

Pandemic Response: The Role of “Kampung Tangguh” as Indonesian Context of Strategic Community Empowerment

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Abstract: The pandemic crisis has caused significant impacts in all sectors of social, economic, and environment; Asian countries are no exception. The great fragile wave attacks health and economic system, especially in an urban area where the risk and impacts develop expressively. The governance response to the global crisis defines the short- and long-term consequences on the societies and the country system. Meanwhile, the local communities play their roles in responding to the pandemic crisis. This study presents the community initiatives in Indonesia to urge the pandemic response from the bottom-up movement. The initiatives called “kampung tangguh” are seen as an effective alternative to the context of a big developing country like Indonesia, as the administrative units are technically formed in multiple layers. The descriptive studies were presented to pinpoint the strength of the Indonesian context of strategic community empowerment in pandemic crisis response. The results show that the sense of volunteering and ‘gotong-royong’ local values among the local leaders and the neighborhood actors are significant to the root power of ‘kampung tangguh’ to fulfill the gap between the unprepared policymakers and the fast-growing crisis at the public level. This study suggests that the public policies in pandemic response need to consider the local context of culture and community empowerment as the adaptive, innovative, and comprehensive approach to the pandemic response in developing countries.

Keywords: pandemic, kampung tangguh, Community Empowerment

I. PUBLIC POLICIES IN RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

Countries around the world has been struggling from the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic since early year of 2020. Indonesia officially announced the first case on March 2, 2020. As per December 21, 2020, Ministry of Health reported total of 671,778 cases with 20,085 confirmed deaths and 546,884 recoveries. The virus has reached to the Indonesia’s 34 provinces. The pandemic crisis has caused significant impacts in overall sectors of social, economic, and environment. The great fragile wave attacks health and economic system, especially in an urban area where the risk and impacts develop expressively. However, the remote areas also face the great issues due to the archipelago locations and challenges of the facilities distribution and information management

The governance response to the global crisis defines the short and long-term consequences on the societies and the country system [1]. The crisis management is essential for public policy in many countries facing the crisis. The pandemic has brought the great challenge for Indonesia to strategize policies in responding to the crisis. Specifically, National Covid 19 pandemic Taskforce was formed to fully handle the crisis. In this context, Indonesia played central government to frame the public policies with the state government to implement them. Ranges of policies, laws, decree and regulations were issued. Government responses on this situation, among the policies were; Presidential Regulation No. 103/2020 on the national government for development financing, Finance Minister Regulation No. 118/PMK.04/2020 on the vaccine custom, a joint decree among Education Minister, Religious of Affairs Minister, Health Minister and Home Affairs Minister on the education during the pandemic, Home Affairs Minister Instruction No. 6/2020 on the health protocols, Manpower Minister Circular No. M/11/HK.04/2020 on the maximum wages, Industry Minister Regulation No. 31/2020 on the duty free facility and the Jakarta Regional Regulation No. 2/2020 and Governor Decree No 101/2020 on the Covid 19 counter over policies [2]

As the pandemic has expanded to almost entire year 2020, the response to the pandemic crisis has been put down for review for better solutions and mitigating the local risks. As countries worked on different styles of governance and decision making, learning from the past and learning from each other is a strategic alternative [3-5]. Besides, the great impact of pandemic has scaled up to the macro economy and worse social issues. The nation does not only struggle from the virus attack but also from hunger,

unemployment and recession [6-9]. Besides focusing on the pandemic response, this situation brings Indonesia to also pay attention on the national economic and social balance commitment.

Ranges of studies, reports and surveys reported the key points of review on the Indonesia's response on the pandemic. According to an online survey (March 24, 2020) on ranges of government agencies: President; Minister of Health; National Board of Management Disaster; and Local Governments reported that 42.8% of respondents agreed on the ineffective central government in responding to the pandemic crisis, 36.3% of them stated that President shown the slow response and 35.1% replied that Minister of Health was also not indicating fast response. Contrary, the survey presented that 43.6% of respondents expressed that National Board of Disaster Management worked satisfactory as well as local government (36.1%) [9]. A field study on September and October 2020 conducted by WHO, Hasanuddin University and National Board for Disaster Management (BNPB) stressed that there were still ranges of areas to review and improve for better and comprehensive response to the pandemic crisis [10]. Among them were the major components including data and analysis report, budget distribution, protection equipment and health systems.

The data indicated that the public opinion was still unsatisfactory on the government response to work within the framework. The response and management were seen not maximized to face the global crisis; tough no country is fully ready for one. In the context of this study, among the great challenges faced by Indonesia in delivering a more effective response are the large archipelago area, overpopulated and varies of socio-economic background of societies, technology barriers and multilayer of administrative authorities. Indonesia needs a more comprehensive responses due to the multi backgrounds of geography, demography, social and economy [11]. There were advantages and disadvantages of centralized decision-making system applied by Indonesia in strategizing the pandemic response [12]. The weakness of the ultimate national government policies made the slow movement of response by the region authorities during the pandemic. The coordination between strategic and operational actions was the key issue of the slow response [13]. The strategic policies in responding to the pandemic require a planning and diagnosing [14].

