

Valuing Sustainability Impact: A Comparative Study of Impact Measurement of Community Empowerment Programs Based on Social Return on Investment (SROI) in Oil and Gas Refinery Companies in Indonesia

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Abstract: - SROI is a measurement tool to determine the level of success of social investments reflected in their impact. Through the calculation of SROI, companies can determine the extent of the impact of their CSR program implementation compared to the value of the investments made. In this study, the author conducted a comparative research measuring the SROI value performance of three companies, namely KPI Sungai Pakning, KPI Plaju, and KPI Kasim, during the period from 2021 to 2023. As a result, the SROI values obtained by the three companies have tended to be positive by the third year of program implementation. KPI Kasim achieved the highest SROI score of 3.08, while KPI Sungai Pakning received an SROI score of 2.99, and the lowest was KPI Plaju with a score of 1.75. However, these three companies are still positive, which means that the costs they incur for social investment have had a greater positive impact at the community level. Even so, the SROI value cannot be compared outright because there are factors that influence the SROI assessment.

Key-Words: - SROI, Impact Measurement, Community Development Program, Social Innovation, Sustainable Development Goals, Oil & Gas Companies

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1 Introduction

In the modern era, an important part of business strategy is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), where companies strive to maintain profits while making a positive contribution to society and the environment. CSR is seen as a way for companies to fulfill their social responsibilities, build good relationships with stakeholders, and enhance the company's image.

Although CSR programs have been widely implemented, it is difficult to objectively measure their impact. The social impact generated by this program is often difficult to measure using conventional methods, such as financial reports and satisfaction surveys. As a result, a more comprehensive evaluation method is needed to demonstrate the social impact of CSR programs (Bridgeman, J., & Loosemore, M., 2023). One of the main challenges faced by companies is measuring the actual impact of the CSR programs they implement; this measurement is crucial to ensure that the programs carried out truly provide benefits that align with the established objectives (Hutchinson CL, Berndt A, Gilbert-Hunt S, et al., 2018).

To assess the social impact of investments in CSR, Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a popular and commonly used tool for evaluation (Scelles, N., Inoue, Y., Perkin, S.J. et al., 2024). SROI is an evaluation that measures the social value generated by a program or project compared to the investment made (Gosselin V, Boccanfuso D, Laberge S., 2020). This method provides a better understanding of how effective CSR programs are by converting social impact into financial value. Therefore, businesses can understand the extent to which their CSR programs contribute to the well-being of the environment and society, and identify areas that need improvement (Banke-Thomas AO, Madaj B, Charles A, et al., 2015).

SROI, on the other hand, offers a quantitative and systematic approach. Measuring social impact correctly, finding relevant indicators, and addressing subjectivity in assessments are some of the issues that arise when implementing it (McCaffrey, et al., 2024). In addition, research has shown that the impact of CSR programs can vary significantly depending on the industry, type of program, and local context.

The SROI method is still relatively new for evaluating CSR programs, especially in Indonesia. It is very important to conduct a comparative analysis of the impact of CSR programs that use the SROI method across various sectors or companies. Therefore, we need a better understanding of how the SROI method can be used effectively, as well as the

advantages and disadvantages of additional evaluation methods.

Despite its many benefits, SROI also faces a number of criticisms and challenges. Some experts argue that SROI tends to be complex and requires significant resources for its implementation. As stated by Cordes (2017), SROI calculations require very detailed data and thorough validation, which may be difficult to achieve under certain conditions.

In addition, there are concerns that the process of monetizing social outcomes may be too subjective or inaccurate. This is especially true when monetary value must be assigned to qualitative impacts, such as increased self-confidence or community engagement. Therefore, it is important to use various data triangulation methods to ensure accuracy in SROI calculations.

In the field of research on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainable development, the calculation of the social impact of community empowerment programs has become a key topic in the literature research. Public expectations regarding corporate social responsibility are rising (Widhagdha, Wahyuni, & Sulhan, 2019), leading to an increased need to measure and report the social impact of the programs being implemented (Silberberg M, Martinez-Bianchi V., 2019).

PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI), a subsidiary of PT Pertamina (Persero) Indonesian State-Owned Enterprise, is an oil and gas refinery company with seven refineries in Indonesia. This company is one of the business sectors in Indonesia that has participated in the Corporate Social Responsibility program. Of the seven refineries owned by the company, each one has implemented a corporate social responsibility program, particularly focusing on community empowerment. Three factories conducted SROI calculations in 2023 to evaluate the implementation of program impacts. They are the KPIs of the Sungai Pakning Unit in Bengkalis Regency, Riau Province for the Radiant Peat River Program; the KPI of Plaju in Palembang City, South Sumatra Province for the Innovative Food Village Program; and the KPI of Kasim in Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua Province for the Independent Sustainable Moi Program. The aim of this research is to observe and compare the SROI value obtained from the community empowerment programs implemented in 2023.

2 Literature Review

The calculation of the social impact of community empowerment programs has become an important

topic in the study of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainable development. As public expectations for corporate social responsibility continue to rise, there is a growing need to measure and report the social impact of the programs being implemented. One prominent method in this regard is the Social Return on Investment (SROI), which provides a framework for calculating the economic value of the social impact generated by a program (Corvo, L., Pastore, L., et al., 2022). Social Return on Investment (SROI) is an analytical method used to measure the economic value of the social impact produced by a program or initiative, including community empowerment programs. The concept of SROI was first introduced in the early 2000s and has evolved into an important tool for organizations to measure and communicate the social value generated. According to Damtoft, N.F., Lueg, R., van Liempd, D., Nielsen, J.G. (2023), SROI not only calculates direct financial benefits but also the broader social, environmental, and economic impacts.

Interestingly, SROI uses the basic principles of Return on Investment (ROI) but expands its scope by incorporating social and environmental elements. For example, Mook et al. (2015) suggest that SROI helps organizations understand and demonstrate the added value of social activities undertaken, particularly in the context of community empowerment. This is important because many community empowerment programs focus on long-term changes that are difficult to measure with traditional evaluation methods.

The calculation of SROI involves several important stages: (1) Identifying the stakeholders involved, (2) Setting the goals and scope of the analysis, (3) Collecting data on inputs, outputs, and outcomes, (4) Assigning monetary value to social outcomes, (5) Calculating the SROI ratio, and (6) Reporting and using the analysis results for program improvement. According to Nicholls et al. (2012), one of the key elements in calculating SROI is the establishment of a monetary value for qualitative outcomes. For example, the improvement in quality of life due to community empowerment can be assessed in terms of reduced healthcare costs or increased income. This process, although complex, provides a more holistic view of the benefits of the program.

In addition, the calculation of SROI also requires a balanced use of qualitative and quantitative data. According to Arvidson et al. (2013), the main challenge in SROI is ensuring that the value assigned to social impact truly reflects reality and is not merely a subjective estimate. Therefore, data validation with stakeholders is an important step in calculating SROI.

The application of SROI in community empowerment programs has been widely researched. For example, a study by Millar & Hall (2013) shows how SROI is used to measure the impact of women's economic empowerment programs in England. Hopkins G, Winrow E, Davies C, Seddon D. (2023) also used SROI to measure the impact of social and health services in England. Hutchinson, C., Cleland, J., et al. (2024) using SROI to evaluate the impact of mentoring programs for groups with disabilities in Australia. K. Ashton, A. Cotter-Roberts, et al. (2024) also using SROI to evaluate the impact of healthcare services for the community. Di Francesco, A.; Pinelli, M.; Lettieri, E.; Toletti, G.; Galli, M. (2023) researched the impact of walking aids on hemiplegic patients, while Basset, F. (2023) examined the effects of social farming. Nolan, Bridge, & al. (2024) using SROI to measure the impact of family welfare programs.

In Indonesia, SROI is also increasingly being used to measure the impact of social investment programs, particularly community development programs. Wahyudi, Subhan, et al. (2024) used SROI to measure the success of community empowerment programs for fishermen, Suryawati, R.F., Firmandani, W., Akbar, Andri., & Suharno, N.E. (2024) using SROI to evaluate CSR Program of Oil & Gas Distribution Company in Jakarta, while Purwanto, W., Widhagdha, M. F., and Fatma, Z. N. (2023) also employed SROI to assess the impact of community development programs in remote areas of Southwest Papua. Several studies have found that SROI provides a clear framework for measuring and assessing the social impact generated, including changes in the economic and social status of beneficiaries.

