



## *Gampong* and Local Reform in Aceh

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### Abstract

The passage of Act No. 18, 2001 on regional autonomy and followed up with the issuance of Qanun No. 4, 2003 on mukim, and Qanun No. 5, 2003 on *gampong* and reinforced by UUPA No. 11, 2006 on Acehese government is a history of social identity of Acehese society, which has been neglected during the conflict. The regional government has made some breakthroughs and one of the breakthroughs was *gampong* revitalization through a program called "back to *gampong*". The study aims to answer the dynamic of revitalization of *gampong* institution in the middle of special autonomy implementation and the implementation of Qanun *gampong* in the administration of *gampong* institution. The study shows that the implementation of program "back to *gampong*" encourages the strengthening process of *gampong* institution as well as weakens the institution itself. The development of *gampong* that focuses on physical aspect has created coordination gap among officials of *gampong* institution in planning system and financial management. The tug in the mechanism of financial development and management at *gampong* has created a space for the involvement and influence from *gampong* elite in *gampong* governance. Non-uniform honorary allocation for *gampong* governmental apparatus is one of indicators of weak role and function of *gampong* cultural institution because the previous inherent communal values have been calculated economically.

**Keywords:** *revitalization; Gampong institution; back to Gampong*

### INTRODUCTION

The fall of New Order government in 1998 has led to new development in governance in Indonesia. One of these developments is the passing of the concept of local autonomy through Act No. 22 of 1999 on local government which was subsequently revised into Act No. 32 of 2004 replacing Act No. 5 of 1974 on the Principles of Regional Governance and Act No. 5 of 1979 on Village Governance. The development changes the orientation of government management from centralized paradigm in New Order Era towards decentralization and regional autonomy in reform era and it has automatically put an end to the pattern of government at the center (central government), shifting to the pattern of autonomous local government (Eko 2005; Kolopaking 2011). The format change of local self-government

administration to self-governing community is the manifestation of a radical change in the political development in several regions which is eagerly awaited by all regions, including in Aceh. Aceh is a conflict-ridden region both in the era of independence and post-independence. The conflicts of Islamic scholars (*Ulama*) and *uleebalang* which happened in the early independence era and the emergence of Free Aceh Movement (GAM) in 1976 which became stronger in the new order era until before the fall of the New Order in 1998 show social resistance from the mainstream of the relation of central and local communities.

Entering the reform era, the ongoing conflict between GAM and RI finally found common ground when the peace agreement through Helsinki agreement was signed in 2005. The results of this agreement

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are described within UUPA (Act of Aceh governance) as a form of manifestation on recognition on “special” Aceh (Djojosoekar-to 2009), and the right to conduct its own government based on their specialization as a result of the ongoing conflict between Indonesia and Free Aceh Movement (GAM). One concrete manifestation that is implemented in the UUPA is that they try to restore the institutional form of a lowest customary village that has been stagnated and destroyed during the reign of the New Order. The collapse of local institutions in the community happens not only in Aceh, but also in some other communities, such as *Nagari* in Padang which should be integrated in the form of state power through Act No. 5 of 1979 on village administration. The law systematically upholds structural de-legitimacy of *gampong* which unite them as the smallest unit of administration. Local institutions are removed; there is only village as the smallest unit of the New Order government in implementing economic, social and political aspects of rural communities in a comprehensive manner (Bebbington, 2006; Kolopaking, 2011).

Such widely-opened democratic space and autonomy exhibits a new scene of political development in Aceh. The enactment of Act No. 18 2001 on Special Autonomy for Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) is followed by the issuance of *Qanun 4/2003* on *Mukim*, and *Qanun 5/2003* on *Gampong* governance. They are strengthened under the legal umbrella of Act on Aceh Governance (UUPA) No. 11 in 2006 which is the embodiment of the reintegration of traditional values and religion in a social system that was previously limited under the New Order government.

The special autonomy and Act of Aceh governance (UUPA) No. 11 2006 have provided space for social discourse on village formations which not only touch the existence of an institutional formality, but also essential aspects of *Gampong* community. Considering the cultural identity of Acehese people who believe in the principle of unity based on legal territory, *gampong* is essential as the image of Acehese identity

that upholds religion and customs. Therefore, it is justifiable if there are differences in understanding the concept of *Gampong* which is conceived by central government and people of Aceh. Darmawan (2006) describes sociologically there are fundamental differences between institutions of *gampong* with village. The differences are visible in the following aspects: (1) the historical development of social-cultural in a village is established based on the legitimacy of the “upper village” engineered by the power of technocratic to the interests of organizing the construction, *gampong* is cultivated by indigenous and religious people generated from socio-religious associations for the sake of socio-civic organization; (2) a democracy that is grown in village is sown from “upper village” that does not always fit in with the spirit of the common people, while democracy that is built by *gampong* is a paternalistic democracy that respects the elements of indigenous elders or are known in *tuha lapan* and *tuha peut*; (3) the integration/internalization of the concept of village of rural communities in the concept of formal village is a “pseudo-internalization (pretending)” because it does not fit with the local culture, while *gampong* is part of a growing indigenous institution since long time ago.

In line with this view, Tripa (2003) also warns that *gampong* is not the same with village. There are substantial differences between *gampong* and village administration and its officers and customary institutions. *Gampong* must be seen as the unity of law and indigenous communities in the lowest power structure and has its own territory and its own wealth or income source. *Gampong* is led by *keuchik* and *teungku meunasah*. *Keuchik* is responsible for public administration and implementation of custom law (*adat*), while *teungku meunasah* is responsible for implementation of the religious life of the community, Shari’ah, religious and moral education, and on other fields related to social life. While in the sociological context with *gampong* government system, the democratic system from the bottom (bottom-up) can actually be implemented.

Therefore, the voice of the community will be accommodated, and it is different from the system of village administration which is really centralized.

