

Cerita Nusantara: On CSR Program Innovation and Optimization of Child Growth and Development (A Study at PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang)

Sarika Apriyeni Gopar¹, Agus Maulana², Tri Nofi Nur Antoro³, Hanafi Faris Fauzi⁴, Monica Anindita Firdadi⁵, Trie Dinda Putri⁶

¹*Assistant Manager of HR, General Affairs, & CSR of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang, Indonesia*

²*Public Relations & CSR Officer of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang, Indonesia*

³*General Affairs Officer of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang, Indonesia*

^{4,5}*Community Development Officer of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang, Indonesia*

⁶*Komunitas KITA, Indonesia*

Email: monica.firdadi@gmail.com

Abstract. This study analyzes the implementation of the Cerita Nusantara social innovation carried out through the CSR program of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed to examine efforts to optimize child growth and development in Penjaringan District through the Cerita Nusantara program. The findings indicate that the social innovation has succeeded in creating a sustainable community empowerment ecosystem focused on fulfilling children's developmental needs. Other significant findings reveal that: (1) Efforts to optimize child growth and development through Cerita Nusantara are implemented using a holistic approach. Parents are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support their children's development actively. (2) CSR interventions in collaboration with the KITA Community serve as the foundation for nutritional optimization during the first 1,000 days of life (HPK) in Penjaringan District. (3) Within three years, the Cerita Nusantara social innovation has successfully improved the economic conditions of the KITA Community.

Keywords: Social Innovation, Corporate Social Responsibility, Community Assistance, Child Growth and Development, KITA Community.

A. INTRODUCTION

Issues related to child growth and development remain a significant concern for Indonesian society. These issues affect not only children's daily lives but also the overall quality of life in the future. Children experiencing growth and developmental challenges are at greater risk of chronic illnesses in adulthood (Firdaus et al., 2024). Moreover, neglecting child development creates a domino effect on children's physical health, cognitive development, and learning processes (Garina et al., 2024). Consequently, this issue has drawn attention from both central and local governments, including the Jakarta City Government. One of the government's direct interventions is reflected in the Kota Layak Anak policy, which specifically aims to support child development across physical and educational aspects (Drianda & Kesuma, 2020). Nevertheless, in practice, the program has not fully resolved child development problems in Jakarta. One of the main challenges lies in the unequal distribution of child-friendly facilities, whereby some areas have access to developmental resources, while others do not (Drianda & Kesuma, 2020).

Efforts to optimize child growth and development require a comprehensive multisectoral approach. This means going beyond top-down government policies, as nutrition experts' interventions and cross-sectoral collaboration also play a crucial role in accelerating solutions to child development challenges in Indonesia (Rahman et al., 2024). Cross-sector collaboration refers to the joint efforts of central government policies, private sector initiatives,

and active community participation. One form of private sector involvement is manifested through the presence of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs. Broadly, CSR is understood as a company's responsibility and response to the direct and indirect impacts of its business activities on society and the environment. In relation to child development issues in Jakarta, CSR is not merely an extension of corporate outreach, but also serves as a stimulus to strengthen the welfare chain for children.

Furthermore, CSR engagement in community empowerment programs is generally regarded as a form of social innovation. Conceptually, social innovation functions as a tool for community revitalization (Sofianto, 2020). The establishment of social innovation also serves as an effort to accelerate change in society, particularly regarding child growth and development, which remains a pressing issue in society (Afandi et al., 2024). The synergy between CSR initiatives and social innovation in community empowerment programs represents a strategic step to address complex problems such as child development. This is because the programs developed are able to embrace wider community participation and promote the sustainability of ongoing initiatives (Moscibrodzki et al., 2022).

