

Full Length Research Paper

Revitalization of *Gampong* Institution in Aceh: Measuring the program of “*Back to Gampong*” in the middle of the changing society: A case in Aceh Besar regency

Mahmuddin Mahmuddin¹, Lala M. Kolopaking², Rilus A. Kinseng², Saharuddin²
and Sadu Wasistiono³

¹Post-Graduated IPB Bogor, Indonesia.

²Study Program of Rural Sociology IPB Bogor, Indonesia.

³IPDN Bandung, Indonesia.

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The passage of UU 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 research uses qualitative approach. Data collection is conducted using in-depth interview, observation and documentation study. Data reduction process, data presentation and conclusion are used to analyze data. 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 apparatus of the institution in planning system and financial management of the institution. 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 the indicators of weak role and function of *gampong* cultural institution because the previous inherent communal values have been calculated economically.

Key words: Revitalization, Gampong institution, Back to Gampong.

INTRODUCTION

During the economic recession in late 1997, the implementation of social, economic, cultural and political

lives has undergone perspective changing. One of the changes was when the existence of cultural institution

*Corresponding author. E-mail: Mahmuddin_spd@yahoo.co.id.

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received attention. Through the umbrella of law of UU No. 2, 1999 on regional government that replaced the previous act, UU No. 5, 1974, the implementation of government in local level based on customary values within the society has started to emerge. In addition, with the pass of UU No. 32, 2004 on regional government few years later has brought re-orientation (of value) that changed the process of developmental democracy in Indonesia, which previously was integrated into UU No. 22, 1999 (Nugroho, 2008; Satria, 2011).

The movement in governmental format from local self-government to self-governing community is the actualization of radical change in regional developmental politic.

This change has long been sought by all regions in Indonesia, including Aceh, which has been in conflict either during or after the independency era; for example, clergy's conflict and *uleebalang* that occurred in the beginning of Independence Day until the "Free Aceh Movement (GAM)" in 1976. The conflicts strengthened during the New Order era and toward the collapse of the era in 1998. Those conflicts are the social resistance from the main stream of state relation and local society (Liddle, 1973; Pye and Karl, 1978).

At the beginning of reformation era, the long period of conflict between GAM and RI reached common ground with a peaceful agreement through MoU Helsinki in 2005. The MoU is described in UUPA (Aceh Governmental Legislation) as the manifestation of recognition for Aceh as "special" territory (Djojosoekarto, 2009). In this case, Aceh has a right to conduct its own government based on its specialization. It is the result from the long conflict between RI and GAM. One concrete implementation of UUPA is the effort to bring back the lowest form of customary institution, *gampong*, which has undergone stagnancy and disintegration of local values during the New Order era. Aceh is not the only place that undergoes local institution collapse within the society, other local institutions such as *Nagari* in Padang should be integrated into state power through UU No. 5, 1979 on village government. The legislation was systematically delegitimized *gampong* structural by unifying them as the smallest government, which is a village. Local institution was removed and the only institution left was village as the extension of New Era government to comprehensively implement economic, social and political development in village society (Bebbington, 2006, 2001; Kolopaking, 2011).

Special autonomy policy and Acehese Governmental Legislation (UUPA) No. 11, 2006 gave space for social formation discourse of *gampong* society. The formation covers formality aspect of institutional existence and essential aspect of the life of *gampong* society. *Gampong* institution is very essential as the identity image of Acehese who upholds religion and culture because it is the cultural identity of Acehese that consists of society unit based on territorial law. Therefore, it is reasonable that there is difference in the understanding of village

conceptualized by the state and the essence of *gampong* interpreted by Acehese. Dharmawan (2006) describes the basic different between *gampong* and village in sociological way. The differences are on the aspects of: (1) history of socio-societal development, village growths based on "village" legitimation persuaded by technocrat authority (more) for the interest of development organizing; whereas, *gampong* is developed by cultural society and religion originated from the association of socio-religious for socio-societal organizing; (2) democratic life developed in the society, which planted from the "above of the village" and often does not fit to the spirit of most societies; whereas, the democratic developed by *gampong* is democracy-paternalistic with respect to indigenous elders and the existence is known within *tuha lapan* and *tuha peut*; and (3) integration or internalization of village concept throughout the village society, which is a *pseudo-internalization* because it does not fit into the local culture; *gampong* is part of indigenous institution developed a long time ago.

In line with the above opinion, Tripa (2003) reminds that *gampong* is different from village. There are substantial differences between *gampong* and village governments as well as the apparatus and institutions. *Gampong* should be viewed as the unity of legal society and culture in the lowest power structure and having its own power and wealth or income source. *Gampong* was led by *keuchik* and *teungku meunasah*. *Keuchik* serves in administration of government and the implementation of law (custom). *Teungku meunasah* has responsibility for the implementation of societal religious life, law (sharia), education (religion and moral), and for other sectors related to social life and community. Based on sociological context, bottom-up democratic system is applicable in *gampong* government system. Therefore, societal voice is accommodated, which is different from decentralized village government.