There have been several previous studies that focus on *gampong* institutions, both from social science, politics and legal standpoints. Warsidi (1977), in a study that observes the fundamental issues contained in *gampong* governance structure, views that *Gampong* government functionaries as it is now are still quite difficult to be able to carry out various functions of public administration efficiently. The institution itself seems to have not given enough functionality in playing a role in the administration of the village and sub-district institutions. Especially with the idea of the local government which adopts the residential system as the village model in Java. The problem occurs when they do not consider a fairly diverse residential condition.

Kuahaty (1983) uses Weber's concept of authority and power to see changes in the structure and powers of *keuchik* in leading *gampong*. The study illustrates that there are some problem indications that develop in the governance structure of *gampong* where the macro village does not have the right to elect the head of village (*keuchik*) and they are not entitled to have their own financial resources to organize and manage their own household. The change not only happens at the level of *gampong* government, but it is also in the structure of society itself. The lives of the people who rely on the value of togetherness and collective leadership on traditional values began to be degraded by the institutional changes of *gampong* on the implementation of Act No. 5 of 1979 on village governance.

Another study related to the institutional structure of the village, although not implicitly elaborates further on the governance structure of *gampong* with governmental aspect in it, is found in Kappi (1983) on "*Kelompok Elite di Pedesaan*" which gives specific implications of construction in a *gampong* society. The existence of groups of traditional elites who defend status quo and view any change as a threat is quite contra-

dictory with the emergence of new elite that holds a strategic role in society, both in the form of formal or political leadership and give wide impact of changes in social structure of a community. Still dealing with the structure of the rural elite, Abdullah (1976) with the historical approach illustrates how relationships and institutional structure of traditional administration in *gampong* is essential to unite people under the umbrella of tradition and religion. Social change in a society run by the influx of money into the village has indirectly undermined traditional institutional structures that exist in society. Abdullah (1988) in "*Struktur Sosial Pedesaan di Aceh*" describes the function of *Gampong* is based on social structures in governance of public life is the central power for integration of community in maintaining integrity of a village. Social change or population dynamics are key variables to see a shift in their roles and functions of the *gepong* governance structure. *Keuchik* for example, serves as the public protector, the settlement of disputes to marital problems, currently has expanding role. They are not only responsible for the use of *Gampong* funds, harvesting, land and collecting taxes, but also for the implementation of government programs in *Gampong*, and win certain political currents in election activities.

Mattugengkeng (1986) suggests a form of fundamental differences between *Gampong* with village administrations. He also describes that the structure of *Gampong* comes from the community itself for generations as a social heritage. That means, *Gampong* government structure is something that has been patterned in society therefore, it becomes part of local culture. And the structure of village administration is from central government (the new order) as one of the state institutions in Indonesia. With such fundamental differences, the change on social values within the governance of *Gampong* is slowly affecting the Acehnese social structure which is full of religious values and customs. Because of Act No. 5 of 1979, the issue of governance of local customs and religious values are not stated implicitly and it would be difficult to

bridge a variety of programs aimed at the welfare of villagers and residents of *Gampong* in Aceh in particular.

Darmawan (ed. 2006), from the findings of several field research, portrays how the diversity of local issues of regional autonomy have given its own color in the institutional mechanism of villages in five different provinces (in Aceh, West Sumatra, West Java, Bali and Papua). This study shows the village autonomy can be approached in several stages; first, government must create village autonomy that is better understood as functional independence (performing functions). Second, the expressional independence stage (independence to initiate and realize a development initiative). Third, existential independence is a manifestation of the independence ability of the village to run their household and is able to perform negotiations with government institutions at the supra village level. This study also mentions village level autonomy as expected by Act number 32 of 2004 which is in no way construed as an independent village from relinquish power and central government power. In reality, the village administration will not be able to organize and develop their administration independently. Even, village is highly dependent on the institutional structure in the hierarchy above it in terms of funding and development initiatives.

Gayatri (ed. 2008) through case-based qualitative approach carried out in two different districts of Central Aceh and North Aceh, illustrates the complexity of life which is not just a social institution and reflects the relationships between units of the lowest organizational structure. It concerns the relation -social relationships of the various characters in kinship system among the people of Aceh. *Gampong* reflects the kinship system that supports the existence of society. Despite undergoing the shifting change because of the influence of modernization, elite interactions that exist in two research sites are still marked as genealogical bond to be their social basis. Therefore, it is reasonable that *Gampong* can still be seen in the pattern of elite relations based on traditional authority which guarantees

the continuity of the tradition based on religious values and customs.

Through Act No. 18 of 2001 on Special Autonomy for Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) which was followed by the publication of *Qanun 4/2003* on *Mukim*, and *Qanun 5/2003* on *gampong* revitalization which are also strengthened by the Act on Aceh Governance (UUPA) No. 11 2006 provide opportunity for the return of traditional values and religion that have long been integrated into society. Various breakthroughs follow up the new scene of political development. Not only have they touched the political aspect alone, but also the economic development of the community which becomes a top priority in terms of improving people's welfare of society after suffering in several decades. One concrete manifestation developed by local governments is to develop "back to *Gampong*" program. The program is conducted as a breakthrough to strengthen the village in various aspects of society. The program is conducted based on the impact of the ongoing conflict which indirectly gives tremendous effect in the social structure of *Gampong*. One follow-up program that is outlined is also in the form of financial aid *peumakmue Gampong* (BKPG) allocated from the province government. Then it is added by the respective districts / cities in the form of allocation of *Gampong* funds (ADG), based on the financial capacity of the district / city.

The programs is not only expected to lead the improvement of the economic aspects of society but also d to fix *Gampong* thoroughly. Therefore, the integration of *Gampong* officials becomes the motor of *Gampong*. It is needed because there was institutional paralysis during the New Order era. *Gampong* must not be separated from local institutional development model proposed by central government. Therefore, this program receives a positive response from the various elements of society that hopes to restore the identity of this *Gampong* that has been neglected.

Nevertheless, the efforts to restore the existence of *mukim* and *Gampong* as it was in the past are not that easy. In addition to



the regulatory issues that have not provided detailed technical instructions on the implementation of government at the village level, there is also the issue of limited existence which leads to a mere formal structure. This means that some authorities are still strongly influenced by the power of district. Therefore, it is not surprising to see some studies which show complexity of *Gampong* in terms of divisions of role, authority and power relations between the *Gampong* with district or provincial governments (Eko 2007).