Referring to the context of DKI Jakarta, child growth and development issues remain a concern across various layers of society. In addition to the unequal distribution of government facilities, economic and demographic factors also influence child development. Based on data collected from the Social Mapping Document (PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang, 2024), there are 9,710 individuals categorized as poor. This has implications for the community's ability and knowledge in accessing information and media related to early childhood development. Considering the high rate of developmental delays and the community's inability to access such information, PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang developed the Cerita Nusantara Program (*Cerdaskan Balita Kita Menuju Generasi Sehat dan Sejahtera*).

The Cerita Nusantara program was established to address the needs of vulnerable groups in Penjaringan District. These groups include children experiencing developmental delays, children with disabilities, pregnant women, parents of young children, and Posyandu (integrated health post) cadres. Cerita Nusantara carries a social mission to foster maternal independence, as well as the welfare of mothers and children under five, to prevent stunting. Broadly, this program was designed to create a resource center-based ecosystem focusing on early childhood growth and development in Penjaringan District.

Although the Cerita Nusantara program has only been running for three years, its impact has been strongly felt among vulnerable communities in Penjaringan District. This is because the program design of Cerita Nusantara does not merely focus on health aspects, but also encompasses environmental health, economic, and social dimensions of the Penjaringan community. Unlike other child development programs, Cerita Nusantara adopts a more holistic and long-term approach. Moreover, recognizing that the root of child development issues does not lie solely within the child, CSR PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang carries out comprehensive interventions across the entire spectrum of societal change, from upstream to downstream.

Furthermore, the implementation of the Cerita Nusantara program cannot be separated from the active participation of the Penjaringan community, particularly mothers who are members of the KITA Community. The KITA Community is not merely a group of participants, but rather the foundational pillar of the growth of the Cerita Nusantara program. Through the involvement of the KITA Community, Cerita Nusantara has been able to develop various community approaches that differ from conventional methods. Based on these issues and solutions, this article will further discuss how the Cerita Nusantara social innovation,

implemented by the CSR unit of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang, has transformed community engagement in the area of child growth and development.

B. METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. This approach emphasizes how human behavior and the social interactions within it take place. In addition, this study also explores the phenomena present in the Penjaringan District community (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The use of this approach aims to provide a factual, systematic, and in-depth depiction of the phenomena occurring in society. Furthermore, the use of a descriptive qualitative approach is highly relevant for interpreting the information and data widely available in society concerning the Cerita Nusantara social innovation.

Subsequently, the method applied in this study was inductive and interpretative. The data in this study consisted of secondary data, such as the Social Mapping document, IKM, SROI, Social Innovation, and documentation from PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang, which were elaborated with theories and concepts related to the Cerita Nusantara social innovation. The use of secondary data enabled the researchers to examine more deeply the development of similar issues over time. In addition, the use of secondary data also represents a more efficient use of time since data collection was obtained without direct fieldwork (Moleong, 2018).

Furthermore, to ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the researchers processed the available data using two strategies. First, the researchers conducted data triangulation by comparing information from several different secondary data sources (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). Second, the researchers assessed the credibility of those data sources by utilizing information from recognized sources.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Cerita Nusantara and Efforts to Address Child Development Issues

The social innovation of Cerita Nusantara is one of the CSR initiatives of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang. This program originated from the developmental challenges faced by toddlers in the Penjaringan District. Unlike common child development intervention programs, Cerita Nusantara focuses on building an ecosystem for the detection of developmental delays in children. In addition, parents are facilitated in accessing knowledge and learning resources through stimulation media for early childhood development. PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang recognizes that this issue is highly complex.