3 Methods

This research is a comparative literature study of the Social Return on Investment (SROI) evaluation reports prepared by each company during the years 2021-2023. The SROI method is the result of calculating the Value of Benefits generated divided by the Value of Investments made over a specific period. According to Social Value International (2021), SROI quantifies the social benefits perceived from the implementation of social investment programs. In the literature obtained over three years, data was collected on the social investment values expended by the three companies for each year, as well as the social benefits received by the three companies for each year. Thus, this research will compare these values and analyze the impacts provided.

4 Result and Discussion

From the analysis of the literature sources referenced in this research, SROI is seen as capable of providing an assessment of the impact of social investment initiatives that focus on community empowerment. Community empowerment programs often aim to provide skills and economic opportunities to disadvantaged individuals and communities. In this regard, SROI can help organizations assess the extent to which these programs are successful in achieving those goals. The SROI application in this context allows for a more accurate measurement of the program's impact in terms of increased income, reduced unemployment rates, and overall improvement in well-being.

The study by Yates & Marra (2017) also emphasizes the importance of SROI in the context of community empowerment by demonstrating how this method can identify values that may not be visible through traditional evaluation approaches. They concluded that SROI not only assists in calculating impact but also in better program planning by providing insights into what truly matters to the community.

The CSR programs analyzed in this study are those that have been implemented by the Company for over three years, thus consistently measuring their impact through SROI. These programs consist of community empowerment initiatives carried out by PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Unit Sungai Pakning, PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Unit Plaju, and PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Unit Kasim from 2021 to 2023.

PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Unit Sungai Pakning: Sungai Gambut Berseri.

In the Beringin hamlet, Lubuk Muda village, Siak Kecil sub-district, Bengkalis district, Riau province, PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Sungai Pakning is implementing the Sungai Gambut Berseri (Radiant Peat River) CSR program as a form of social responsibility. The company must initiate the Sungai Gambut Berseri (Radiant Peat River) program due to the main issue faced by the community, which is the difficulty in obtaining clean drinking water, especially during the dry season. To address this problem, the activities of the Sungai Gambut Berseri (Radiant Peat River) program aim to develop peat water filtration (Filagam) and Reverse Filter. This program, which involves many parties, is expected to yield sustainable benefits that not only touch on the social aspects of the community but also the environment through the conservation of hardwoods in the Siak Kecil watershed. In addition, through freshwater fish farming and the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the Sungai Gambut

Berseri (Radiant Peat River) program provides opportunities for the community to gain additional economic value generated from Value Sharing Creation (PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional Sungai Pakning, 2023).

KPI Sungai Pakning has been making social investments since 2021, investing a total of 213,000,000 rupiah and generating social benefits amounting to 200,479,500 rupiah. Then, in 2022, the company invested 363,000,000 rupiah and produced social benefits of 748,402,980 rupiah. In 2023, the company made an additional investment of 534,000,000 rupiah, resulting in social benefits of 748,402,980 rupiah. KPI Sungai Pakning conducted an SROI calculation for the Sungai Gambut Berseri (Radiant Peat River) Program over three years, with a value of 2.99. Technically, a value of 2.99 indicates that for every Rp1 invested by PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Sungai Pakning in the Program, it generates benefits amounting to Rp2.99. Substantially, the value of 2.99 demonstrates that the Sungai Gambut Berseri Program has been implemented effectively.

PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Unit Plaju: Kampung Pangan Inovatif

Unlike the KPI of Sungai Pakning, which implements programs for river conservation, the KPI of Plaju in Palembang City carries out the Kampung Pangan Inovatif (Innovative Food Village Program). This program aims to address the governance issues of slum settlements in the city of Palembang. KPI Plaju is striving to promote a cleaner and more creative village layout model through this program. This is done through area planning, increasing local sources of income, and creating new methods for producing traditional tempeh found in the region (PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional Plaju, 2023).

This program started in 2021 with an investment of 122,942,091 rupiah. Then, in 2022, the investment increased to 864,657,700 rupiah, and in 2023, the investment rose to 1,362,834,435 rupiah. For three years, the Innovative Food Village Program has generated a total benefit of 2,381,076,876 rupiah. The SROI calculation for the Kampung Pangan Inovatif (Innovative Food Village Program) conducted by KPI Plaju over three years is 1.75. Technically, a value of 1.75 indicates that for every Rp1 invested by PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Sungai Pakning in the Program, it generates benefits amounting to Rp 1.75. Substantially, a value of 1.75 reflects an improvement in the Freshwater Fish Conservation Program, which has proven to be well implemented. In the Beringin hamlet.