Empirical facts show that there are declining respects for the customs, waning of traditional *Gampong* institutions, *Gampong* misappropriation of funds and weak human resources in *Gampong* which exhibits the problems of *Gampong* autonomy. And with no effective functioning institution and residents of *Gampong*, the entire village officials who regulate social order will also be eventually alienated. Shrinking the role and slow function of *keuchik*, waning function and role of *teungku meunasah*, *keujreun blang*, *paglima laot*, *commander uteun handler gle*, *peutua seunobok*, *Haria Peukan*, *tuha peut* and also *tuha lapan* are fundamental issues that are still found today in spite legal protection through *Qanun 5/2003 of Gampong*, No. 4/2003 on the habitation, local Government Act No. 32 of 2004, with a special autonomous space that is opened widely and incentive payroll each month for *Gampong* officers do not necessarily raise the function of *Gampong*. Therefore, it is not surprising if the task of *keuchik*, citing language Sujito (2000), is only limited as a means of implementing “administrative” function. This is not stopped there, the leadership of *keuchik* better reflects the current leadership of the dual leadership. Due to the non-optimal function of *Gampong*, it is quite reasonable when *Gampong* is mentioned to face a serious problem of government effectiveness.

From the above reviews and existing reality, it shows that there is a need to explore the dynamics of institutional revitalization of *gampong* through the elaboration on Act No 11. 2006 about UUPA, the special

autonomy as well as the *Qanun 5 of 2003 on gampong* realized in the form of local government policy of “back to *Gampong*” program because there has not been any serious and in-depth study on it. Therefore, this research is directed to investigate; how the institutional function of *Gampong* in the middle the implementation of special autonomy *gampong Qanun No. 5 in 2003*; how is the dynamic of back to *Gampong* program and its relationship with the institutional strengthening of village. These are the main focus in this paper.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study focused on a qualitative approach to analyze more deeply on how the dynamics of institutional revitalization of *Gampong* amid the implementation of special autonomy and the implementation of *Qanun Gampong* in institutional governance of *Gampong*. The study focused on the District Lamteuba *Gampong* Seulimeum Districts (agricultural area) and Mon Ikeun *Gampong* (coastal areas) Lhoknga District, Aceh Besar Regency. For areas that are close to the center of government administration, the study was carried out in the village of Mon Ikeun Lhoknga District. While the village Lamteuba Seulimum was selected to represent a district far from central government administration. In addition to the choice of location was also made to facilitate the collection of data, where the existence of such institutions *keujreun blang Gampong* can be found in the Lamteuba *Gampong* (agrarian). And vice versa, *paglima laot Gampong* can be found in the Mon Ikeun *Gampong* (coast). Therefore, the *keujreun blang Gampong* can be found in an agricultural area, as well as the *paglima laot Gampong* can only be found in coastal area. The site selection was also based on institutional existence of *Gampong* and community structures as a result of the excesses of the conflict. Therefore, the site selection becomes important to describe social reality institutional revitalization of *Gampong* within the frame of special autonomy.

The targets of the research were officials involved in the governance structure of

*Gampong* as a whole such as *Gampong* officials, MAA districts, districts governments, local governments, and local communities. The data collection method used in-depth interviews, observation and documentation study. The analysis was conducted through: the process of data reduction, data presentation and conclusion (Miles and Huberman 1994). Analysis of the data used was qualitative analysis. Qualitative data analysis followed the view of Patton (Marvasti 2004) in which the data was organized into a pattern category and description of the basic unit. Therefore, the categorization of data tailored to the formulation of the questions asked in the study and was intended to provide ease of interpretation, selection, and an explanation in the form of a description of the analysis. In the stage of data analysis, data was collected through interviews, observations and records or documents relating to the research theme. For data validity checking, clarifying or comparing the triangulation of data and information from sources of information and different data collection were conducted.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **Gampong: A Historical Note**

*Gampong* in the public's understanding contains two different senses. First, *Gampong* is understood in the era of the Sultanate of Aceh as a territory for control of natural resources and citizens who inhabited it. The naming of *Gampong* was based on the name of place of origin and was visible from the settled population. The various meanings of *Gampong's* names depend on the territory of the homeland and ethnic origin as well as the origin of arrival. Or in another perspective, it will always deal with the context of power (territorial) and citizenship (civilian) (Gayatri 2008).

*Gampong* is customary areas, where there are figures like *keuchik*, *tuha peut* or *ureueng tuha*, and *teungku* or *imam meunasah*. Each figure has its own function which is associated as a combination of 'father' and 'mother' of the people of Aceh. So, it can be further said that *Gampong* contains the

idea of a division system of labor between men and women. Spatially, in the Sultanate of Aceh, the village was a collection of occupancy with one *meunasah* (or mosque). Generally, a village consists of several *jurong* (hallway), *tumpok* or collection of houses, and *Ujong* (or the end of the village) (Alfian 1988).

*Gampong* in Acehnese society is a social system that can regulate themselves and *Gampong* serves as a unit organized by people who live in the village administrative or legal environment (Eko 2007). *Gampong* is also a social organization that is equipped with leadership structures and devices with context functions in accordance with the social, economic and political aspects. *Gampong* reflects the identity of the occupants, namely the people of Aceh who are originally autonomous, and tend to be cosmopolitan because of historical influence of interaction with the international capital power through trading lanes in the Strait of Malacca in the 15-16 centuries (Reid 2005). The word *Gampong* itself may be drawn from Malay language words which means "*kampong* (villages)" or in Javanese spelling *kampoeng*. This is not surprising as some historical writings during Sultan Fathahillah, in a number of correspondences with foreign delegations visiting Batavia, would use the word great *kampoeng*. The spelling of "K" in Arabic Javanese was the official language of the empire, when it was translated to the Acehnese language, Arabic Javanese spelling became "G" after being given full stop mark (.) at the top of the letter "K" (Sharif 2001). Therefore, it was changed from *kampong* to be *gampong*.