Cerita Nusantara represents a transformation of previous efforts in addressing developmental challenges. Building upon the success of the Denting Nusantara program, CSR PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang collaborated with the KITA Community as the grassroots driver of this social innovation. Membership in the KITA Community consists of Posyandu (integrated health service post) cadres in Penjaringan District. Through this scheme, toddlers in Penjaringan receive special attention for their developmental care. Several children identified as being at risk of or experiencing developmental issues receive special interventions. These interventions are not provided by CSR alone, but also involve the community, children, and the local government in implementing the program. Such multisectoral involvement accelerates progress and enhances the focus of parents and children on developmental issues. Moreover, this collaboration also raises parental awareness of the importance of parenting patterns, nutritional intake, and sanitation as preventive measures to optimize child development (Lino et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the Cerita Nusantara social innovation also emphasizes several values that serve as the foundation for addressing stunting. While most stunting intervention programs

focus on referrals to pediatricians or child development specialists, Cerita Nusantara goes beyond that. Through this program, parents are required to devote greater attention to their children. Beyond mere presence, parents are guided to actively participate in their child's learning process, both through stimulation media and further training related to child development.

However, behind these values lies the issue of limited access and assets, which remains one of the root causes of stunting in Penjaringan District. Recognizing this factor, Cerita Nusantara specifically intervenes with parents from vulnerable groups or those with limited access and assets to obtain child development stimulation media, as well as information or learning about stunting. This initiative is realized through the Kelas Semesta (Skrining Stimulasi Monitoring Tumbuh Kembang Balita). Through this program, parents, particularly mothers, are equipped with knowledge related to pregnancy and parenting.

The collaboration built through Kelas Semesta involves not only CSR PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang and the beneficiary parents, but also the local government and stunting advocacy communities within Penjaringan District. Overall, CSR programs that involve other communities, experts, local government, and even academics, such as Cerita Nusantara, represent a relevant and essential strategy to accelerate the reduction of stunting rates (Andayani et al., 2022). This is reflected in the activities embedded within the Cerita Nusantara social innovation.

Beyond parental assistance, the Cerita Nusantara social innovation also collaborates with several groups, such as Bank Tama (Bank Sampah Bahari Utama), Rumah Jahit, and the Omocha MSME group. Through these cross-group collaborations, an environmentally friendly and sustainable ecosystem is created to address child development issues in Penjaringan District. The scheme is as follows:

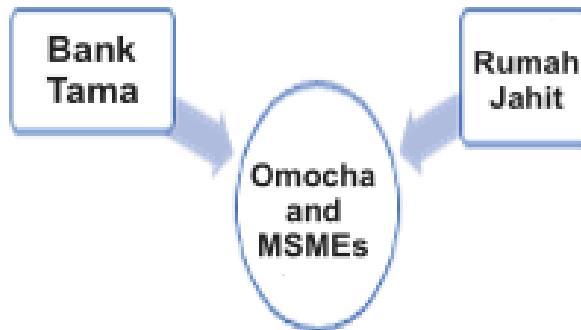


Figure 1. Collaboration Scheme in the Cerita Nusantara Program

Source: Researcher's Data Processing, 2025

Based on the figure above, Bank Tama and Rumah Jahit have similar roles. Both act as the first line in sorting products for recycling as children's learning media. Bank Tama collects reusable wood waste from shipyard industries along the Penjaringan coast. Additionally, wood waste is also obtained from the operational processes of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang. This sorting process is subsequently managed by the Omocha Group and MSMEs to be processed into educational toys for children. Meanwhile, the Rumah Jahit Group plays an important role in collecting fabric waste to be processed into children's toys as well. This process is also continued by the Omocha Group, which produces educational toys that meet SNI (Indonesian National Standard) requirements.

2. Educational Play Tools Supporting Children's Cognitive Development

The golden period within the First 1000 Days of Life (HPK) is a crucial phase in which a child's brain develops rapidly. At this stage, children learn to recognize the world through direct experiences, social interactions, and educationally oriented play activities (Astuti et al.,

2024). Furthermore, according to Fahyuni (2019), development refers to a series of progressive changes resulting from processes of maturation and experience. Child development is not merely about an increase in height or weight, but rather the enhancement of the ability to adapt to the environment.