Table 1. Calculation of SROI for three consecutive years 2021-2023

Year	Value	KPI Sungai Pakning		KPI Plaju		KPI Kasim	
		Amount (Rp)	SROI	Amount (Rp)	SROI	Amount (Rp)	SROI
2021	Investment	213.000.000	0,94	122.942.091	1,82	768.000.000	0,76
	Outcome	200.479.500		224.394.907		586.379.250	
2022	Investment	363.000.000	2,06	864.657.700	1,03	1.821.980.000	1,58
	Outcome	748.402.980		896.349.404		2.879.661.110	
2023	Investment	534.000.000	2,99	1.362.834.435	1,75	2.705.781.900	3,08
	Outcome	1.601.734.294		2.381.076.876		8.320.369.422	

PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Unit Kasim: Moi Lestari Mandiri.

The refinery company located in the easternmost part of Indonesia, namely KPI Kasim, is situated in a very vulnerable area, right in the middle of an indigenous forest that isolates them from more developed regions. Therefore, KPI Kasim, located in Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua Province, is making efforts to enhance community independence. Community independence is realized through several stages, starting with the development of water distribution systems, local food systems, and the revitalization of elementary schools, so that it can be utilized by the community (PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional Kasim, 2023).

This program also started in 2021 with a social investment value of 768,000,000 rupiah and generated social benefits amounting to 586,379,250 rupiah. From the perspective of the value of benefits produced, this program appears to be relatively small; however, when viewed from the perspective of the beneficiaries or the community, the impact felt is much greater. In the first year, the company focused on governance systems and water distribution to the entire community. Then, in 2022 and 2023, the company made additional social investments of 1,821,980,000 rupiah and 2,705,781,900 rupiah, respectively, resulting in a total social impact of

8,320,469,422 rupiah.

Technically, a value of 3.08 indicates that for every Rp1 invested by PT Kilang Pertamina Internasional (KPI) Kasim in the Program, it generates benefits amounting to Rp 3.08. Substantially, this value of 3.08 demonstrates that the Moi Lestari Mandiri Program has been effectively implemented. The following is the SROI calculation for the three companies over 3 years.

This research is a comparative literature study of the Social Return on Investment (SROI) evaluation reports prepared by

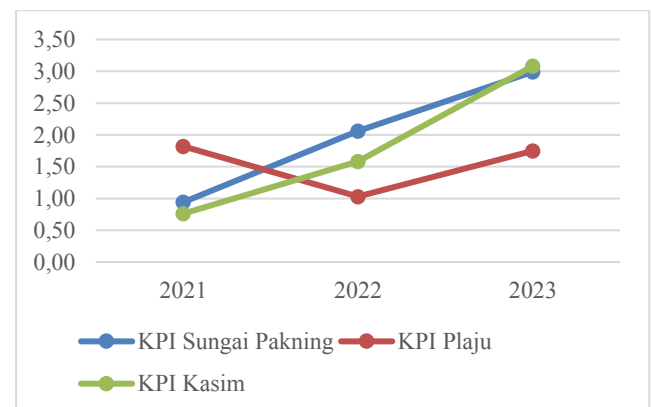


Figure 1. SROI value graph for three consecutive years 2021-2023

5 Conclusion

The implementation of the CSR programs carried out by the three companies has shown significant impact.

When viewed from the SROI value, all three companies have demonstrated a positive SROI, which means that the social investments made by these companies have resulted in positive social

impacts in their respective development areas. However, when looking at the consistency of SROI value acquisition, KPI Plaju experienced a decline in the second year, although it increased again in the third year, yet it remained below the SROI value obtained in the first year. This is likely due to the suboptimal management of social investments. Meanwhile, in the other two companies, the SROI value tends to increase cumulatively from year to year. This indicates that the development of CSR programs is progressing well and is becoming more advanced year after year. The acquisition of a positive SROI value (above 1) is evidence that the implementation of the CSR program has successfully provided social benefits that exceed the social investment costs incurred by the company. Nevertheless, this research is limited to the comparison of SROI values among the three companies; it does not imply that the impact of the program in one location is better than in another, as this study does not qualitatively assess the impact of social investment program implementation in each company. Overall, the SROI method offers a comprehensive and innovative approach to measuring social impact, including in the context of community empowerment programs. However, the success of SROI implementation greatly depends on the ability to address challenges in data collection, outcome validation, and establishing accurate monetary values.

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