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Participatory Assistance for Halal Certification of Micro and Small Enterprises Operating Canteens at Pesantren Baitul Hikmah Jember

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Abstract
This study examines assistance with halal certification for canteen operators at Pesantren Baitul Hikmah, an eco-pesantren in Jember. The intervention included integrated halal-thayyib literacy education, Business Identification Number (NIB) facilitation, and hands-on assistance for the SiHalal Self-Declare scheme. Operators contributed recipes and ingredient information and reviewed kitchen arrangements with the team. During the visit, raw meat storage was separated from the area used to prepare fresh produce. By the time of manuscript revision, all three reported program outputs had been completed: halal certificates had been issued for products from three participating canteens, the module had been published, and intellectual property registration for the module had been issued. These results describe administrative completion and an observed change in food handling. Changes in income, knowledge and environmental performance require separate assessment.

Keywords: *halal certification, pesantren canteens, MSEs, participatory assistance.*

Introduction

Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia are currently transforming their strategic role. They no longer function solely as epicenters for religious education and moral formation but have evolved into catalysts for social empowerment and sustainable economic independence. A concrete manifestation of this transformation is the implementation of the eco-pesantren concept, which holistically integrates nature conservation-based educational governance with the values of ecological monotheism (Mangunjaya and McKay 2012; Herdiansyah et al. 2016).

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Pesantren Baitul Hikmah, located in Tempurejo District, Jember Regency, has implemented this concept in East Java. The ecological commitment of this partner is evidenced by an outstanding track record of achievements, ranging from being recognized as an Environmentally Friendly Pesantren by the Governor of East Java, winning the Provincial-Level Adiwiyata Award 2025, to securing 2nd Place in the Regency-Level Waste Recycling Competition. Here ecological tawhid connects belief in the unity of God with responsibility for the use of natural resources. Waste separation illustrates this responsibility. The school's environmental achievements, however, provide little information about whether its operators can trace the ingredients in a prepared meal.

Modern pesantren ecosystems demand comprehensive food quality assurance to complement this foundation. The communal canteen plays a crucial role within the pesantren's economic structure, providing food for students (santri) each day. Halal assurance concerns the permissibility of ingredients and production processes, as well as the records supporting a product claim. Thayyib concerns the wholesomeness and suitability of food for consumption. In this program, its observable scope encompassed washing facilities, storage and the handling of raw meat near fresh produce.

Before the assistance program, the canteen micro-entrepreneurs at Pesantren Baitul Hikmah faced difficulties preparing for halal certification. This initial condition prompted assistance with ingredient information, business registration and the SiHalal application. By the time of manuscript revision, halal certificates had been issued for products from three participating canteens, as reported in the Results section.

Halal certification is now a mandatory state regulation. The government, through the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH), is accelerating the implementation of the Mandatory Halal ecosystem for all circulating food and beverage products, including business units operating within educational institutions (Faridah, 2019). BPJPH provides a self-declaration scheme for eligible micro and small enterprises (MSEs), with assistance from a Halal Product Process Assistant (P3H). The business identification number (NIB) supports registration, and certification decisions rest with the competent authorities (BPJPH, 2026a). Delaying this certification hinders the canteen's legal standing, diminishes competitiveness, and compromises student consumer protection (Warto and Samsuri, 2020). At the

time of the August activity, Government Regulation 42/2024 set 17 October 2026 as the end of the phase-in period for MSE food and beverage products. Government Regulation 40/2026 subsequently extended that period to 17 October 2028 (BPJPH, 2026b).

Concrete academic intervention through a community service program is essential to address this urgency. Earlier research examined obstacles to halal certification in East Kalimantan (Prabowo et al. 2015). Research on Indonesian MSEs identifies barriers to certification access (Fathoni et al. 2025), while research on digital certification examines the demands that online procedures place on smaller enterprises (Yuanitasari et al. 2025). A comparative survey examines why food businesses intend to seek certification (Fianto et al. 2025). This case follows a different question: once operators at a shared educational institution decide to apply, how do they translate recipes and kitchen routines into the information required for an application?

The specific objective of this community service activity is to deliver practical solutions through halal-thayyib literacy education and comprehensive (end-to-end) technical assistance. The service team facilitates the workflow from socialization and NIB registration to SiHalal applications in collaboration with the Halal Center of Universitas Jember and student assistants. We describe the division of work between operators and facilitators, report the status reached and examine what the kitchen visit adds to an administrative account of certification.