Child development during this golden period will affect development at subsequent stages (Ullayya et al., 2023). In this period, development includes cognitive, socio-emotional, language, and physical-motor aspects. Cognitive development in children occurs through distinct sequences. These stages explain how children think, store information, and adapt to their environment (Karim & Wifroh, 2014). According to Piaget (2010), cognition is an individual's ability to perceive, remember, and reason in order to imagine (Veronica, 2018).

The importance of the cognitive aspect in children can be supported by providing appropriate stimulation according to their age. Inadequate stimulation may cause disruptions or deviations in a child's development (Kemenkes, 2016). Cognitive stimulation refers to stimuli that engage brain functions such as thinking, language, memory, and self-control through interactions and mentally challenging activities (Reikha Pratiwi, 2025). One effort to provide cognitive stimulation for children is through educational play tools (Alat Permainan Edukatif or APE), which stimulate the senses and children's intelligence.

Educational play has long been recognized as an effective method to support children's cognitive development (Astuti et al., 2024). These activities are not only enjoyable but also provide intellectual challenges that encourage children to think critically, solve problems, and understand patterns and relationships between objects (Veronica, 2015). Cognitive aspects develop while children are playing. Referring to the above statements, PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang has innovated the production of APE as part of efforts to prevent developmental delays among children in Penjaringan District. This innovation was initiated in 2022, beginning with design research in collaboration with child development experts.

APE that are aligned with children's developmental stages can accelerate the mastery of basic concepts such as pattern recognition, spatial logic, and simple mathematical calculations (Syamsuardi, 2012). Through APE, children's quality of play can be enhanced while also helping to identify their talents. Several criteria must be met when purchasing toys to ensure they are beneficial and educational for children. First, they should stimulate physical activity to promote health; second, they must be safe for health and physical use; third, they should encourage exploration and experimentation; fourth, they should be modular or reconfigurable; and fifth, they should motivate children to imitate adult behaviors and ways of thinking (Indrijati, 2017).

In relation to the Cerita Nusantara program, the production of APE has undergone a design research phase and resulted in seven types of APE that are now being sustainably produced and distributed to children in Penjaringan District. The APE produced through this program is the result of collaboration between the company and groups such as Bank TAMA, Rumah Jahit, and the Omocha MSME group in utilizing waste materials from both communities and companies. Active community involvement in CSR implementation provides benefits by empowering communities and supporting the successful implementation of CSR programs. Such involvement holds the potential to become organizational learning that enhances community capacity (Aji et al., 2024).

Community participation in CSR programs is manifested through the division of tasks among partner groups in producing APE. The Bank TAMA group collects used boat-building wood in the Tanjung Priok area and discarded switches from companies, which are then manufactured into APE, such as activity boxes, sensory balls, alphabet blocks, and building blocks. Constructive play activities, such as using LEGO or blocks, are also highly effective tools (Astuti et al., 2024). These activities stimulate creativity, spatial ability, and logic as

children build structures from various block shapes, training them to think innovatively while also understanding spatial concepts.

Furthermore, fabric waste generated by the Rumah Jahit group is transformed into toys such as finger puppets, pompoms, and baby mobiles. The use of finger puppets stimulates children to tell stories, helps develop communication skills, pragmatic language ability, imagination, fine motor skills, and enhances socialization abilities (Unair News, 2022). The finger puppet products manufactured by groups under the guidance of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang are intended for infants aged six months and above to stimulate interest in social interactions and support early language development.

APE as a medium for children's play functions as one of the activities that stimulate cognitive development in children. All of these toys undergo a feasibility testing phase by the Omocha MSME group. In terms of marketing, the educational toys are distributed by the Omocha MSME group and the KITA Community. Proper and age-appropriate stimulation can activate children's brains to enhance understanding and recognition of developmental tasks such as movement, language, speech, social interaction, and independence (Budhyanti & Lisnaini, 2022). Optimal stimulation can be achieved through the involvement of parents and other family members, supported by the surrounding environment (Yenawati, 2010).