When reading *The Tale of the Kings Pasai* in the book of Syech Bustanuslatin Nuruddin Ar-Raniry for example, it contains many governance structures of sultan of Aceh at around 13 s/d 17 centuries which mentions *Gampong* as a smallest government in that era. The meaning of *Gampong* was very simple, only led by *petua*, a public figure who was entrusted as *Uleebalang* and appointed by the Sultan. *Gampong* Aceh sultanate era was important to sustain the sultan or the *uleebalangs* when *Gampong*

became the base of agricultural commodities produced by a *Gampong*.

In the reign of the Sultanate of Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), it changed drastically, *Gampong* became more dynamic and democratic. This concept was maintained, in which *Gampong* is known as a territorial government after smallest residential area known as *sagoe cut* (small *sagi*) which is in the same level with the district. *Gampong* in Sultan Iskandar Muda era was understood as a representation of society which were represented and fully involved in the process of *Gampong* governance. A *kheucik* for example, as the head of the village would be assisted by *tuha peuet* and *meunasah* immunity in relation to indigenous issues and worship. Similarly, several issues concerning agriculture arrangement will be managed by *keujreun blang*, forestry issues with *peteuteun*, marine issue with *panglima laot*, and plantation issue with *peutua Seuneubok*. All these *Gampong* officers until now are still maintained as a form of integration of religious values and customs in *Gampong* governance (Alfian 1988; Umar 2006; p.1-8).

As an institution, *Gampong* is a residential unity of individual / group based on territory. In the perspective of the law of *Gampong*, it is a territorial unit of customary law community. This means that the village is the unity of the community unit which is bound by customary laws that have been consensually agreed. From the physical aspect, *Gampong* is a settlement pattern therein lies the house (*rumoh*), paddy (*blang*), *Lampoh* or *seunobok* (plantations), *padang* (open field) and forests (*gle*) (Nyak Pha 2000; Gayatri 2008). In addition, *Gampong* is a social organization that is equipped with leadership structures and officers that function in accordance with the social, economic and political aspects. Thus, as an institution, *Gampong* is called a territorial unit which portrays the settlement pattern and is social organization that consists of individuals/groups with social groupings based on the roles and functions that already exist and develop in accordance with the context of space and time.

In historical context, *gampong* social-

ly was collapsed which not only happened since the time of independence and revolution, but also the days of the New Order. At the time of independence and revolution, social structures and institution of *Gampong* changed. *Gampong* was weakened for its role and function, particularly when the social revolution in the 1960s, which led to the low political participation of the people for political positions in *Gampong* governance. The history of the village in the Old Order must not be separated from political power system constructed to derive Maliki's central government (1999)-When the country approached the people-not merely build *negarasisasi* at local community level but also a political ideology based power bureaucratization as a mirror of the collapse of identity community-based cultural and traditional religious values. DI / TII in Aceh in 1953 led by the clergy who were members of PUSA was as logical form of scholars' disappointment when the abolition of Aceh province and put it into part of North Sumatra province, as well as eliminating the status of Aceh's autonomy in carrying religious laws.

During the New Order (1965-1998), the lowest social structure of society such as *Gampong* or *mukim* were only used as a symbol of customary, since the institution of substantive set the wheels of government, social and even economic life only in the hands of *Gampong* and district administration. In village government, military bureaucratic structure in the form of Babin-sa and Muspika indirectly holds an important position in the development of society that was attached. In fact, when we come back to the social system, *keuchik* or *imum meunasah* have an important role in the management and administration as well as aspects of religious life. However, with strong penetration power of the new order, customary institutions are just a mere formality and merely a tool for easy access control over the construction of the new order (Harley 2008). Social institutions paralyzed, *kheucik* was limited to the administration of village government without further involved in protecting society based on traditional values and religion.

Entering the reform period with concepts of democratization and decentralization, the state through legal protection Act No 22 1999 concern local government which accommodate *Gampong* government as part of political development and realization of democracy to the lower level. Normatively, Act no 22 1999 no longer puts the village as the lowest form of government under the sub-district head, but as a legal community unit which has the right to regulate and manage the interests of local communities in accordance with the right of the origin of the village (Eko 2005). Nevertheless many parties considered this legislation incapable of running effectively when state power was still strong at the village level.

The issuance of Act number 44 of 1999 of the excellence in the province of Aceh,

one of which is by restoring the privileges of *Gampong* which then a few years later despite the implementation of the idiosyncrasies do not run maximum-released of some of the *Qanun* 5 of 2003 on the governance of the *Gampong* became the starting point of the movement of local democracy which previously had to be absolute subordinate of the central government. The privileged Aceh continues to change in tune by the peace agreement between RI and GAM, through the agreement in Helsinki, August 15, 2005, a form of privilege Aceh once again renewed not only in the customs, cultures, but also in the political field by being given the opportunity to form local political parties and this indirectly manages the *Gampong* level which not only affects the institutional capacity of the village but also at the

Table 1. Position and Role of *Gampong*

Period	Policy toward <i>Gampong</i>	Position and role of <i>Gampong</i>	remark
The Sultanate	coopted in royal structure Being under the rule of the kingdom	Under the power of <i>uleebalang</i> in a <i>kingdom structure</i>	<i>Gampong</i> becomes part of low territory structure in Acehnesse Sultanade. Functioned as institution which helps <i>uleebalang</i>
The Dutch Colonialism	Transplantation of <i>gampong</i> under colonial government	Making benefit of <i>uleebalang</i> power to control <i>gampong</i> . Dutch politics open the room for conflict between <i>uleebalang</i> and <i>gampong</i> people	Some policies of Dutch with development model of modern infrastructure, and force plantation underwent social changes in <i>gampong level</i>
Japanese Colonialism	Becoming the basis of Japanese power in the practice of <i>romushha</i>	Balance politics between <i>uleebalang</i> and Islamic scholars in managing <i>gampong</i>	Making benefit from Islamic scholar to mobilize <i>gampong</i> people in building infrastructure
Post Independence Era	Weakened role of <i>gampong</i>	Some policies weakened the position of <i>gampong</i>	Function and role of <i>gampong</i> were fading as government introduced modern system of bureaucracy
New Order	Lowest unit under district	De-legitimacy of structural uniform unit of government as village under district	The collapse of local structure with village model. The role and function of <i>gampong</i> is replaced by system of village government
Post New Order	Revitalization of <i>gampong</i>	<i>Gampong</i> is under <i>mukim</i>	Returning the collapsed local structure in new order. Revitalization of <i>gampong</i> is not running as the expectation

Adapted from several sources: Tripa 2003; Gayatri 2008; Harley 2008



social structure of the village community as a whole.

