

## ***The Community is Participating in The Independent Neighborhood Program for Economic Improvement in Banjarbaru City***

Anjani <sup>1\*</sup>, Dewi Purboningsih <sup>2</sup>, Adellya Novelyn Tjhia <sup>3</sup>, Lilis Herawati <sup>4</sup>, Nas Qosid <sup>5</sup>

E-mail: [anjani@ulm.ac.id](mailto:anjani@ulm.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [dewi.purbongsih@ulm.ac.id](mailto:dewi.purbongsih@ulm.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [adellyanovelyn21@gmail.com](mailto:adellyanovelyn21@gmail.com)<sup>3</sup>,  
[lilisherawatiiii@gmail.com](mailto:lilisherawatiiii@gmail.com)<sup>4</sup>, [nasqosid21@gmail.com](mailto:nasqosid21@gmail.com)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>Faculty of Social Science and Political Science, Lambung Mangkurat University

\*corresponding author

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### ***Abstract***

*Improving the community's economy is an achievement and one of the government's successful efforts in implementing development. Neighborhood associations have a role in enhancing the community's economy, so the role of Neighborhood Associations is vital in regional development. Communities are empowered because community members work together to improve development through their participation. Therefore, the Banjarbaru City Government, through the independent neighborhood program, provides space for the community to participate in economic empowerment. The policy is contained in the Banjarbaru City Regional Government's Medium-Term Development Plan 2021-2026. One of the objectives of the Independent Neighborhood Program is to build micro, small, and medium enterprises at the neighborhood level to grow Banjarbaru's micro, small, and medium enterprises. Funding assistance in the Independent Neighborhood program amounted to seventy-five million rupiah (Rp. 75,000,000) for each neighborhood association. This policy has been running since 2022 by providing business capital funding assistance to citizens of Banjarbaru City with a selection system for each sub-district to get a quota of three POKMAS (community groups). The research conducted used a qualitative approach. The research location was in Banjarbaru City. The data was collected through structured interviews, observations, and document studies published by the Banjarbaru City government. The conclusion is that the independent neighborhood program is one of the efforts of the Banjarbaru city government to mobilize and empower the community's economy through development activities. The program's goal is to improve the welfare of community groups and make the community more independent in their economy and able to contribute to development activities in their area. Community participation in this program is essential; most community groups are still at the implementation stage and can not be used for development activities. The program's success is that all stakeholders actively participate in the independent neighborhood program.*

**Keywords:** *Economic Improvement, Independent Neighborhood, Community Participation*

### **1. Introduction**

Enhancing the community's economy is a desirable outcome and a vital indicator of the government's successful implementation of development initiatives. The initiation of development should commence with the administration of the neighborhood organization. The citation for this information is from the study conducted by (Willius et al., 2022). Neighborhood organizations are established through local community discussions and



decision-making processes (Zaina & Wicaksono, 2018). As under Permendagri No. 5/2007, the Neighborhood Association is an establishment formed from the outcomes of local community discussions (Sugiyanto, 2007). The primary role of the neighborhood association is to facilitate communication and collaboration among residents, serving as a conduit for expressing the desires and concerns of the local community to the government and facilitating the resolution of community issues through mediation. The Neighborhood Association is responsible for aiding the government in executing service obligations for the neighborhood, upholding the cohesion of communal life, strategizing and executing development initiatives by cultivating ambitions, and facilitating community self-sufficiency (Zuhdi et al., 2019).