Methods

Research Context and Situational Analysis

This community service activity was conducted at Pesantren Baitul Hikmah, located in Tempurejo District, Jember Regency, East Java, on Wednesday, August 12, 2026. The selection of this location was based on the pesantren's strategic position as the center of the educational ecosystem and halal lifestyle for its students (*santri*). Preliminary observations and situational analysis identified NIB registration and access to SiHalal as practical obstacles for the partners. The activity records do not give unit-specific baseline counts.

Target Partners

The main subjects and strategic targets in this community service activity were the canteen operators and micro-entrepreneurs within the Pesantren Baitul Hikmah environment. The intervention focused on this group because

they play an essential role in the supply chain, providing for students' daily consumption. The reporting unit is the canteen enterprise. Three canteens were represented in the confirmed certification outcome. Individual attendance and certified product-line counts were unavailable.

Methodology and Implementation Procedures

This community service program employed participatory assistance. Operators contributed ingredient and business information, while facilitators helped translate it into the required application records. The activity account documents joint action and observation. It does not establish that collective reflection informed a subsequent cycle of action, as required for a full participatory action research design (McIntyre, 2008). Guided by this participatory framework, the intervention was systematically designed and carried out through four main stages:

a. Education and Socialization: The material delivery was conducted through interactive presentations and two-way discussions, encouraging active partner participation. The material focused on the urgency of Halal Product Assurance (JPH) regulations, an introduction to the basic concepts of SJPH, and practical training on maintaining critical cleanliness points in the production area and ensuring accuracy in the halal raw material selection process.
b. Business Legality Assistance: Operating collaboratively, the service team provided technical facilitation by directly assisting partners in the administrative data entry process. The goal was to obtain a Business Identification Number (NIB) online through the integrated Online Single Submission (OSS) system.
c. SiHalal Registration Assistance: After the NIB was issued, the stage continued with creating a business account on the BPJPH SiHalal portal. The team guided the operators as they compiled documents and submitted applications using the self-declaration scheme.
d. Field Visit: As a form of joint verification and practical evaluation, the service team and the canteen operators conducted direct observations of the canteen's operational area. This collaborative inspection examined the production flow, washing facilities, waste separation and the location of raw meat storage relative to fresh produce preparation.

Achievement Indicators and Expected Outcomes

Post-intervention, canteen operators are expected to possess increased literacy and a comprehensive understanding of SJPH standard implementation. We distinguish this learning objective from the outputs reported below. The activity account identifies completed tasks and observed changes on site. The output assessment covers three completed deliverables at the time of manuscript revision: issued halal certification for products from three canteens, a published module, and issued intellectual property registration for the module. These statuses are reported based on the authors' confirmation. Matched knowledge tests, a scored hygiene checklist and observations across later working days were unavailable.

Result and Discussion

Halal-Thayyib Literacy and SJPH Understanding

The program commenced with an interactive education and socialization session to establish a foundational understanding of the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) and the holistic principles of *halal-thayyib*. The service team conducted two-way participatory dialogues that introduced the role of BPJPH, the core standards of SJPH and the records needed to describe canteen products.



Figure 1. Socialization and educational session.

During these sessions, operators actively engaged in theoretical mapping of potential non-halal contamination risks. The discussion focused on critical materials such as complex seasonings, flavor enhancers, and animal-derived additives. An exemption applicable to an ingredient is distinct from the certification of a finished product. The session account establishes the topics discussed and the operators' participation. No knowledge score was available.

Facilitation of Business Legality

Transitioning from theoretical knowledge to administrative action, the service team provided direct technical assistance to overcome digital accessibility barriers in navigating the *Online Single Submission* (OSS) portal. Working collaboratively using digital devices provided by the team, operators submitted their personal administrative data, business profiles, and risk assessments. This participatory process resulted in the successful issuance of official Risk-Based Business Identification Numbers (NIB). The NIB served as a business identifier for the next stage. The available account does not give the number of newly issued NIBs.

SiHalal Account Registration and Application Assistance

Canteen operators collaborated with student research assistants to review their daily food and beverage inventories. The team then guided the operators step-by-step through creating business accounts, uploading product recipes, documenting production workflows, and submitting applications under the Self-Declare scheme designated for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs). The P3H from the Halal Center at Universitas Jember helped verify the application information. The final certification outcome is reported in the following subsection. Account totals, application totals and certified product-line counts require separate records. The available records do not provide a dated verification entry for each application.