Through UUPA number 11 2006 mentions the village or any other name is the unity of the legal community who are under *Mukim* and led by *keuchik* or the name of any other right to conduct its own internal affairs. With the UUPA number 11 of 2006, *gampong* indirectly has wider autonomy in the implementation of development. However, citing Sutoro Eko (Gayatri 2008) who normatively describes autonomy, it still illustrates the ambiguity. First, the village placed in the position of autonomy, but they are given the obligation to carry out a single principle of assistance. Secondly, the system of the authority of the district to the *Gampong* is subsidiarity. Third, the village is a mix of institutional self-governing community within the institutional system of customary and local-state government through assistant task.

In the past, *gampong* government institution consists of *keluchik*, *imam meunasah* and *tuha peut* to the center of activities carried out in *meunasah*. *Gampong* possesses leadership collective, meaning almost all matters concerning the interests of the village is brought to *meunasah* to be decided in consultation and consensus. The concept of power in the people of Aceh is not separated between customs and religion. This concept is then span the 'hierarchy in village governance structure with *keuchik*, *imam meunasah* and *ureng tuha*. The structure power that is built in *gampong* is bound to one another and have their own tasks and functions. A village can be seen as part of the governance structure with countries involving government bureaucracy that puts *keuchik* as a government representative in *gampong*. As representatives of the government, a *keuchik* will carry out the functions and duties delegated in accordance with the state laws and regulations that apply (Abdullah 1988; Gayatri 2008).

Besides *keuchik*, there is also *imam meunasah*, called the *ma gampong* (mother) that plays a role in carrying out religious activities as a whole. *Tuha peuat* or called *ureung tuha* (elder leaders) became

the central figure in the decision on a case and also at the same time giving advice to *keuchik* in running *gampong* government. In performing its duties, *keuchik* and *imeum meunasah* (executive element) collaborate with *ureung tuha* (legislators). The elements are aligned and scope of works really is distinguished clearly. This system is different with village leaders who are ex-official executive as well as a legislative leader (Nyak Pha, 2000, Dharmawan 2006, Eko, 2007). *Gampong* secretary helps *keuchik* in carrying out the tasks associated with the administration of the village. In the institutional structure of village, there is *tuha lapan* (elements of public figures), *keujreun blang* (responsible for the management of paddy fields), *panglima laot* (responsible for the management of marine resources), *harian Peukan* (responsible traditional market management which is usually done once a week), *peutua Seuneubok* (responsible for the management of the plantation), and also *syahbandar* (regulating and responsible in terms of entry and exit of ships in harbor or path issues in marine transportation), who all became very urgent in the governance of social life.

All relationships of which are often likened to the proverb in Aceh *hukom ngon adat lagee zat ngon sifeut, adat angon hukom hana tom cre* which means that customary law as a like a substance with characteristics, customary law is never broken. Although in practice not all traditional institutions still exist in the people of Aceh, following the introduction of other official institutions that are modern in meeting community needs.

### **Institutional Structure and Function of *Gampong***

*Gampong* is a social organization that comes with leadership structures and officers in accordance with the social, economic and political aspects. In a *gampong*, the governance structure consists of government members, religious elements and representative elements. Members of the government is represented by *keuchik*, re-

ligion by *teungku meunasah* and representative member is represented by *tuha peut* and assisted by other traditional institutions that play an important role in turning the wheels of *gampong* government. All of the officers are attached to the role and function in accordance with the authority vested in each of these institutions. With roles and functions carried out by each institution, the pattern of government of *gampong* is actually a system that is very democratic, where all decisions and measures are taken by *keuchik* and should be discussed with *tuha peut*, so the decision or policy has strong authority. According to *Qanun 5* In 2003, there is position and equal power between *keuchik*, *imam meunasah*, and *tuha peut* in the administration system of *gampong* government. Therefore, a *keuchik* can not necessarily run the government without the involvement of the other *gampong* elements such as *imam meunasah* and *tuha peut*.

Structurally, *Gampong* is a building structure from several elements involved based on consensual decision of its people. *Gampong* will consist of several officials who work and act in accordance with their respective duties. A *keuchik* for example is responsible for the operations of the government. Or *teungku meunasah* is responsible for the implementation of religious life in society. *Peut Tuha* is responsible as an institution and advisor for *keuchik* consideration in leading the village. *Gampong* as well as some others are related to the livelihoods of *Gampong* communities. Basically, in *Gampong* government system there are two equal leaders, with different duties and responsibilities: *Keuchik* as perpetrators of the government and *teungku meunasah* as executor of religious life in society. Alignment of these two institutions must not be separated from the philosophy of society, where customs and religion become the basic foundation of the social system in Aceh (Alfian 1988; Umar 2006).

