketing strategies for micro-businesses.

This research is suitable for using descriptive analysis methods because it describes community service activities as its focus is to explain in detail and systematically the phenomena, characteristics, or conditions of the research object (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In the context of community service, this means researchers can comprehensively describe the types of activities carried out, the stages of implementation, the resources used, and who is involved (both the service team and the target community). Descriptive research allows for the presentation of data on how the program was implemented, community responses to the program, and the initial and final conditions of the target community. This is important for documentation, initial evaluation, and in-depth understanding of program implementation without the need to seek cause-and-effect relationships or test hypotheses. Thus, descriptive research reports provide a clear and factual picture of the entire process and aspects of community service activities, making it a strong basis for planning similar programs in the future or for further, more in-depth research.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The entrepreneurship training session conducted at Salemba Class IIA Prison yielded positive and encouraging outcomes. Participants, composed of selected inmates with varying educational and vocational backgrounds, demonstrated a noticeable improvement in their understanding of small business fundamentals. By the end of the program, most participants were able to articulate core concepts of the topic. Several inmates proposed feasible business ideas based on their interests and skills. Mr. Beni Hidayat, as head of Salemba Prison, permits us to conduct the program during 2025.



Picture 1. Speech from the head of the Prison

The head of the Salemba prison in Jakarta enthusiastically welcomed the Perbanas Institute's initiative to organize an educational program for inmates. Full permission has been granted for the Perbanas team to enter and provide essential training, particularly in preparing inmates to reintegrate into society. This program focuses on improving entrepreneurial literacy, a crucial skill for independent competition after release. Equipped with business understanding and business development strategies, it is hoped that inmates will avoid going down the wrong path and instead be able to create economic opportunities for themselves.

In addition to entrepreneurship, security in the digital era is also a key focus of this education. Today, almost every aspect of life is interconnected with digital technology, including the potential for fraud and cybercrime. Therefore, equipping inmates with knowledge on how to maintain personal data security, recognize online fraud, and use digital platforms responsibly is vital. This collaboration between Lapas and the Perbanas Institute is a proactive step in developing inmates into productive, competitive, and digitally literate individuals, so they can successfully reintegrate into society and avoid repeating past mistakes.

Participants also gained an introductory understanding of simple business legality mechanisms, such as how to obtain a permit and register their business activities to operate legally. The training emphasized the importance of being formally registered to gain access to government programs, credit facilities, and protection under the law. In addition, participants learned about financial access, including how to utilize basic banking services, microfinance institutions, and digital platforms for managing income and expenses.



Picture 2. Opening of Education Session

An important topic discussed during the session was the use of social media and digital tools for business promotion. Participants expressed a high level of interest in using platforms like Instagram and Facebook Marketplace to market their products and services, especially since these tools are relatively accessible, low-cost, and capable of reaching a broad customer base.

Nevertheless, alongside these advantages, participants were also reminded of the potential risks associated with online transactions. While Instagram offers a convenient platform for business activities, it is not immune to fraudulent practices. As noted by Amelia (2016), online fraud on Instagram has become increasingly common, with many users falling victim to scams involving fake accounts, false advertising, and non-delivery of goods. Such risks underscore the importance of digital literacy and awareness when conducting transactions through social media platforms. Equipping inmates with not only promotional skills but also knowledge about online fraud prevention is crucial to ensure that their entrepreneurial efforts are secure and sustainable.



Picture 3. Delivering Material

The interactive discussion session also brought to light the participants' enthusiasm to apply their newly acquired skills after release. Many expressed a desire to become self-employed rather than seek conventional employment, due to the social stigma and limited job prospects faced by ex-inmates. This

reinforces the idea that entrepreneurship can serve as a viable and empowering alternative for economic reintegration. Moreover, the session highlighted the importance of community partnerships, mentorship, and institutional support in sustaining entrepreneurial activities. Facilitators encouraged participants to seek out local community groups, NGOs, and government programs that support former inmates, especially those providing training, capital, and marketing assistance.



Picture 4. Prison Facility

Adequate facilities to foster an entrepreneurial spirit in prison are crucial in preparing inmates to reintegrate into society as independent and productive individuals. The availability of workshops equipped with relevant equipment, such as sewing machines, carpentry tools, or graphic design software, will enable them to learn practical skills in demand. Beyond physical facilities, it is also crucial to provide access to experienced mentors from the business world, who can provide guidance, inspiration, and real-world insights into business dynamics. The training curriculum should cover basic aspects such as business planning, simple financial management, product marketing, and an understanding of business licensing. Furthermore, mini-business incubators within prisons or partnerships with external SMEs, allowing inmates to participate in production or sales, will provide invaluable practical experience. Thus, upon their release, former inmates will possess not only the skills but also the entrepreneurial mindset, self-confidence, and initial networks to start businesses, reducing the risk of recidivism and positively contributing to the economy. The community service activity from Perbanas Institute demonstrated that well-structured entrepreneurship training can positively impact inmates' mindsets and aspirations. With the right support systems, former inmates can transition into economically productive roles, thereby reducing the risk of recidivism and fostering long-term social reintegration.



Picture 5. Classes for Prisoners

To maximize the success of such entrepreneurship training, it is essential to emphasize not only skill acquisition but also the importance of delivering quality products and services. As highlighted by Amelia et al. (2023), customer loyalty in the business world is significantly influenced by product quality, the effectiveness of services provided, and the supporting facilities available. Applying this insight to the prison-based entrepreneurial programs, inmates must be trained not only in how to produce goods or offer services but also in how to maintain high standards of quality and reliability. This approach ensures that the businesses they develop post-release can compete in the real market, build trust with customers, and achieve long-term sustainability. Therefore, integrating these commercial principles into prison training programs will prepare inmates not only as entrepreneurs but as providers of value-driven products and services that meet market expectations.

Research indicates that a positive prison environment, fostered by well-trained correctional staff, is crucial for inmate mental health. When staff members are equipped to create safer and more respectful settings, it directly correlates with better mental well-being among the incarcerated population. This suggests that investing in comprehensive training for correctional officers is not just a matter of policy, but a practical step toward improving the psychological health of inmates. By focusing on de-escalation, empathy, and conflict resolution, staff can help cultivate a less stressful and more supportive atmosphere, which in turn can mitigate some of the negative mental health outcomes often associated with incarceration (Lima et al., 2025).

Beyond creating better environments, addressing inmate mental health requires a multi-pronged approach. While bolstering social support networks is a valuable strategy, there is a clear need for more advanced tools to accurately assess mental health issues within the prison system. Current assessment methods may not be sufficient, leading to misidentification and inadequate intervention. Future research should therefore prioritize the development of specialized and more precise screening and diagnostic

tools. This will enable mental health professionals to more effectively identify individuals who need support, ensuring they receive the right kind of care and ultimately leading to more successful rehabilitation and improved outcomes. This result is well supported by the research conducted in Salemba Prison Jakarta.

IV. CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurial training for inmates is a strategic approach to reduce unemployment and social exclusion post-release of the Salemba Prison Inmates. This program from Perbanas Institute successfully introduced practical, low-barrier business models and digital innovation awareness. Inmates need a second chance, and most of them are excited to have a better life after being released. Future efforts should focus on building business incubators in correctional institutions and creating post-release mentoring programs. Maintaining the program to be sustainable in a long-term collaboration among the university, government, and industry is important.

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