Local governments should adopt a distinct strategy for involving citizens and civil society, which differs from the methods employed in academia, industry, and the public sector (Roman et al., 2020). This inclusive approach is crucial for ensuring system stability, even in a problem in only one system (Kozak, 2021). Communities can be empowered via the collaborative efforts of their members, who contribute to enhancing growth through active engagement. To implement Rukun Warga-Based Community Empowerment, it is essential to establish collaboration between the government and the grassroots community apparatus, specifically the Rukun Warga (RW) leaders (Fitri et al., 2019). As per (Kania et al., 2019), *the primary concern in present-day development is the sluggish implementation progress. This occurrence arises due to a significant bureaucratic inefficiency and the overlapping implementation of development plans.* Furthermore, it is evident that the government's growth plan, which has been organized and implemented, needs to be more suitable for societal requirements. The phrase implies that the current crucial concern in development is the sluggish execution caused by ineffective bureaucracy and redundant programs, resulting in the development plan needing to align with the community's requirements. (Sudnickas et al., 2023) (Sudnickas et al., 2023) found that strategic planning in a public sector organization enhances efficiency and the broader social environment. This phrase implies that the strategic planning of a public sector organization not only aims to enhance efficiency but also has consequences for both the organization itself and the broader social context. Hence, it is imperative to engage the community and participate actively in executing the development program. According to (Michels & de Graaf, 2010), networks of civic involvement also enhance citizens' competence. Civic engagement networks enhance citizens' competence. The presence of this network of community engagement strengthens the community's competence and further augments the success of the development program.

Active participation from community members can effectively enhance the community's economic conditions. Community participation refers to the active involvement of community members in recognizing and addressing issues and opportunities within their community. This includes selecting and making judgments on viable solutions to overcome difficulties and evaluating the effectiveness of these solutions (Yazid & Alhidayatillah, 2017). The Neighborhood Association is a subsidiary institution of



the sub-district. Enhancing the economy necessitates collaboration from the community in order to establish a self-reliant and robust community. Furthermore, RT plays a crucial role in enhancing the local economy, thereby emphasizing the significance of neighborhood associations in regional development (Fitri et al., 2019).

Thus, the Banjarbaru City Government facilitates the community's involvement in economic empowerment by offering opportunities through the independent neighborhood initiative. The policy is outlined in the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) of Banjarbaru City from 2021 to 2026. The Independent Neighborhood Program is a type of community empowerment initiative in Banjarbaru City that has operated since 2022 (Buklis, 2021). The primary goal of the Rukun Tetangga Mandiri initiative is to establish micro, small, and medium companies (UMKM) at the neighborhood level in Banjarbaru City, with the intention of fostering their growth. This program aims to enhance the economic self-reliance of individuals at the Neighborhood Association level. The government provides monetary assistance of IDR 75,000,000 for every neighborhood in the independent neighborhood program (Banjarmasin, 2021). The program uses a selection process where one sub-district is allocated three (3) POKMAS (community groups). The table below displays the count of Pokmas in 2022 that were granted financial support for the independent neighborhood program.

**Table 1**  
**List of community groups (POKMAS) in 2022 Provided with Funding Assistance for the Independent Neighborhood Program**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Village Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1	kelurahan Syamsuddin Noor	3 Pokmas
2	kelurahan Mantung Manggis	3 Pokmas
3	kelurahan Mantung Payung	3 Pokmas
4	kelurahan Suktabat Utara	3 Pokmas
5	kelurahan Mentaos	3 Pokmas
6	kelurahan Komet	3 Pokmas
7	kelurahan Sungai Ulin	3 Pokmas
8	kelurahan Sandasan Ulin Tengah	3 Pokmas
9	kelurahan Sandasan Ulin Barat	3 Pokmas
10	kelurahan Sandasan Ulin Utara	3 Pokmas
11	kelurahan Sandasan Ulin Tengah	3 Pokmas
12	kelurahan Sandasan Ulin Selatan	3 Pokmas
13	kelurahan Mantung Paikat	3 Pokmas
14	kelurahan Kemuning	3 Pokmas
15	kelurahan Sungai Besar	3 Pokmas
16	kelurahan Suktabat Selatan	3 Pokmas
17	kelurahan Kempaka	3 Pokmas



18	tingai Tiung	3 Pokmas
19	alam	3 Pokmas
20	angkal	3 Pokmas
<b>Total Number</b>		60 Pokmas

**Source : Bappeda Banjarbaru City, 2023**

According to research conducted by Purboningsih & Anjani (2023), 56 of the 60 POKMAS that received assistance from the Banjarbaru City Government are still active, while 4 are no longer continuing. This study examines how the participation of the Banjarbaru community in an independent neighborhood program contributes to the economic improvement of Banjarbaru City, specifically about the objectives set for the program in 2022.