The extensive open of democratic space and regional autonomy marks the new era of political development in Aceh. The pass of UU No. 18, 2001 on Special Autonomy for Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) Province and followed by the issuance of *Qanun* No. 4, 2003 on *mukim* and *Qanun* No. 5, 2003 on *gampong* has revitalized *gampong* and *mukim*. The revitalization is also strengthened by Aceh Governmental Legislation (UUPA) No. 11, 2006. It opens the opportunity to bring back customary values and religion that has united within the society.

As a follow up for the new era of political development, some breakthroughs continue to be done. The breakthrough covers political aspect as well as economical development of society, which is the main priority to improve societal welfare that has collapsed for decades. One of the concrete forms developed by regional government is the development of "back to *gampong*" program. The program is an effort to strengthen *gampong* institution in various aspects of society. It is reasonable

since the long period of conflict in the society has affected the social structure of society, especially *gampong*. The program also describes in form of grant called *peumakmue gampong* financial aid (bantuan keuangan *peumakmue gampong*/BKPG) allocated from province. Each regencies or municipalities also give additional aid in form of *gampong* fund allocation (*alokasi dana gampong*/ADG) based on the financial ability of each regency or municipality.

The aim of the program is not only for the improvement of societal economy but also *gampong* institution as a whole. It means that improvement in the capacity and role of *gampong* institution apparatus as the motor for the re-emergence of *gampong* is important. The program is considered important due to the stagnancy of *gampong* institution during New Order and post-New Order eras related to the developmental model of local institution introduced by the state. Therefore, the program received positive response from various societal elements that hope to bring back the identity of *gampong* being neglected.

Nevertheless, it is not easy to bring back the existence of *mukim* and *gampong* to its former condition before the New Order era. The regulation has not given detail technical guidance on the implementation of government in *gampong* level. Another problem is the existence is limited to merely formality. It means that, some authorities are sometimes strongly influenced by sub-district authority. Thus, some studies show that the existence of *gampong* institution as a whole, especially for *gampong* government aspect, indicates the complexity among roles, authority distribution and power relation between *mukim* and *gampong* and sub-district, regency or province (Eko, 2007).

Empirical fact shows problems for *gampong* institution autonomy indicated by decrease in respect to custom, the fade of *gampong* customary institution, corruption of *gampong* fund and weak human resources in *gampong*. If the existing *gampong* and *mukim* institutions are unable to function effectively, the whole apparatus who administer the society life will also be alienated. The diminishing role and function of *keuchik* or the role and function of *teungku meunasah*, *keujreun blang*, *paglima laot*, *paglima uteun*, *pawang gle*, *peutua seunobok*, *haria peukan*, *tuha peut* dan juga *tuha lapan* that faded are the basic problems found in the institution. The existence of the umbrella of law *Qanun* No. 5, 2003 on *gampong*, No. 4, 2003 on *mukim*, Regional Government Legislation No. 32, 2004, the open space of special autonomy and salary incentives for *gampong* apparatus every month do not immediately re-elevate *gampong* institutional form and the optimum function of the customary apparatus within the institution for the societal social order. Therefore, it is reasonable that *keuchik*'s duties are (Sujito, 2007) limited as sub-district "administrator". Furthermore, *keuchik* leadership reflects single leadership instead of dual leadership. It means that duties and functions shift of *gampong* government is no longer

optimum as its own role and function. It is logical to state that *gampong* institution faces serious government effectiveness problem. Based on the realities, questions emerge; is there any relationship between legislation and *Qanun* and the ability of *gampong* to bridge *gampong* institution reinforcement or vice versa? This is the main focus of this paper.

RESEARCH METHOD

The study focuses on qualitative approach to deeply analyze the dynamic of revitalization of *gampong* institution in the middle of special autonomy implementation and the implementation of *Qanun gampong* in *gampong* institution governance. The research was centered in *Gampong Lamteuba*, Seulimeum Sub-district (agrarian areas) and *Gampong Mon Ikeun* (coastal areas), Lhoknga Sub-district, Aceh Besar Regency.

In addition, site selection is also done to facilitate the collection of data, where the existence of such institutions *keujreun blang* can be found in the *Gampong Lamteuba* (agrarian areas). *Panglima laot* institutions can be found in the *Gampong Mon Ikeun* (coastal areas). That is, institutional *keujreun blang* can be found in agricultural areas, as well as the *panglima laot* can only be found in coastal areas. Site selection is also based on the existence of *gampong* institutions and structures of society as a result of the excesses of conflict. So site selection will be important to describe social reality in the frame of *gampong* revitalization institutional autonomy.