*Gampong* administration is deter-

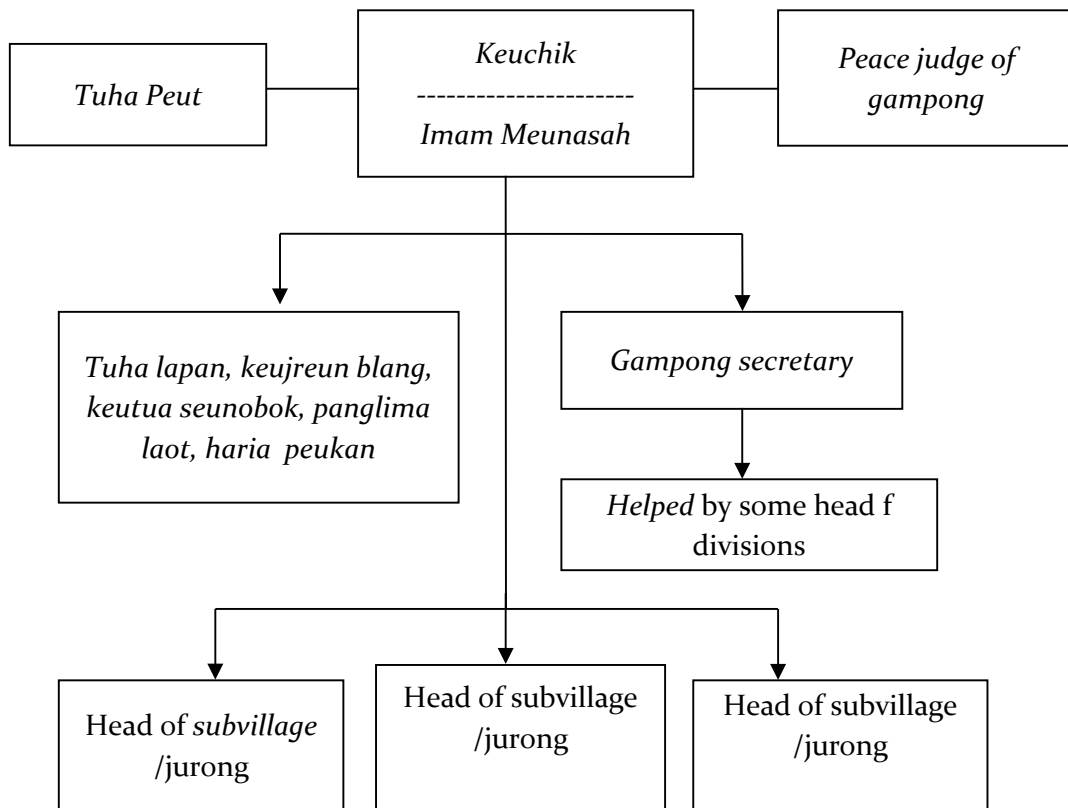


Figure 1. *Gampong* Structure

mined by the involvement of *Gampong* elements/officials. Implementation of autonomous local government system with each functions and roles are seen within the government structure and become the basis of consensus in society to shape up social order as agreed by the community over customary and religious aspects. When the chain's philosophy of integrating traditional and religious are slowly eroded in the institutional structure of *Gampong*, just like the enactment of Act No. 5 of 1979 on *Gampong* government, the institution of local customs which are rooted in the institutional system of *Gampong* will be slowly fading due to power relations on values and traditional norms which are replaced with a system of modern bureaucratization.

The institutional structure of *Gampong* set on *Qanun* 5 2003 regulates the position and equal power relations between *keuchik*, *imam meunasah*, and *tuha peut* in the administration system of *Gampong* government. The position of this alignment is in accordance with traditional values and religion in the social system of the Acehnese. A *keuchik* cannot run the government without the involvement of elements of *imam meunasah* and *tuha peut*. Relationships coordination could indirectly become an important instrument of power and the role of identity institutional apparatus of *Gampong* as a whole.

In fact, the efforts to strengthen the institutional structure of the village as a whole are not easy within a changing community. Empirical facts show that even though *Gampong* is legally given their identity through UUPA and *Qanun*, there is still structurally and culturally found weaknesses in *gampong* development. The fundamental problems can be caused from two sides, the first, internal factors such as the lack of human resources, or external factors which are also associated with support facilities and infrastructure that are still inadequate. Therefore, we reasonably can find *Gampong* structure only in the memories of a *keuchik*, or *gampong* which does not have a clear structure although the village officials who are involved receive an honorarium or incentive

every month. This is still a fundamental issue in the middle of efforts to restore the institutional identity of the village as it is written in the *Qanun* and UUPA. On one hand, government makes the process of *Gampong* institutional development programs for *Gampong*, but on the other, social change and the way people view are different with reality.

It is interesting to see the philosophy which is often pronounced the parents “*umong meu ateung, lampoh meupageu, rumoh meu adat, peukat meu kaja*” (that is, fields have *pematang* (line), gardens have fence, houses have rules and trawls have signs). This understanding explains that the positions and roles attached to the traditional institution of *Gampong* has its limits and the role that should be done in accordance with their responsibilities, and no one should interfere with the rights of others. The linkage functions and responsibilities attached to *Gampong* government officials as mentioned *Qanun* 5 Year 2003 and supplemented by *Qanun* 10 Year 2008 concerning customs agency is a manifestation of the social order that has long been rooted and closely linked to the fulfillment of the needs of the village community life which is not only about the cultural and economic but also political aspects. The efforts taken by the district / city in reviving and recreating the traditional institutions of *gampong* is developed through the program “back to *Gampong*” which is running at the moment.

Top-down system of the relation of state and local communities has long become a pillar of *Gampong* development. This will be a long process to change the development paradigm towards the bottom up society that comes from the bottom. Besides, accumulation of prolonged conflict leading to the *Gampong* government to lose their trust. Renewal of *Gampong* has put *Gampong* government as regional development agencies in one hand, but on the other hand, reducing the *Gampong* model development vis to vis of top down and bottom up. That is, the authority and the right of *Gampong* that is not accommodated as a whole in *Gampong Qanun*,

Reflecting at the philosophy of a *Gampong*, it can be simply stated that *Gampong* must be seen as a customary law community unit and the lowest in the power structure and has its own territory and has its own wealth or income source. As explained previously, a *Gampong* is led by *keuchik* and *teungku imuem meunasah*. The ideal function of a *keuchik* is to serve in the field of public administration and the passage of the law (*adat*), while *teungku* is responsible for implementation of the religious life of the community, the passage of the law (*Shari'a*), implementation of education (religious and moral), and on other fields related to social life and social beings. The philosophy of the building at the level of the value system translates the symbols of identity of Acehese social life.

