

THE REVITALISATION OF GOTONG ROYONG: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION TO COMMEMORATE THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDONESIA'S INDEPENDENCE IN RT 02/RW 08, JL. ARJUNA, LABUH BARU TIMUR VILLAGE, PEKANBARU, RIAU

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Abstract - Gotong royong represents a fundamental traditional value within Indonesian society, functioning as a means of grassroots empowerment and fostering social resilience. This community service initiative took place in RT 02/RW 08, Jl. Arjuna, Labuh Baru Timur Village, to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Republic of Indonesia's Independence. The program aimed to involve residents actively in environmental restoration efforts. Community members collaborated to clean drainage systems and enhance public spaces, thereby promoting sustainable environmental practices and strengthening social cohesion within the neighborhood.

Keywords: Gotong Royong, Participation, Residents, Environmental Restoration, Indonesian Community Involvement.

Abstrak - Gotong royong merupakan nilai tradisional yang esensial dalam Masyarakat Indonesia, berperan sebagai wadah pemberdayaan akar rumput dan ketahanan sosial. Pengabdian Masyarakat ini di RT 02/RW 08, Jalan Arjuna, Kelurahan Labuh Baru Timur, Dalam Rangka Hari Ulang Tahun Kemerdekaan Republik Indonesia ini bertujuan untuk melibatkan warga dalam pemulihan lingkungan secara partisipatif, warga bekerja sama dalam membersihkan saluran drainase, memperindah ruang publik, untuk dapat mendorong pengelolaan lingkungan yang berkelanjutan serta meningkatkan kohesi sosial komunitas Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Gotong Royong, Partisipasi, Warga, Pemulihan Lingkungan, Keterlibatan Komunitas Indonesia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian culture has long been rooted in the spirit of *gotong royong* (English: cooperation), a collective tradition that underpins community responses to various social and environmental challenges. Over the past few decades, however, urbanization and the rise of individualistic lifestyles have gradually eroded this communal practice. The annual commemoration of Indonesian Independence Day offers a strategic opportunity to revitalize and strengthen these values through community-based participatory activities.

In the Labuh Baru Timur neighborhood, specifically RT 02 RW 08, a diverse population of 110 residents—representing various ethnic and religious backgrounds—has come together to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Indonesian Independence. Activities have included drainage clean-up efforts and community competitions, with participation from RT 02 RW 08 residents, local youth groups, and government representatives, such as the village head (*lurah*) and the village supervisory officer (*babinsa*). These efforts aim to enhance environmental quality while simultaneously reinforcing national identity and strengthening the community's social capital.

1.1 Objectives

1. To encourage active community engagement in *gotong royong* within RT 02 RW 08.

2. To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the Republic of Indonesia's Independence through productive and meaningful initiatives.
3. To collectively clean and improve the local environment.

1.2 Significances

1. Enhance the quality of the residential environment.
2. Strengthen social ties among community members.

2. METHODS

1. Field Observation: The team identified key environmental issues through direct observation and engaged in discussions with residents of RT 02, RW 08. Based on this input, tasks were collaboratively designed and distributed among community members.
2. Implementation of Activities: Activities commenced at 07:30 and concluded at 14:00 WIB. These included drainage cleaning along Jl. Arjuna (RT 02/RW 08), concrete drilling, and greening of the local sports field.
3. Joint Reflection and Evaluation: Following the activities, the team held a collective reflection session with residents to evaluate the outcomes and discuss further improvements.
4. Tools and Materials Used: The community utilized the following equipment: hoes, crowbars, a drill, an electric power source, rubbish sacks, ropes, 10 mm steel sling, a rubbish disposal truck, and tools for managing muddy soil.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Residents of RT 02/RW 08 displayed strong enthusiasm, as reflected in the high number of volunteers who actively participated in the activities. The cooperation (*gotong royong*) initiative proved effective in clearing clogged drains and enhancing the neighborhood's appearance.
2. Field observations confirmed that active community engagement was key to the success of the community service program. Participants from RW 02, RW 08, and the *babinsa* (village supervisory officer) of Labuh Baru Timur emphasized the importance of collaboration among social stakeholders. One of the most significant outcomes was the growing environmental awareness among residents and their emerging commitment to making *gotong royong* a regular practice.
3. The *babinsa* of Labuh Baru Timur played a vital role in motivating residents and reinforcing the synergy between the local community and security agencies. This activity also served as a meaningful way to commemorate Indonesia's Independence Day. The community's efforts to unblock drainage channels through self-help and cooperation demonstrated a strong commitment to improving local environmental conditions and boosting collective morale.
4. A notable example involved cleaning a severely clogged drainage channel filled with mud. Due to the left side of Jl. Arjuna having a steeper slope than the right, the team used a large *Hulux* truck, 10 mm steel slings, ropes, and car tyres to assist with the task. Aan, one of the volunteers, inserted used tyres into the drainage channel and then pulled them out repeatedly to remove debris. This process successfully cleared the blocked section beneath the bridge. The site is located on Jalan Arjuna, RT 02/RW 08, along the left side of the road bordering RW 09.



Figure 1. Residents using tools, tyres, steel slings, and vehicles to clean a blocked drainage system on Jl. Arjuna.



Figure 2. Demolition of the old bridge on Jl. Arjuna is using electrical equipment



Figure 3. Clearing a blocked drainage channel and removing accumulated waste on Jl. Arjuna



Figure 4. The Head of RT 02/RW 08, the *babinsa* (village supervisory officer) of East Labuh Baru, the RW advisor, and residents of RT 02/RW 08 working together on Jl. Arjuna

4. CONCLUSIONS

1. The cooperation (*gotong royong*) activities in RT 02/RW 08 reflect strong community enthusiasm, clearly demonstrated through practical collective efforts that delivered tangible results.
2. The environment has become noticeably cleaner, while stronger social bonds have formed among residents, enhancing neighbourly connections and a shared sense of purpose.

RECOMMENDATION

The community should establish cooperation (*gotong royong*) as a regular monthly agenda at RT02 and RW 08 levels to foster sustained engagement and collective responsibility. To support this initiative, it is essential to mobilize assistance from the local government, including logistical and institutional support from the Pekanbaru Level II Government, sub-district leaders, and village heads.

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