The target of the research was actors who involved in *gampong* governmental structure as societal figures, MAA at sub-district, sub-district authority, regional government, and local societies. In-depth interview, observation and documentation study were used for data collection. Analysis was conducted through data reduction process, data presentation and conclusion (Miles and Huberman, 1992). Data validity examination was conducted in triangulation by clarifying or comparing data and information from different sources and data collection.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Gampong : A historical note

Gampong has two different meanings based on societal understanding. First, *gampong* during Acehese Sultanate era is perceived as territory to control the natural resources and people who live in it. The interpretation of *gampong* is based on the original place. It is indicated from the various *gampong* names based on the people who settled there. The various interpretations on *gampong* are mostly based on the territory and original homeland (original tribe) and original arrivals (original areas). In another perspective, it is always faced with the context of power (territory) and citizenship (civilian) (Gayatri, 2008).

Gampong in Acehese is a self-administer societal system and is a unit that organizes the society who domiciles in the village's administration environment or legal environment (Eko, 2007). *Gampong* is also social organization equipped with leadership structure and functional equipment appropriate to certain social,

economic and political contexts. *Gampong* reflects the identity of its inhabitant, in this case Acehnese; and it is autonomy and tends to cosmopolite due to its historical interaction with international capital power through Malacca strait in 15-16 centuries (Reid, 2005). The word *gampong* itself might have been taken from Malayan language meaning *kampung* (village) and *kampoeng* in *Jawi* language. Thus, in reading some historical written during the era of Sultan Fathahillah, in his letters with foreign delegations who visited Batavia, the word *kampoeng* is in capital. The spelling of "K" in Arabic-Jawi language as the official language of the sultanate will change into "G" in Acehnese language after a period is given above the "K" letter (Syarif, 2001).

Reading the history of Pasai kings in Bustanuslatin book by Syech Nuruddin Ar-Raniry, there are many stories on the governmental structure of Acehnese Sultanate around 13 to 17 M century that mentioned the word *gampong* as a government led by *petua*, who is a societal figure trusted by *Uleebalang* and nominated by the Sultan. *Gampong* during Acehnese Sultanate era is important to support Sultan's or *uleebalang* authorities. At that time *gampong* was a base for agricultural commodities.

During Sultan Iskandar Muda era (1607-1636), a dramatic change happened, in which *gampong* governance was more dynamic and democratic. The concept was maintained where *gampong* was known as the smallest governmental territory after *mukim* known as *sagoe cut* (little *sagi*), similar to sub-district. *Gampong* during the era of Sultan Iskandar Muda and the next sultan was interpreted as the representation of society that fully involved in the management process of *gampong* government. A *keuchik*, for example, as the head of *gampong*, will be assisted with *tuha peuet* and *imum meunasah* related to customary and religious matters. Whereas, *keujreun blang* will assist *keuchik* for agricultural sector, *peuteu uteun* for forestry sector, *panglima laot* for marine sector and *peutua seuneubok* for plantation sector. All *gampong* apparatus is still maintained up until now as a form of the integration of religious and customary values in the governance of *gampong* government (Alfian, 1988; Umar, 2006:1-8).

As an institution, *gampong* is a unit of individuals or groups settlements based on territory. In legal perspective, *gampong* is a unit of customary law society territorial in nature. It means that *gampong* is a society unit bound with mutually-agreed customary law. From physical aspect, *gampong* is a settlement pattern that consists of houses (*rumoh*), rice fields (*blang*), plantation (*lampoh* or *seunobok*), open field (*padang*) and forest (*gle*) (Nyak Pha, 2000; Gayatri, 2008). *Gampong* is also social organization equipped with leadership structure and functional equipment appropriate to social, economic and political contexts. As an institution, *gampong* is called territorial unit that describes the settlement pattern as well as a social organization consisting of individual or

groups with social grouping based on its existing and developed roles and functions in accordance with space and time.

In historical context, *gampong* institution has undergone social collapse not only in the era of independency and revolution but also in the era of New Order (Table 1). In the era of independency and revolution, social and institutional structure of *gampong* has changed. *Gampong* institution was weakened in terms of its roles and functions, especially during social revolution in 1960s which caused low political participation among the societies to occupy political positions in *gampong* government. *Gampong* in the era of Old Order cannot be separated from the political power system built by central government. Referring to Maliki (1999), a state approaching its people is not limited to *negaranisasi* (turning the local society level like a state level) but also the power of political ideology based on bureaucratization indicates the collapse of cultural identity of religious and customary values-based society. DI/TII incident in Aceh in 1953 was driven by clergies who joined PUSA due to logical form of their disappointment when Aceh Province was integrated into North Sumatera Province and the removal of autonomy status for Aceh to implement shariah.

During the New Order era (1965-1998), the lowest social structure of a society, such as *gampong* or *mukim* was made as a customary symbol because the substantive institution administered the government, social life and economic was in the hand of villages and sub-districts government. Military bureaucracy was adhered to in the village government, in form of *Muspika* or *Babinsa* that directly occupied the important positions in societal development (Crouch, 1978). If the social systems were based on societal social system, *keuchik* or *imum meunasah* would have important role in government administration and religious life aspect. Strong penetration of New Order authority, however, has made customary institutions merely a formality and become tools to facilitate control access of the New Order government in development (Harley, 2008). Social institutions were paralyzed, *keuchik* only administered *gampong* government and could not further involve in protecting the society based on customary and religious values.