The complexity of the crisis sends message that a comprehensive approach was a need [11]. Government as the central authorities and power of the country need a united stakeholders and comprehensive approach to respond to the global crisis. This study presents that one significant lacking aspect from this scenario is a bottom-up participation. A review and discussion on the real project are elaborated in this study. This discussion is expected to be a reference to fulfill the need of a comprehensive approach to Indonesia's response to the pandemic crisis.

II. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF CRISIS RESPONSE AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Crisis response and management is an integrated connection among significant components. Them as a strong link among public policies, coalition of multi actors, contextual and mix of strategic and operational [14]. This study highlights that the involvement of society is an important determinant to the crisis response. The bridge between the government and society is a key role in the pandemic response [15]. Furthermore, she pointed out that the role of neighborhood leaders was incomparable with the state government as they have access to the micro level of society. That local and public engagement were the systematic approach to address the multisectoral and multidimensional pandemic crisis and promote the communication strategies in responding to the pandemic crisis.

Community engagement and volunteering is an important variable in pandemic response [16-18] some called it a key for containing pandemic [19]. Community engagement was also seen as innovation approach to respond to the pandemic crisis [20]. Besides the complexity of global crisis, pandemic requires community engagement to reach out to the marginal society for prevention and control [21]. This situation is applicable to Indonesia context with the huge archipelago remote areas. The community engagement was also important to reduce the physiology burden of facing pandemic crisis [22]. The local initiatives and participation were considered to speed up to eradicate the pandemic crisis [23]. The community empowerment enhances the participation of internal and external stakeholders including local institutions and higher education players [24]. In the context of this study, the engagement from higher education players is one of the focus discussions.

In general, community empowerment involves the society participation in preparedness and the response during and post pandemic. Community empowerment is often seen as process of re-negotiating the people's power to address the society's issues in finding the alternative of solutions [25]. In the context of Indonesia, community empowerment is not a new concept. The strong culture of society bounding and sense of togetherness are the social capital of Indonesia in conducting the public actions and finding solutions to the society challenges. In Indonesia, civil society and corporate has put down efforts together in delivering the pandemic response.

III. KAMPUNG TANGGUH: A FORM OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the local wisdoms of Indonesia community empowerment in pandemic response is a concept of *kampung tangguh*. 'Kampung' means 'village' while 'tangguh' refers to 'resilience'. A 'resilient village' was not meant to represent the physical development or administrative boundaries, it was derived from the sense of togetherness of neighborhood in the 'kampung' or village environment. *Kampung tangguh* concept was not specially formed for pandemic response as it was already existed for earlier community empowerment programs for both rural and urban levels. *Kampung tangguh* aims to involve community with 'resilience concept' in facing and mitigating the risk and impact of the crisis. This initiative was perceived as an effective alternative to the context of a huge developing country like Indonesia, as the administrative units are technically formed in multiple layers. Uniquely, *kampung tangguh* was formed by institution bodies (e.g local authorities) and the local initiatives. It involves layers of actors; household, RT/RW or *Lurah* (smallest unit of local leader), youth, women, army, and in some cases local/state authorities

Kampung Tangguh was launched for ranges of communities and programs with different scope of objectives. *Kampung Tangguh Nusantara* (national resilience village) program was mostly conducted by working with the aid of the armies. Ministry of Public Work (2020) also initiated *kampung tangguh* program to work on the food security in East Jawa. *Kampung Tangguh* was also held for disaster resilient villages where the community responsiveness was the capital for disaster risks mitigation [26, 27]. In the context of pandemic response, *kampung tangguh* was the platform of community empowerment to have the innovations in improving the pandemic crisis control in a local scale [28].

This study presents a case of *kampung tangguh* initiative, a community engagement where the Universitas Indonesia students conduct the virtual campaign of 'Youth Care for Environment' in a neighborhood scale (Fig. 1). The virtual community service was focusing on the waste management campaign among the youth during the pandemic in Tirtajaya Residence, Depok, Jakarta Metropolitan Area. Basically, this campaign was initiated from the pandemic issue in the neighborhood scale. The 'work from home' and 'study from home' pandemic daily activities generate extra household wastes over the normal routine. Therefore, students take part to encourage youth to actively involved in managing the household waste through the shorting and the recycling before sending for disposal (Fig. 2). The students mentored the youths in monitoring the progress of the daily household waste management activities through the social media.



Figure – 1: The Youth Care for Environment Campaign in Tirtajaya Neighborhood



Figure – 2: The Household Waste Shorting and Recycling by the Youths

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study discusses the application of 'Kampung Tangguh' in responding to the pandemic. 'Kampung Tangguh' is a concept of local context of Indonesian community empowerment with the resilience point of

view. In the Indonesian context, the sense of volunteering and togetherness value, locally known as '*gotong-royong*', among the local and the neighborhood initiators are significant to the root power of '*Kampung Tangguh*' to fulfill the gap between the low response of policymakers towards the pandemic and the fast-growing crisis. The local bottom-up approach was a key role to define the significance of Kampung Tangguh in responding to the pandemic, not only in surviving from the pandemic but also recovering process. This study emphasizes that the public policies in pandemic response was essential to consider the local context of culture and community empowerment as the adaptive, innovative, and comprehensive approach in developing countries.

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