As part of the sustainability of the Cerita Nusantara program, PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang has developed a digital learning module containing guidelines on how to stimulate child development using the seven types of toys produced through this program. This module was developed under the guidance of experts, including child development specialists, pediatricians, child psychologists, and developmental therapists. It is intended to assist parents of toddlers in Penjaringan District in providing developmental stimulation for their children using the APE provided by the company.

3. Implications of the Cerita Nusantara Social Innovation

Psychosocial or socioeconomic environmental risks that may hinder child development include poor socioeconomic status, such as poverty, low parental education, inadequate housing, and having too many children (Allen, 1993). Departing from the issues of parental accessibility and assets in optimizing child development, PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang implemented the CSR program Cerita Nusantara, which targets parents with toddlers in Penjaringan District. This effort was carried out through the innovation of producing educational play tools that utilize recycled materials.

Social innovation is closely related to efforts to achieve well-being in connection with environmental issues and sustainable development (Prasetyo, 2023). Social innovation in the Cerita Nusantara program emphasizes three activities: the organization of Kelas Semesta, the production of educational toys for children, and the management of the Brakiasi CSR Resource Center. Together with the KITA Community, PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang strives to raise public awareness of the importance of parental and environmental support for toddler development. The company implements sustainable development efforts by focusing on addressing delays in toddler development while integrating community economic improvement, waste recycling, and public education.

One form of social innovation carried out by PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang in the Cerita Nusantara program is the integration of community groups into program implementation. Moulaert (2013) states that social innovation is strongly linked to strengthening social relations and encouraging aspects of well-being. As previously mentioned, the company has integrated the KITA Community, the Bank TAMA Group, Rumah Jahit, and the Omocha MSME Group in producing educational toys made from wood waste, fabric scraps,

and industrial waste. This innovation has fostered community cohesion in Penjaringan District in addressing stunting issues through the production of developmental stimulus toys.

Empowerment programs are essentially designed not merely to increase community income but also as social innovations that aim to create solutions for the needs of vulnerable groups (Ummami et al., 2025). PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang pays special attention to toddlers experiencing developmental delays and toddlers with disabilities in Penjaringan District. By providing easier access, preparing developmental stimulation media, and offering screening facilities, the Cerita Nusantara program has assisted 206 toddlers in maximizing their development. Specifically, toddlers with disabilities have also received free mentoring from child development experts for developmental monitoring. Furthermore, the company has also provided Brakiasi facilities and educational toys at the Resource Center. These facilities have been accessed by more than 200 toddlers in Pluit Subdistrict, contributing to efforts to reduce children's excessive exposure to gadgets.

Pregnant women and parents of toddlers with developmental delays are among the vulnerable groups targeted by the Cerita Nusantara program. The program's innovation has had a positive impact on improving community knowledge, particularly among pregnant women and parents of toddlers, in understanding the importance of child development according to age. Through the organization of Kelas Semesta, 283 pregnant women in Penjaringan District received education from posyandu cadres regarding the prevention of developmental delays during pregnancy. In the same activities, 206 parents of toddlers identified as experiencing developmental delays increased their awareness and understanding of the importance of early childhood development within the first 1000 Days of Life.

Social innovation with inclusive and collaborative approaches will provide broader long-term impacts and create a sustainable empowerment ecosystem (Mindarti, Wismanu, & Pamula, 2021). The Cerita Nusantara program not only impacts the improvement of child development quality in Penjaringan District but also contributes to responsible environmental management and community economic growth through collaboration among partner groups. The success of empowerment programs can be measured using the sustainability compass introduced by Alan Atkitson (2001), which refers to four aspects of life: nature, economy, society, and well-being.