Entering the reformation era echoing democratization and decentralization, state through the umbrella of law of legislation No. 22, 1999 on regional government, accommodated traditional institutions side by side with village government as part of political development and realized democracy through the lowest level. Normatively, UU No. 22, 1999 put the village not as the lowest governmental form under the sub-district but as a unit of legal society having right to administer and manage local societal interests in accordance with the village origin rights (Eko, 2005). Nevertheless, many parties considered the legislations were not effective if the state power was strong at the village level.

Table 1. Position and role of *Gampong* institution.

Period	Policy on <i>Gampong</i>	Position and Role of <i>Gampong</i>	Description
Sultanate Era	Cooptized in monarchy structure	Under the authority of <i>uleebalang</i> in monarchy structure	<i>Gampong</i> is part of the lowest territory level in Aceh Sultanate. It functions as institution that assists <i>uleebalang</i>
Dutch Colonization	The transplantation of <i>gampong</i> institution into colonial authority	Utilizing <i>uleebalang</i> authority to control <i>gampong</i> . Dutch politic has triggered conflict between <i>uleebalang</i> and <i>gampong</i> societies	Dutch policies with modern infrastructure development model and cultivation created social change at <i>gampong</i> level
Japanese colonization	Became a basis for Japanese power with its <i>romusha</i> practice	Balance politic between <i>uleebalang</i> and clergies in controlling <i>gampong</i>	Utilizing clergies to mobilize <i>gampong</i> societies in infrastructure development
Post-Independence	<i>Gampong's</i> role and function is weaken	Some government polices has weaken <i>gampong</i> position	<i>Gampong</i> functions and roles are faded. The introduction of modern bureaucracy system
New Order	The lowest unit under the sub-district	Structural de-legitimation uniforms the governmental unit as a village and the position is under sub-district	Local institution is paralyzed by village government model; <i>Gampong's</i> roles and functions are replaced by village government system
Post New Order	Revitalization of <i>gampong</i> institutions	<i>Gampong</i> position is under the settlement.	Returning existing local institutions previously paralyzed during the New Order era. The involvement of sub-district is still dominant. <i>Gampong</i> revitalization is not working as expected by society

The issuance of UU No. 44, 1999 on the privilege of Aceh Province, in which one of the statements is returning the privilege of *gampong* and – although the implementation of the privileges was not maximum – followed with the issuance of several *Qanun* 5, 2003 on *gampong* government is the starting point of local democratic movement, which was under the absolute authority of state. Acehese privilege continues to change along with the sign of peaceful agreement between RI and GAM through MoU in Helsinki on August 15, 2005. This privilege is re-improved by including not only customary and cultural aspects but also political aspect by giving an opportunity to form local political parties. This improvement directly affects at *gampong* level in the capacity of *gampong* institution and social structure of *gampong* society as a whole.

The present separatist movement led by the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) or Free Aceh Movement is the contemporary extension of older struggles against the Javabased colonial government even before Indonesia formally gained its independence in 1949. During this history, of which only a brief overview is provided because the references provide further details, the sepa-

ratist became religious, social and economic in nature as well as territorial (Mardhatillah, 2004; Robinson, 1998; Aspinall and Berger, 2001; Reid, 2004, 2005, 2006).

UUPA No. 11, 2006 states that *gampong* or another name is a unit of legal society under *mukim* and led by *keuchik* or another name having right to perform its own household. *Gampong* autonomy is extended in the implementation of development with the existence of UUPA manifested in legislation number 11, 2006. Quoting Eko (Gayatri, 2008), normatively, it describes the autonomy as well as ambiguity. First, *gampong* is situated in autonomy position but is obligated to implement principle of single assistantship. Second, authorization system from regency to *gampong* is subsidiary. Third, *gampong* institution is a blend of self-governing community in customary institutional system and local-state government through assistantship duties.

Governmental institution of *gampong* consists of *keuchik*, *imam meunasah* and *tuha peut*, with activities centered in *meunasah*. *Gampong* government has collective leadership. It means that all affairs related to *gampong* interest will be brought to *meunasah* to be determined in convention and consensus. Authority