#### **Dynamics of Implementation of “Back to *Gampong*” Program**

Since its establishment of “back to *Gampong*” program by local governments around the beginning of 2009, various development programs aimed at improving the welfare and empowerment of village communities are made. Various programs are created that do not just touch the economic aspect, but also strengthening *Gampong* institutions in various aspects of society. In 2012 for example, the Government of Aceh channeled the budget for Financial Assistance for *Pemakmue Gampong* (BKPG) to 6,451 villages with total of Rp. 445 119 billion. Every village in 23 districts / cities received Rp. 69 million. At the same time, there was also a rural PNPM funding assistance from the central government in 2012 to 252 districts, in 18 districts with the total value reaching Rp.529,6 billion.

The target for *Gampong* development through the allocation of the grant still has many problems related to system planning and management of grants that have not been targeted, accountability, transparency to the ability of human resources in the financial governance of the village. In the region of the village *Lamteuba* and *Mon Ikeun*, it shows that *Gampong* development funds such as PNPM Mandiri and also BKPG or

ADG tend to be used for infrastructure development of physical infrastructure, and is still very weak in the non-physical aspects of development.

Some efforts to strengthen the institutional structure of the village as a whole are not easy. Despite the legal format of *gampong* institutional identity that is returned to the philosophy of *Qanun* and UUPA, in fact, there are some *gampong* which are structurally and culturally weak in their development. *Gampong* government on one hand is placed as a regional development agency, but on the other, reducing the model *gampong* development vis to vis of top down and bottom up.

In fact, 90.47 percent of the people want the traditional institutions in the village can be used again. The loss of most of indigenous communities is closely related to the vagueness of the existence and role of traditional institutions in the society. Real data shows almost 93.58 percent of traditional institutions have been manifested in every region, but the empowerment of traditional institutions is still lacking.

“It used to be customary law that a *keuchik* in Aceh must be 40 years old and understands the religion and has authoritative figure. So if not yet 40 years old, they will not be chosen by the citizens because according to the law when the Prophet Muhammad was appointed when he was 40 years old. Now, as long as the candidate can influence his citizens and can build a relationship of power groups within a village community, it is certain that he will be *keuchik* although he is not 40 years old yet”.

The mechanism of the “back to *gampong*” program which mostly relies on aspects of physical development indirectly gives more space of disparities between coordination in the planning system and village development. This on-and-off *gampong* planning process that involves elements of *gampong* government officials have allowed the emergence of elite *gampong* to be a big influence on the governance and financial planning within a village. Implementation



Table 2. Critical Issues Through Institutional Strengthening Gampong

Development aspects	Area	
	Lamteuba	Mon Ikuen
Qanun	NGO's involvement, lacking involvement of local and district government	
Socialization	Non-optimal socialization of <i>Qanun</i> implementation Low understanding of <i>Qanun gampong</i> and draft composition of <i>Qanun gampong in gampong government</i>	
Support of infra-structures	Focus only on physical development and lacking of non-physical development No office for <i>gampong government in conducting their administratiin</i>	Appropriate office is there but the public service is lacking
Welfare improvement	im-honorarium Late honorarium and 2/3 months late Non-uniform honorarium Triggering social jealousy among people	
Custom implementation	Low understanding of <i>keujreun blang</i> custom in agriculture  The fading of custom-based agriculture (farming season and livestock farming) Lack of involvement from local governments in custom implementation Some conflicts are resolved using legal procedure as compared to customary law (although custom can still be used)	Involvement of <i>panglima laot</i> in resolving of marine conflicts is reduced  Lack of coordination between customary institution in conducting marine costum
Institutional coordination	Non-optimal coordination between customary institution in conducting administration Lack of coordination between <i>mukim</i> and district Opening the space for <i>gampong</i> elites in planning the <i>gampong</i> development	

of the program *peumakmu gampong* shows that the program is to help the institutional governance and also has latent function for the elite village because of its associated power and the struggle for economy. Structural-functional perspective mentions that if a phenomenon exists, it means that the phenomenon has a positive function in society. That is, as long as the phenomenon exists and positive during the same function will persist in society (Turner 1998, Merton 1969).

By understanding the meaning of the concept, a growing phenomenon in the governance structure of the village is still weak optimization of the role and functions attached to the village of traditions which are

closely linked to the mechanism of function and dysfunction on the other side of the middle of village development models that exist today. When the aspect of dysfunction for the whole system exists in the village community, it can be functional for others when it is able to seize the economic space and power in the governance of *gampong*. A phenomenon may serve to a certain group, but can also be otherwise detrimental to a group or social system as a whole. Hence, the structure, according to Merton, will bear the manifest and latent functions. In that position, Merton puts the officials as entity that has broad freedom to do what they want and not just a robot that is automatically determined by the structure. Integrated

structure and norms control the behavior of individuals. Structure that exists within social system is reality that is autonomous and interdependent (Merton 1969; Turner 1998).

Weak public participation of *gampong* over access to *peumakmue gampong* program, mechanism of direct aid “giving away money”, which in turn fosters dependence of poor families and concentration of physical development in infrastructure projects are the fundamental problems which are still encountered in the field. In fact, what happens in the community is in contrary with the desired expectations of the community development program. There are some cases of recurring budget fraud of *gampong* or absorption of funds which are not effective. The amount of budget which is always annually given apparently is not able to realize the independence and solve the poverty in the *gampong* and household economic conditions of people in *gampong* (Acehpost, May 28, 2012; foyer Indonesia, December 22, 2012).

