

SAWITKITA, PALM OIL DIGITAL EXTENSION PLATFORM FOR SMALLHOLDERS

Developed by: Faculty of Agriculture INSTIPER and Kehati Foundation

Indonesia is the largest CPO producer in the world with an area of more than 16 million hectares. More than 40% of this area is under smallholder management and involves 2 million households. Most farmers operate independently, and often without technical support from other parties such as government. This causes many farmer activities untouched by regulation and support. There is concern that there will be a decrease in the capacity of smallholder due to cultivation practices that do not follow the principles of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Best Management Practices (BMP).

Conventional extension methods are no longer reliable due to the limited number of extension workers, scattered locations of the plantation, as well as limited resources and capacity. The Covid-19 pandemic has further reduced the reliability of conventional extension in facing future challenges.

To answer these challenges, the Faculty of Agriculture INSTIPER in collaboration with the Kehati Foundation through the Strengthening Palm Oil Sustainability in Indonesia (SPOS Indonesia) program has developed a digital extension platform called SawitKita. SawitKita consists of 3 pillars integrated in one application. First, providing an expert system that can assist farmers in making operational decisions, including the following:

1. LahanKita: land suitability class assessment, calculating land area, and population;
2. BibitKita: description of varieties, mechanism for ordering seeds, calculating nursery facilities, and guidelines for seed selection;
3. OPTKita: identification of pest, pesticide catalogue, and pest control methods;
4. FertiKita: fertilizer recommendations, mixing guide, and calculating costs;
5. PanenKita: recording of harvest, income and expenses, and other administration related to harvesting; and
6. DanaKita: a financial management system at the level of the farmer's organization and farmer's household.

The second pillar of SawitKita is the Learning Management System, namely SawitKita Learning. Farmers can access 21 courses consisting of ebooks, presentations divided into special topics, as well as evaluation tools according to the needs of GAP and BMP implementation. The third pillar is online discussion feature called HelloPlanters. In this feature, farmers can interact directly with experts to solve problems related to palm oil plantation management. Planters can download SawitKita for free via PlayStore ([s.id/sawitkita-android](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=s.id/sawitkita-android)) and Appstore ([s.id/sawitkita-ios](https://apps.apple.com/id/app/sawitkita-ios/id1444444444)). To date, SawitKita has been used by more than 2000 users throughout Indonesia, even in areas with poor internet networks. In the future, SawitKita will be integrated into the national strategy for sustainable palm oil development.