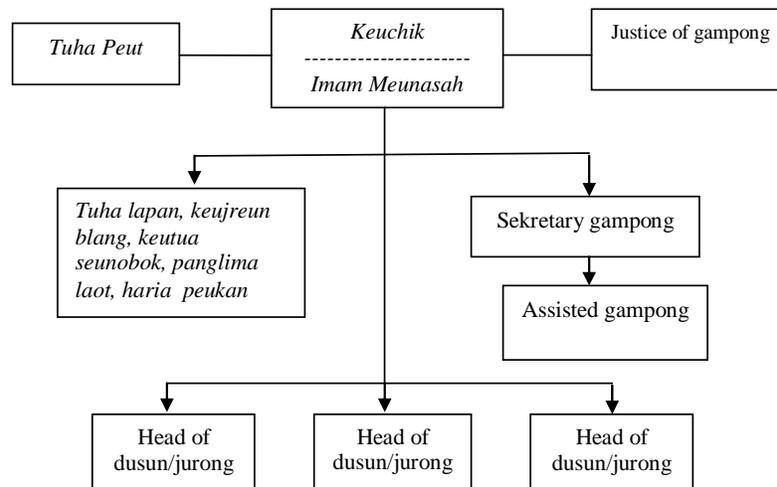


Figure 1. Structure of institution *gampong*.

concept in Acehnese does not separate custom and religion. The concept is further described in governmental structure of *gampong* that consists of *keuchik*, *imum meunasah* and *ureng tuha*. The authority structure built in *gampong* institution is bound to each other and each has own duties and functions. A *gampong* can be viewed as part of state governmental structure, which involves bureaucracy of government and *keuchik* as the representative of government in its *gampong*. As the representative of government, a *keuchik* performs its functions and obligations authorized by the state in accordance with the prevailing legislation (Abdullah, 1988; Gayatri, 2008).

In addition to *keuchik*, there is also *imum meunasah* called *ma gampong* (mother). Its role is performing all religious activities. *Tuha peuat* or *ureung tuha* (the elder) is the central figure in decision making and as an adviser for *keuchik* in running *gampong* government. In performing its duties, *keuchik* and *imeum meunasah* (executive elements) work with *ureung tuha* (legislative element). Both elements are equal and their works are clearly differentiated. It is different from the village system where the executive head, ex-officio, is also legislative head (Nyak Pha, 2000; Dharmawan, 2006; Eko, 2007). *Gampong* secretary helps *keuchik* in performing its duties related to *gampong* administration. In *gampong* institutional structure there are also *tuha lapan* (societal figure element), *keujreun blang* (administer and responsible for the management of rice fields areas), *panglima laot* (responsible in the management of marine resources), *harian peukan* (responsible in the management of traditional market, which is conducted weekly), *peutua seuneubok* (responsible in the management of plantation sector), and *syahbandar* (administer and responsible in the in and out of ships at the port or sea transportation problem). All of them are important in the societal social life order.

All relationship within the structure is often likened as Aceh's aphorism "*hukom ngon adat lagee zat ngon sifeut, adat angon hukom hana tom cre*", which means that law and custom is like a substance with its nature, custom and law is never separated. In practice, nevertheless, not all customary institutions exist in Acehnese with the introduction of official institutions that provide modern services to the society (Figure 1).

Back to *Gampong* program: Expectations and realities

Sociologically, social change developed from development mechanism process, which is the national ideology as an effort to improve societal welfare, has created huge friction on local values that existed and developed within the society. This dilemma is obvious when a state tries to maintain local cultural identity within the society; however, on the other side, modernization aspects of economy, politics and culture in form of various products in the name of development and prosperity are another indicator for the diminishing of local wisdom previously existing in the society. It is logical to state that state still dominates in some policies even in the product of decentralization policies. Regional autonomy implementation goes as far as to the authority delegation and does not reach society involvement in the development (Aspinall and Fealy, 2003; Antlo, 2003).

The expected decentralization and autonomy on *gampong* is not maximal and tends to weak due to the *gampong* apparatus that performs their administrative duties based on monthly salary from the sub-district government. This consequence directly maintains the long existing bureaucratization system and makes *gampong* position under the *mukim* and subdistrict. It means that *gampong's* development program will be

attached to authority power above it; therefore, the expected autonomy manifested through legal formal of *Qanun* and UUPA needs to be re-constructed.

Compared to the previous legislation (UU), the issuance of *Qanun* is a big jump. *Gampong's* identity is recognized as part of Acehnese societal culture and its position is under the *mukim* and has clear authority and customary institution roles. The customary institutions are further strengthened with the issuance of *Qanun* No. 10, 2008 on customary institutions. The *Qanun* mostly contains the functions and roles of apparatus of customary institutions within Acehnese.

The legislation covers the duty of *keuchik* before the role of Aceh Customary Committee (*Majelis Adat Aceh/MAA*) that helps *Wali Nanggro*e in developing and coordinating the existing customary institutions. In practice, however, it has not able to encourage functions and roles of *gampong* institutions and *mukim* to create their identity as mentioned in both *Qanun*.

Authority relationship among customary apparatus in *gampong* institution is the important point for observing the dynamic of *gampong* institutions universally under the umbrella of *Qanun gampong*. It means that, it is reasonable that some literatures critically see another side of *Qanun gampong* either in the context of *gampong* institution reinforcement or in the distribution of authority with the availability of resources through back to *gampong* program. This consequence gives understanding that back to *gampong* program as expected in *Qanun* No. 5, 2005 does not immediately bring its position to the essentiality of previous *gampong* model as expected by the society. It sets aside various problems related to authorities, rights, and obligation aspects or relationship among actors in *gampong* governmental structure.