Completed Program Outputs

At the time of manuscript revision, the authors confirmed completion of the three reported program outputs. Halal certificates had been issued for products from three participating canteens. This establishes completion of the certification process for the products covered by the issued certificates. The count refers to canteen enterprises represented in that outcome. The scope of each certificate should be read together with its corresponding product list.

The program also produced a published module. This publication is an educational output associated with the assistance program and serves as a resource for subsequent training. Reporting the module as a completed output

concerns its publication status. The extent to which operators use the module in their daily work remains a question for follow-up evaluation.

Intellectual property registration for the module had also been issued. This is reported as a separate output linked to the published module. The completion of publication and registration provides a basis for planning the module's subsequent use, including introductory sessions for new canteen personnel and refresher activities with the Halal Center. These uses are proposed follow-up activities whose implementation can be evaluated after publication.

Field Visit and Operational Sanitation Assessment

The final phase involved a joint field visit of the canteen's physical facilities, kitchens, and serving areas. The team observed washing facilities and structured waste separation. During the visit, raw meat storage was physically separated from the fresh produce preparation area. The visit establishes when the adjustment was made. Its continued use and its effect on contamination require follow-up.



Figure 2. Halal certification assistance at Pesantren Baitul Hikmah.



Figure 3. On-site canteen field visit

To provide a clear overview of the intervention, the specific activities and corresponding outputs achieved across each stage are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Program Activities and Completed Outputs

Activity	Reported result
Education	SJPH discussion and ingredient review
OSS registration	NIBs issued
SiHalal accounts	Account creation assisted
Submission and review	Recipes and process details submitted with P3H assistance
Kitchen visit	Raw meat storage separated from fresh produce preparation
Halal certification	Halal certificates issued for products from three canteens. 1. Kantin Ning Faida — Certificate ID 35110081148530926, issued 27 September 2026 2. Kantin Ning Reni — Certificate ID 35110081241061026, issued 3 October 2026 3. Kantin Ning Tuti — Certificate ID 35110081241431026, issued 3 October 2026

Module publication	Training module published under the title *Modul Panduan Operasional Kantin Halal-Thayyib Pesantren (2026)*
Module intellectual property registration	Intellectual property registration issued for *Modul Panduan Operasional Kantin Halal-Thayyib Pesantren.* Registration No. EC002026206282, issued 21 October 2026

The transition from traditional, everyday canteen practices to formal, state-recognized halal certification is rarely a simple journey for small businesses. The activities at Pesantren Baitul Hikmah highlighted a gap between environmentally friendly habits and the documentation required to register a food product. The discussion considers ingredient records, assisted digital registration and the responsibilities that follow certification.

From Everyday Practice to Documented Halal Assurance

In the pesantren canteen, an operator may know a dish by its recipe. The application also calls for a record of the specific ingredients used to make it. For example, a dish name does not identify which formulation of a compound seasoning was purchased. The product record connects the claim about the finished dish to its inputs and preparation steps.

This distinction can be interpreted through the halal supply chain perspective. Tieman et al. (2012) locate halal integrity within connected processes extending from sourcing to the point of purchase. Applied to a small canteen, this perspective draws attention to the relationship between a purchased ingredient, the recipe in which it is used and the handling activities that follow. The present case illustrates the practical difficulty of making those relationships explicit when production knowledge is held mainly by the person preparing the food. Recording that knowledge creates information that another operator or facilitator can inspect, question and update. This is an interpretation of the documented assistance process, rather than evidence that a complete traceability system was established.

The implication is that ingredient mapping should be treated as a recurring business practice. If an operator substitutes a seasoning brand while retaining the same menu name, the written recipe may no longer reflect actual production. A proportionate follow-up arrangement would link each product

to a current ingredient list and retain relevant packaging or supplier information for review. Such a record would make substitutions visible and allow the operator to seek guidance where the status of an input is uncertain. These proposed routines extend the value of the initial mapping exercise without assuming that operators already maintain purchasing logs or that every ingredient change has occurred in the participating canteens.

During our mapping exercise, ingredient selection and kitchen cleanliness raised distinct questions. A seasoning can be checked against a recipe away from the kitchen. Assessing proximity between raw meat and fresh produce required a site visit. Repeated observations would be needed to determine whether separation is maintained during busy periods.