Table 1. Sustainability Compass of the Cerita Nusantara Program

Aspect	Impact	Quantification of Impact
Nature	Reducing environmental pollution from recycling activities: 125 kg/month of wood, 29 kg/month of fabric scraps, and 10 kg/month of switches.	Emission reduction of 1.03 tons CO ₂ eq/year (Environmental Study of the Cerita Nusantara Program by ITS).
Economy	Increase in KITA Community funds as of October 2024.	IDR 12,840,250
	Increase in Bank Tama Group income from collecting wood waste from Muara Angke, fabric scraps, and company switches.	IDR 1,316,000/month
	Increase in Rumah Jahit Group income from selling fabric scrap.	IDR 624,000/month
	Increase in Omocha MSME Group income from selling educational toys.	IDR 3,996,000/month

Society	Creation of collaboration among community groups.	4 community groups
	Increase in the number of members in the KITA Community.	17 posyandu cadres
	Establishment of toddler playgroups with Brakiasi facilities.	1 group
Well-being	Improvement of toddler development status through stimulation with educational toys.	68 toddlers
	Brakiasi CSR Resource Center easily accessed by toddlers as a play and stimulation space.	More than 200 toddlers
	Availability of Digital Modules on Educational Toys.	2 modules, 7 videos

Source: Researcher's Data Processing, 2025

By mapping the impacts of the empowerment program across these four dimensions, companies are enabled to conduct comprehensive and targeted evaluations, thereby ensuring the sustainability of the program in the long term. The implementation of CSR programs constitutes an important step for companies to contribute to society and the environment (Olanipekun et al., 2021). CSR programs that undergo proper planning processes and align with community needs assessments can have significant implications for society, particularly with regard to sustainability. Based on data compiled from the CSR program implementation report of PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang for the fourth quarter of 2024, the Cerita Nusantara program has maximized the development of 206 toddlers through supplementary feeding activities and the provision of educational play tools (Alat Permainan Edukatif or APE). Specifically, this program has helped 15 toddlers in Penjaringan District improve their developmental status, ensuring they no longer experience developmental delays.

D. CONCLUSION

Through the analysis of the Cerita Nusantara social innovation program implemented by PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang, it is evident that the program has effectively reduced the prevalence of toddlers with developmental delays in Penjaringan District. The social innovation introduced by the company differs from the community's existing approaches to addressing developmental delays. This program focuses on increasing community knowledge and awareness, particularly among pregnant women and parents of toddlers, to prevent and enhance child developmental stimulation through Kelas Semesta, the production of educational play tools, and the management of the Brakiasi CSR Resource Center.

PT PLN Nusantara Power UP Muara Karang initiated the production of educational play tools (APE) as an effort to support the golden period within the first 1000 Days of Life, during which a child's brain develops most rapidly. This activity involves the active participation of community groups supported by the company in recycling wood waste, fabric scraps, and discarded switches. Through effective task distribution, these groups have successfully produced seven types of APE, namely activity boxes, sensory balls, alphabet blocks, building blocks, finger puppets, pompoms, and baby mobiles. These APE products comply with the Indonesian National Standard (SNI), as they have undergone research stages in collaboration with child development experts.

The Cerita Nusantara program has had implications for various aspects of community life. Through sustainability compass analysis, the program has demonstrated its role in addressing stunting issues from social, economic, environmental, and well-being dimensions. Socially, the program has fostered collaboration and cohesion among community groups through the production of educational play tools. Economically, the program has contributed to increasing the income of community groups through the sale of educational toys. Furthermore, environmentally, the program has reduced emissions by 1.03 tons of CO₂eq/year through waste recycling activities.

Other sustainable impacts are reflected in well-being, where there has been an improvement in toddlers' developmental status, easier access for toddlers to the Brakiasi CSR Resource Center, and the availability of digital modules on educational play tools. Most importantly, the program has contributed to the reduction of stunting prevalence in Penjaringan District. A total of 15 toddlers has shown improved development through routine stimulation and mentoring by posyandu cadres and healthcare workers, as well as parental support facilitated by knowledge gained from Kelas Semesta. Therefore, the social innovation embedded in the Cerita Nusantara program has effectively addressed child development issues in Penjaringan District.

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