Reinforcement of *gampong* government through *Qanun* is an effort of the revitalization process of *gampong* as developmental base. The reinforcement covers institutional aspect as well as economical, political and cultural fields. *Qanun gampong* consisting of 72 articles describing the authority, position, relationship order among institutions, the functions and roles of apparatus, and financial management is called the locomotion to the improvement of a *gampong*. It means that if *gampong* institution and society is able to interpret the *Qanun* optimally it is likely that *gempong* autonomy will be achieved. In addition, *Qanun* is expected to be able to increase the electability of customary institutions that previously set aside state polices on local societal government. However, if *Qanun* is made as a mean for authority shift to control *gampong* resources, it is likely to create conflict within the society.

Since the implementation of back to *gampong* program by regional government in early 2009, various development programs have been directed to the effort on improving the prosperity and empowerment of *gampong* society. Various programs conducted not only

cover economic aspect but also strengthen *gampong* institutions in various societal aspects. Through governmental and other institutions' efforts, it is expected to bring back *gampong* from its collapse. The working programs from regional government and all societal elements include not only the re-arrangement of *gampong* governmental system but also encourage the reinforcement of economy, politics and culture within the society.

Through those programs, *gampong* is technically directed to prepare and formulate program plan for *gampong* development to maximize the aid for the intended targets. There are at least four actors with direct competence in *gampong* development process: Acehnese government, regencies or municipalities government, *gampong* government and society (including NGO). Provincial government and regency or municipality government is the first sector. They are the center of authority, policies and financial resources that provide strategic direction for *gampong* development. *Gampong* government is the second sector as the actor in *gampong* management along with societal elements. Society is the third sector that serves as the source of knowledge and resources for the driver of *gampong* development. These three elements have important role and mutually integrated in the format of *gampong* development. Likewise, when these elements are disintegrated, *gampong* autonomy will be a dream.

Working programs planning and formulation for *gampong* development as a whole should be implemented in maximum and for the intended targets due to the huge amount of aid given by the government every year. This requires all parties to be ready including apparatus of *gampong* institutional in the process of financial governance and program planning in accordance with the need of *gampong* society itself. Some local or foreign institutions involve by giving training to and helping *gampong* apparatus in working program formulation and planning. This is its own history in the governance process of *gampong* institution after conflict and peace in Aceh (Robinson, 1998; Jemadu, 2004). It is understandable because *gampong* societies are not familiar with the development concept involving huge financial aid. Therefore, to avoid misappropriation and misuse of the funds, government and non-governmental organizations should provide integrated assistance to achieve *gampong* autonomy. As mentioned on printed media, in 2010, Acehnese government gave *pemakmue gampong* financial aid of Rp. 318.950 billion to 6.379 *gampong*. Each *gampong* received Rp. 50 million. In addition, PNPM Mandiri grant also distributed for 244 sub-districts in 18 regencies of Rp. 318.6 billion and operational fund of Rp. 90.432 billion (Harian Serambi Indonesia, July 12, 2011).

Even with the huge amount of fund allocated in the process of program acceleration, there are many obstacles in the practice. The readiness of resources in

Table 2. Critical issues institutional strengthening program of “*Back to Gampong*”.

Regional aspects of development	District	
	Lamteuba	Mon Ikuen
Socialization <i>Qanun</i>	<i>Qanun</i> participates in NGO's involvement on the side, but the involvement of local governments still lacks	
Facilities and Infrastructure	Dissemination of <i>Qanun</i> is not optimum The low understanding of <i>Qanun gampong</i> and preparation of draft <i>Qanun gampong</i> Still focused on physical development and non-development is still lacking physically	administration is feasible, but the public service is still less than the maximum
Giving Welfare	Improvement Honor is often too late and not on time, and are often given two / three months later Honorarium is not uniform	honorarium
Implementation and traditions	Customs Conflict social Implementation of customs of low understanding of indigenous <i>Keujreunblang</i> Implementation of custom-based farming systems start to fade The lack of involvement of the district / city in the administration of customs Some disputes / cases have settled procedural law rather than common law (though still able to customary law)	<i>Panglima Laot</i> involvement in resolution conflict of low Lack of coordination between institutions in the operation of indigenous customary fishing
Coordination institutions	between Institutional Coordination between traditional institutions in governance is not optimum Opened the space for the emergence of <i>gampong</i> elite, which has big influence on financial governance of <i>gampong</i>	

fund management and planning, delays on grant distribution from regency or municipality government and potential conflict among *gampong* society due to different interest toward the grants are among the obstacles. The huge amount of fund received - if there is no delay on the distribution of grants – by every *gampong* every year is something new for *gampong* government in terms of financial governance and planning as the mechanism of grants disbursement. Related to the management system, human resources factor and integration of all elements within *gampong* institution are requirements for the success of *peumakmue gampong* program as a whole (Table 2).