Halal-thayyib offers a complementary basis for interpreting the kitchen observation. Alzeer et al. (2018) discuss the relationship between religious permissibility, wholesomeness and food safety. Their conceptual argument supports examining how food is handled alongside the status of its ingredients. In this case, the separation of raw meat storage from fresh produce preparation is relevant to the handling dimension of thayyib. It does not, by itself, demonstrate that ingredients previously contained prohibited substances or that the kitchens were microbiologically unsafe. Keeping these interpretations separate prevents the field observation from being used to support claims that were not investigated.

The World Health Organization (2006) identifies separation of raw and cooked foods as a core food-handling principle, alongside cleanliness, adequate cooking, temperature control and safe water and ingredients. The adjustment observed in the canteen is consistent with the broader preventive logic of separating raw animal products from foods prepared nearby. Nevertheless, this program did not measure cooking temperatures, storage temperatures or microbial contamination. Its contribution is therefore a documented opportunity to reorganize handling practices. A subsequent assessment should examine whether storage, utensils and preparation surfaces remain appropriately separated throughout normal service, rather than relying only on the appearance of the kitchen during an assisted visit.

Navigating Digital Bureaucracy Together

The Online Single Submission (OSS) and SiHalal portals required operators to describe different aspects of their work. OSS required information about the business, while SiHalal required information about products and how they were made. This distinction helps explain why internet access alone could not complete the task (Yuanitasari et al. 2025).

The administrative burden framework clarifies why this distinction matters. Moynihan et al. (2015) distinguish the effort of learning about requirements from the effort of complying with them, while also recognizing psychological costs. In the present setting, understanding which business and product information belongs in each system represents a learning demand; assembling and entering that information represents a compliance demand. The activity records support discussion of these tasks, but they contain no direct measures of stress, anxiety or perceived burden. Consequently, psychological relief should not be claimed as an observed outcome of the assistance.

Yuanitasari et al. (2025) identify limited information technology knowledge, manual administration, and document constraints as challenges in digital halal certification. The experience reported here adds a concrete account of how facilitators and operators worked through these requirements together. Providing device-enabled access, explaining terminology, and organizing ingredient information helped make that access usable. This suggests that assistance should be planned around the sequence of tasks an operator must complete, including the transition from business identification to product documentation. The evidence does not establish which task was the greatest obstacle or how much time the assistance saved.

During the mentoring sessions, the team explained terms such as "KBLI codes" and "production flow matrices." Operators supplied ingredient information that assistants could not infer from the portal alone. The service team sat next to the operators and translated administrative terms into everyday language. Working through a recipe together allowed the operator to supply the product information and the assistant to help record it in the required format.

By making the operators active participants, the program drew on their knowledge of everyday kitchen routines. Because applications were completed

jointly, issuance alone cannot establish whether an operator could later independently document a new product. A follow-up task could ask operators to update one recipe and record which steps still require assistance.

Ostrom (1996) The concept of coproduction provides a useful interpretive lens for this division of work: a service can depend on contributions from people across different organizations. Here, operators contributed knowledge of actual recipes and production routines, while the university team and halal assistants contributed procedural guidance. Neither contribution was sufficient on its own to describe the products accurately in the required format. This interpretation explains the practical value of participation without equating attendance with empowerment or claiming that the program tested a coproduction model. It also preserves the distinction between helping prepare application information and exercising the authority to decide certification.

This shared work contains a tension between immediate completion and longer-term independence. Assistance can resolve an application task while leaving the operator dependent on the same facilitator for the next change. A useful progression would therefore move from demonstration, to joint completion, to an operator-led update reviewed by an assistant. For example, the operator could explain a recipe, identify supporting ingredient information and locate the corresponding record with progressively less prompting. These are proposed learning activities, not outcomes already established by certificate issuance. They would provide more direct evidence of capability than counting attendance or completed applications alone.

The confirmed certification outcome for products from three canteens demonstrates an administrative endpoint reached after the intervention and follow-up. It does not provide a certification success rate because the available account does not establish a complete denominator of eligible enterprises or submitted applications. Likewise, the lack of dated application histories prevents comparison of processing times. This qualification matters when positioning the case alongside studies of certification barriers, such as Prabowo et al. (2015) and Fathoni et al. (2025). The present contribution is a situated description of assistance after operators engaged with the process, rather than a ranking of barriers or an estimate of program effectiveness across MSEs.