With the bureaucratization of the system open up to the *gampong* level, *gampong* officials should be able to resolve all issues related to the *gampong* administrative, manufacturing and financial managers of *gampong* planning development and policy formulation in the future. This then becomes the fundamental problems in the governance structure of the village when the projected development is not managed properly in the middle of weak resources and local potentials, weakening traditional values of local institutions is something that is inevitable in the current format for *gampong* development. Despite the various programs that are directed in the ground the back the identity of indigenous communities *gampong* with their *Qanun* rules and other support, the issue of the basic problems that always appear in various views of a given society or the traditional leaders in the village, when the *Qanun gampong* is not fully able to restore the identity of indigenous especially with the Acehnese people who are still lack of development programs by the local governments in efforts to strengthen customs.

Reflecting to Aceh government efforts

in reopening the existing traditional institutions through *Qanun* 5 2003 and *Qanun* 10 2008 that want to explain the identity of traditional institutions in Aceh, it has become meaningless when the form of the authority of traditional institutions are not integrated as a rule that. Therefore, it is just a cultural symbolism which can be seen from the existing *Qanun*, without being implemented well within the concept of empowering indigenous institutions. Routines that are not fully demonstrated the identity of a form of traditional institutions like the glory days of Aceh, as *teungku meunasah* who only serves as a priest in *meunasah* or a mosque without being involved in the decision making for village development. Institutionally, *meunasah* function has been reduced only as a venue for rituals, as well as celebrating Islamic holidays such as the Prophet's Birthday, while the role of customary increasingly weak. *Meunasah* is not developed fully like a mosque, but also is not completely dysfunctional as *balee*. This is a form of fundamental transformation in the village today. The *gampong* is slowly but surely has changed, thus indirectly affects the bonds of community solidarity of *gampong*. This is a fundamental form of social transformation that took place in the village. Similarly, the role and functions of *tuha lapan* is still not optimal in formulating or deciding a case when *gampong* elites are more dominant in policy formulation. It is caused when all of the functions and roles are till limited and just abstract narrative. They will not be able to touch the original form of the traditional institution itself.

In the past, it is often described how the position of *keuchik* for example, in the structure of village government has a role and broad functionality of the power given to him. *Keuchik* was highly respected and honored on the decisions making. Snouck Hurgronje (1985) describes that *keuchhi* the Headman or father of the village, lends his authority from *uleebalang* of the province. As the father of the village and government representatives, he will determine *keuchik gampong* administration. This reality is still a fundamental obstacle in the government

structure in *gampong* when the role and functions attached to it are not able to be translated into social reality context to be more real. Their position in a village over a portrait of a symbol of culture is still “maintained” rather than included it as a subject for *gampong* development.

The Act No. 22 1999 and Law No. 32 2004 as well as an explanation by the PP 72 2005 on the village, and later is described through *Qanun* 5 of 2003 on the *gampong* government, does not automatically provide room for the return of traditional values that had previously been paralyzed in the past. *Gampong* is bound by formal law of *Qanun* 5 2003 on the village administration and also *Qanun* 10 2008 concerning customs agency, remains tied by formal rules on through Act No. 32 of 2003 and PP No. 72 2005 on *gampong* that basically have a different philosophical framework in order to realize the autonomy of local institutions thoroughly. Observing the empirical fact, there will be an impact on narrowing space of traditional institutions. On one side, *gampong* is intended to become self governing community by giving back the space of traditional values in the institutional arrangement village, but on the other hand, the village cannot be separated with the concept of village institutions that is proposed by the bureaucratization of central government. Moreover, the spirit of reform has not been matched by reform of local human resources (HR) and the provision of infrastructure at the village level as a whole to be able to run the new values according to the rules and UUPA.

## CONCLUSION

*Gampong* is a unit of community and tradition of lowest power structure and has its own territory and has its own wealth or income source. *Gampong* government system consists of three elements; government, religion and representative elements. These three elements are often referred to *keuchik*, *teungku meunasah* and *tuha peut*. *Keuchik* serves in the field of public administration and the passage of the customary law (*adat*), *teungku meunasah* is responsible for the implementation of the religious life of

the community, while *tuha peut* serves as an advisory body and accompany to *keuchik* in determine decisions for *gampong*. In addition to these three elements, the implementation of village governance also involves elements of traditional institutions in direct contact with the system of people’s livelihoods.

Institutional empowerment of *gampong* which is outlined in the theoretical implications and practical *Qanun* on *gampong* administration and the program of “back to *gampong*” shows a quite weak implementation in order to realize the strengthening of traditional values in institutional governance village. *Gampong* institutional officials work based on economic principles for getting honorarium every month and not based on the values of communalism as the philosophy of the people of Aceh. The consequence is indirectly in maintaining a system bureaucratization which has been running for so long and also the position of the village in this condition could be in *Mukim* and subordinate districts. The village development programs will be bound on the power structure on it, so that the independence of *gampong* to be realized through formal legal *Qanun* and UUPA remains to be reconstructed.

Implementation of the *peumakmu gampong* program (back to *gampong*) turns out to have some lacking aspect in its implementation, such as the planning system and the management of grants that have not been conducted as target. It also has an issue on its accountability, transparency and ability of human resources in the financial governance of *gampong*. Undervaluation of the customs and overlapping authority of authority in the *gampong* governance structure emerge as a result of shifting meaning of the role and function of *gampong* governance. Sociologically, *gampong* program can strengthen institutional governance for village as a whole and also provide a latent function for the elite *gampong* because of its power and struggle for economic space.

Listening from the previous description, there are some urgent steps to be done in *gampong* institutional revitalization ef-

forts. First, the government must do the implementation and dissemination of *Qanun gampong* thoroughly and continuously concerning the clarity of authority, role, and functions of traditional institutions of *gampong* government. The regulation that has been included in the existing *Qanun* must be able to provide an integrated space for traditional values and religion in a climate of democratization and decentralization that is currently running. Second, the implementation of the program of “back to *gampong*” developed by local government should not be measured only in terms of economic growth rate of the micro and amount of money circulating in *gampong* community, but more importantly, local governments should undertake social engineering to build the network by strengthening the integrity of the existing traditional institutions from provincial level to *gampong* level. Third, government must encourage the involvement of local governments and other institutions culturally and politically to realize the development of *gampong*-based welfare improvement in the frame of culture identity of the people of Aceh.

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