Based on Governor Regulation No. 25, 2009 on the guidance in managing *peumakmu gampong* financial aid or ADG grant, the grant is used for government's operation and *gampong* development. Priority scale on poor household economy and continuous acceleration of *gampong's* facilities and infrastructures are programs

triggered by *gampong* and regency or municipality governments as the follow up for the high number of poverty, unemployment, job opportunity and effort to re-arrange *gampong* institution as buffer for the success of *gampong* autonomy after conflict and peace in Aceh. In order to realize those programs, central and regional governments run various assistance programs directed to the empowerment and development of *gampong* society. Among the programs are PNPM Mandiri for urban and rural areas and BKPG or ADG, which are direct assistance model received by society to improve poor household economy, health care, education, religion and socio-cultural. In addition, the programs also directed to the development of *gampong* infrastructure will be able to bridge the integration of *gampong* development as a whole.

In practice, problems remain the target attainment of *gampong* development through the allocation of the grants. The problems can be related to the planning and

management systems of the grants that have not been on target, accountability, transparency and the ability of human resources in financial governance. These factors are mostly criticized by NGO or society regarding the weak monitoring system on the development policy of *peumakmu gampong* program. The reality shows that to date, grant for *gampong* development such as PNPM Mandiri for rural areas and BKPG or ADG tends to be used for the development of physical facilities and infrastructures instead of non-physical infrastructure. Some projects on physical facilities have been abandoned and cannot be fully utilized by *gampong* society.

Weak participation from *gampong* society on information access of *peumakmue gampong* program, direct assistance mechanism such as “distributing money” create dependency based on the effort to accelerate improvement on poor family economy, and focus on the development of infrastructure projects which are basic problems found in the field in the implementation of *peumakmue gampong* program. What has developed in the society is inversely proportional to societal expectation on the development program of *gampong*. What mostly occur are the misappropriation case on *gampong* budget or ineffective funds absorption. Huge amount of grants disbursed every year has not able to realize autonomy and reduce poverty in *gampong* and household economy of *gampong* society is in poor condition (Mei, 2012; Serambi Indonesia, 2012).

In reality, reinforcing *gampong* institutional structure as a whole in the middle of changing society is not as easy as estimated. Empirical facts show despite the identity of *gampong* institution is returned to its philosophic root of *Qanun* and UUPA the weak *gampong* governmental institutions, structural or cultural still can be found in the implementation of *gampong* development. Those basic problems can be related to two factors, internal and external factors. The internal actor includes the weakness of human resources; whereas the external factor is related to inadequate supporting facilities and infrastructure. Therefore, sometimes the structure of *gampong* institution is only in the memories of a *keuchik* or the institution has no clear structure despite the apparatus (actors) receives incentive or salary every month.

The linkage between functions and responsibility attached to *gampong* governmental apparatus as mentioned in *Qanun* No. 5, 2003 and reinforced with *Qanun* No. 10, 2008 on customary institutions is a form of social order that has long been rooted and closely related to the fulfillment of *gampong* societal subsistence that related to cultural, economic and political aspects. Efforts taken by regency or municipality government to revive and re-function the customary institution of *gampong* government developed through back to *gampong* program at present is not simple as imagined. Top down system of the relationship between state and local community is a pillar for *gampong* development (Painter and Goodwin, 1995; Grootaert, 1999).

Therefore, it will need a long period to change the development paradigm into bottom-up system originated from lower society voice. In addition, the accumulation of prolonged conflict has caused *gampong* government loses trust and disintegration of the existing values as essential part of a *gampong*. Modernity on *gampong* development conducted through the existing program has placed *gampong* as regional development agent in one side, and in the other side reducing *gampong* development model vis a vis top down and bottom up. It means that, *gampong*'s authority and rights are not accommodated thoroughly in *Qanun gampong*. What exist is a historical romantic without holistic interpretation on the meaning of authority, clear power relations or authority of governance system of *gampong* government itself.

Basically, the existence of customary institutions in every social system is very significant to preserve the custom itself. This institution is important as an effort to save hereditary customs. The sustainability of a custom can be predicted through the existence of the institutions. In other words, the existing traditional values become important instruments to observe the sustainability and influence societal attitude and behavior. Previous study shows 90.47 percent of society wanted to re-function the customary institutions in *gampong*. The disappearance of many customs in the society is closely related to the uncertainty of the existence and role of customary institutions within the society. Real data show that almost 93.58 percent of customary institutions have been realized in every areas; the empowerment, however, is less.