Keeping the Canteen Clean and Legal Long-Term

Keeping the halal-thayyib standard in everyday use requires a role for pesantren leadership. The physical changes made in the kitchens, like keeping raw meat strictly separate from vegetables, could be incorporated into vendor agreements. A periodic walkthrough could identify who is responsible for a correction and whether it is still in place at the next visit.

The pre-existing eco-pesantren framework provides an institutional setting for environmental care. After certification, the pesantren could designate a contact person to retain each certificate, along with its product list, and to record changes in ingredients or suppliers.

The eco-pesantren setting also creates a possible organizational basis for continuity. Existing environmental commitments may offer familiar language for discussing care in the kitchen, yet waste separation and ingredient verification require different evidence and routines. An environmental achievement cannot substitute for product documentation, just as a halal certificate cannot demonstrate a waste reduction. The practical opportunity lies in coordinating these responsibilities within the same institution while retaining distinct records for each. For example, a regular canteen review could examine ingredient changes and storage practices alongside waste-handling arrangements, with each issue assigned its own corrective action.

Responsibility should remain identifiable at the level where decisions are made. An operator would need to report changes to recipes or suppliers; a designated pesantren contact could retain the relevant records; and the Halal Center could provide guidance when a change raises a technical question. This is a proposed distribution of tasks, not an arrangement already demonstrated by the study. It addresses a specific continuity risk: records prepared during a university visit may become disconnected from daily purchasing once the visit ends. Scheduling a review after a recipe change or a change of personnel would make follow-up responsive to operational events rather than dependent solely on occasional training.

Beyond administrative requirements, the published module could support halal-thayyib education for incoming canteen personnel. Its usefulness in training and its impact on daily practice remain open to evaluation.

With publication and intellectual property registration completed, the next practical step is to connect the module to the responsibilities arising after certification. The pesantren could identify a person responsible for retaining the module and organising its use in staff induction. The Halal Center could help align training sessions with questions that arise when operators change ingredients, suppliers, or recipes. This would connect the completed educational output to the ongoing maintenance of product information. Such arrangements would need to be agreed upon and documented during follow-up.

The module offers a potential means of retaining explanations when personnel change, but publication and intellectual property registration establish the existence and formal registration of an output, not its educational effectiveness. Its next use could combine a brief explanation with a practical exercise using an actual canteen product. Participants could identify ingredients, describe preparation steps, check the corresponding records, and then explain the handling precautions relevant to that product. Recording which tasks they complete independently would help determine whether the material supports practical learning. The content would also need periodic review when procedures or application interfaces change.

Taken together, the case suggests a sequence linking everyday production knowledge, assisted documentation and institutional follow-up. Its analytical contribution lies in showing why certification assistance in a pesantren canteen requires attention to both information and physical practice. The ingredient discussion made production knowledge available for documentation; the portal sessions organized that information for an application; and the site visit identified an arrangement that could be changed immediately. These elements were implemented within one program, but the available evidence cannot isolate their individual effects. The sequence should therefore be treated as an organizing proposition for future assistance and evaluation, rather than a validated causal model.

Further evaluation could distinguish administrative outputs, operator capability and sustained practice. Administrative records could establish the number and dates of applications and certificates; an operator-led task could assess the ability to update product information; and repeated observations could document whether handling changes persist during ordinary service. Any assessment of income, consumer confidence or environmental

performance would require separate indicators and an appropriate observation period. Because this report concerns a single pesantren and lacks a comparison group and matched baseline measures, its lessons are most useful for designing and evaluating similar interventions, rather than for asserting population-wide impacts.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The community service intervention at Pesantren Baitul Hikmah used localized, participatory facilitation. The service team guided micro-entrepreneurs through business identification and SiHalal applications. At the time of manuscript revision, all three reported program outputs had been achieved: halal certificates had been issued for products from three participating canteens, the module had been published, and its intellectual property registration had been issued. The field visit also documented a change in the storage of raw meat relative to fresh produce preparation.

Pesantren Baitul Hikmah could incorporate ingredient-record updates and kitchen checks into its internal governance. Additionally, maintaining a structured partnership with the Halal Center of Universitas Jember for periodic refresher training is crucial to offset the natural turnover rate among canteen personnel and sustain continuous compliance.

At the national policy level, government agencies managing the OSS and SiHalal platforms should consider simplifying their bureaucratic lexicon and interface design. The practical value of simpler instructions could be assessed by observing operators complete a subsequent registration or recipe update.

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