The mechanism of back to *gampong* program mostly rests on physical development aspect, which indirectly gives more space to the occurrence of coordination gap developed in planning system and development of *gampong*. The tug on *gampong* planning process involving apparatus *gampong* government has opened the space for the emergence of *gampong* elite, which has big influence on financial governance of *gampong*. Inconsistency in grants allocation to improve the well-being of *gampong* apparatus is one of the factors for the weak role of customary institutions. Therefore, it is understandable if well-being problem is indicator of *gampong* development process. On the other hand, less coordination between regional government of regency or municipality and *gampong* government apparatus regarding the amount of honorarium received by each apparatus is the actual problem developed in the society. This means that the existing position has been calculated economically.

With bureaucratization system that opens up to *gampong* level, *gampong* apparatus should be able to solve any problems related to administrative, planning and financial management, and policies formulation for future *gampong* development. It will be the basic problems in *gampong* governmental structure when development projection is not properly managed with the

weakness of human resources and the existing local potential. The weakening of local customary institutional values is something inevitable in the present format of *gampong* development. Despite various programs directed to bring back the customary identity of *gampong* society with *Qanun* and other supporting regulations, this basic problems continue to emerge in various opinion provided by society or traditional figures in *gampong*. It is especially when *Qanun gampong* is not entirely able to bring back the customary identity of Acehnese and minimum development programs conducted by regional government to reinforce customary institutions (Schulze, 2005).

Looking back at the efforts of Aceh Government to re-function the customary institutions through *Qanun* No. 5, 2003 and *Qanun* No. 10, 2008 that explain the identity of customary institutions in Aceh, it seem meaningless when the authority form and power of customary institutions are linear in nature and have not integrated as rules that clearly describe the existing institutions. Therefore, cultural symbolism is obvious in the existing *Qanun* without good manifestation in the concept of customary institutions empowerment. Routine activities have not shown the identity of customary institutions as in the glory era of Aceh. For example, *teungku meunasah* only serves as imam in *meunasah* or mosque with no further involvement in decision making of *gampong* development. Moreover, *tuha lapan* has not able to serve optimally in formulating or making decision on a case when *gampong* elite involvement is dominant in the formulation of policies. It happens when all functions and roles are limited to historical narrative and abstract. It has not touched the real form of the institution itself.

In ancient times, *keuchik* position, for example, in *gampong* government had board roles and functions on its authority. *Keuchik* was highly respected and the decision made was also respected. Hurgronje (1985) describes, 'The *keuchik*, the headman or father of the *gampong* borrows his authority from the *ulee balang* of the province to which his village belongs'. As the father of *gampong* and representative of the government, *keuchik* determined the operation of *gampong* government. This reality is still the basic obstacle in *gampong* governmental structure when the attached roles and functions are unable to be interpreted in the context of social reality. It means that their position in a *gampong* describes cultural symbol retained instead of involving them as subject of *gampong* development.

Even though various programs have been directed to bring back the customary identity of *gampong* society with the existence of *Qanun* and other supporting regulations, this basic problems continue to emerge in various opinion provided by society or traditional figures in *gampong*. It is especially when *Qanun gampong* is not entirely able to bring back the customary identity of Acehnese and minimum development programs conducted by regional government to reinforce customary institutions. Looking back at the form of *gampong* societal

life, homogenous bound of societal life was formed in a territory, with its sovereignty and control on natural resources together; if it has its own government with all the legal order, which is based on customary institutions and all its apparatus and legal material; *gampong* will be the important part of the social system of Acehnese.

Conclusion

Gampong is a unit of legal society and custom in the lowest authority structure having its own authority and wealth or income sources. *Gampong* governmental structure consists of three elements: government, religion and representative. Those three elements are known as *keuchik*, *teungku meunasah* and *tuha peut*. *Keuchik* that serve in the administrative sector of the government and in the implementation of customary law. *Teungku meunasah* is responsible for the implementation of religious life of the society. Whereas, *tuha peut* is an advisory body and assists *keuchik* in decision-making. In addition to those three elements, the governance of *gampong* government also involves customary institutions element directly in touch with livelihood system of the residents.

Implementation of the program *peumakmu gampong* (back to the *gampong*) turns out in practice to still have many problems. The low custom awards, overlapping authority structures of power and authority in the *gampong* government are mechanized as a result of the shift in the meaning of the role and function of the overall *gampong* governance. Sociologically, strengthening program for the *gampong* in addition to functioning institutional system as a whole village has a positive function (latent function) for the elite *gampong* as they relate to the power struggle and economy of space.

Back to *gampong* program launched by regional government in early 2009 has impacted the reinforcement process of *gampong* institution. On the other side, it opens the space for the weakening of the reinforcement of *gampong* institution itself. Less appreciation of custom and overlapping power and authority in the structure of *gampong* government are the mechanization resulting from the shift of role and function in the governance of *gampong* government. Less socialization on *Qanun gampong* in the mechanism of *gampong* government as mentioned in *Qanun* no. 5, 2003 has impacted the governance process that is still trapped in administrative routine, which in turn will undermine the identity of customary values to realize back to *gampong* program.

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