## 2. Methodology

The research was carried out utilizing a qualitative approach. The research methodology employed is a case study, which involves a comprehensive description of the prevailing situations, identification of underlying causes, and the formulation of recommendations for resolving the issues associated with the independent neighborhood program. The data for the research was gathered in Banjarbaru City using a combination of observations, interviews, and document analysis of publications by the Banjarbaru City government. The identification of informants is conducted by purposeful procedures, which include: a) the Banjarbaru City Regional Development Planning, Research and Development Agency; b) relevant regional work units in Banjarbaru City; c) sub-district heads in Banjarbaru City; and d) sub-district heads in Banjarbaru City.

## 2. Results and Discussion

Participation refers to the active engagement and involvement of the community in the process of developing plans. The text refers to Regulation No. 5 of 2007 issued by the Minister of Home Affairs, which provides guidelines for organizing community institutions. The involvement of the Banjarbaru community in the independent neighborhood initiative could enhance the community's economic conditions. The policy on the independent neighborhood program is outlined in the Mayor's Regulation of Banjarbaru City. Based on Banjarbaru Mayor Regulation No. 77 of 2021 on the Guidelines for Implementing the Independent Neighborhood Program, The program aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. We foster community development, enhance economic growth, empower individuals, and promote social cohesion.
2. Galvanize and inspire the community to actively engage in local development endeavors.
3. Enhance the engagement of community organizations in the local area.
4. We are enhancing the well-being of community organizations.



5. To make a financial contribution to the local community in the neighborhood.

Putnam (1995) defines community involvement as individuals' voluntary acts to engage in their community actively. (Putnam, 1995) identifies two categories of engagement:

1. Internal participation refers to involvement in local community organizations and associations, such as social clubs, sports groups, or religious organizations.
2. External engagement refers to engaging in political activities, such as exercising the right to vote, attending municipal council meetings, or actively supporting candidates during election campaigns.

Community engagement is crucial for the development of robust and thriving communities. Communities characterized by elevated levels of engagement typically exhibit increased levels of trust and collaboration while experiencing reduced levels of crime and social problems (Putnam, 1995). (Arnstein, 1969) devised a hierarchy of participation that illustrates the many degrees of community engagement in decision-making. The ladder comprises eight steps, precisely:

1. Manipulation is where communities are provided with information about the decisions taken.
2. Therapy: Individuals have the freedom to express their viewpoints. However, these viewpoints may only sometimes be given due weight or regard.
3. Communication: Communities are provided with information regarding the decisions and their rationale.
4. Consultation: The general public can provide input and recommendations for forthcoming decisions.
5. Collaboration: Communities actively participate as partners in the decision-making process.
6. Delegation: Communities are granted the authority to make decisions autonomously.
7. Community control: The community possesses complete authority over the decisions made.
8. Shared ownership: Communities possess collective ownership of decisions and are responsible for their execution.

Arnstein posits that increased levels of engagement result in enhanced decision-making and more equitable outcomes for the community. The Banjarbaru city government and the Regional Development Planning, Research, and Development Agency have organized the stages of the independent neighborhood program to achieve its objectives:

#### **a. The planning stage**

The planning stage is a process that determines the future goals and the necessary steps to accomplish them. The initiation of community involvement in the planning process commences with organizing a socialization forum for the independent neighborhood program in 2022, facilitated by a notice letter sent to the sub-district for sub-district



deliberation (MUSKEL). The sub-district deliberation (MUSKEL) is a public institution-organized forum that brings together the Neighborhood Association, Community Association (Rukun Warga), and Community Groups (POKMAS). The primary objective of the sub-district deliberation is to facilitate disseminating information, engaging in discussions, and making decisions for community groups (POKMAS) that are beneficiaries of the 2022 independent neighborhood program's financial assistance. According to the head of the Komet sub-district, the independent neighborhood program application works in the following way:

*"During Muskel (Musyawarah Kelurahan), individuals express their interest in each Rukun Tetangga, and a proposal is created based on the community's potential from each Rukun Tetangga" (Interview Results, July 5, 2023).*

The Head of Administration of Kemuning Village confirmed this statement, stating that the submission process involves three steps:

*"community proposals to the neighborhood association, followed by the neighborhood association forum, and finally brought to the sub-district. The sub-district then selects three neighborhood associations with potential, creates an official report, issues a decree, establishes a structure, and provides a funding amount of IDR 75,000,000" (This information was obtained from an interview conducted on July 5, 2023).*

Each urban village will follow up on the urban village deliberation agenda by selecting three community groups that have successfully passed the selection process for community group proposal submissions. The sub-district, in a commitment to transparency, has the exclusive authority to decide which community groups (POKMAS) will be chosen to receive money. According to conversations with the leaders of sub-district in Banjarbaru City, the sub-district assesses the number of proposals from each the neighborhood association. Subsequently, through sub-district deliberation, three suggestions are selected to obtain financial aid. It's important to note that there is a lack of established guidelines for determining the approval of proposals at this stage. We are actively working on this, and each sub-district has specific criteria, which include factors such as the nature of the business, the knowledge and experience of its members, and the availability of resources.

## **b. Budgeting Stages**

The allocation of funds occurs following the determination of POKMAS in each urban village, which comprises three POKMAS per urban village. According to Mayor Letter Number 48 of 2021, which pertains to the Independent Neighborhood Pilot Project and Community Groups for the Implementation of Independent Neighborhood Activities in 2022, 60 POKMAS have been selected to receive financial support for the program. Subsequently, the money is deposited into the account of the POKMAS Chairperson, with an exact amount of Rp. The amount is 75,000,000.00 rupiah, which is equivalent to seventy-five million rupiah.



These statements were made by the Head of the Economic and Human Development Division of BAPPEDA Banjarbaru City during an interview on July 20, 2023. According to the interviewee, the budgeting procedure for the money would commence in 2021, with disbursement expected to occur in mid-2022, maybe in June or July. Importantly, the funds will be directly allocated to POKMAS, ensuring transparency and accountability in the process.

*Moreover, the statement was reinforced by the testimony of the Head of the Government of Kemuning Village, who confirmed that Rp. 75,000,000 were disbursed and directly sent to the bank accounts of each POKMAS leader (Interview, July 5, 2023).*

Community engagement in the budgeting process is a significant aspect of the allocation of funds. This occurs through the establishment of POKMAS, which comprises a POKMAS chairperson, treasurer, and members. The community plays a vital role in strategizing the nature of the business, identifying the necessary resources, outlining the stages of business implementation, establishing profit sharing mechanisms, and designing a financial reporting system in alignment with the government funding allocated to POKMAS.

### **c. Implementation Stage**

The implementation of the Rukun Tetangga Mandiri program is delegated directly to POKMAS. The community's Active involvement in implementing the program is of utmost significance. Community engagement is an ongoing, reciprocal communication process to enhance community comprehension (Wirawan & Nurpratiwi, 2015). The program's success is contingent upon the implementation stage, and the involvement of all parties is crucial. The entities participating in the execution of the RT Mandiri program consist of :

#### **1. The Banjarbaru City Government.**

The Banjarbaru City Government, headed by the Mayor, oversees the execution of government matters in the Independent Neighborhood Program as part of the Regional Government's organization. Its function is to set regulations regarding the guidelines for implementing the Independent Neighborhood Program and create Independent Neighborhood Pilot Projects and Community Groups (POKMAS) that are eligible for participation in the Independent Neighborhood Program.

#### **2. The Banjarbaru City Development Planning, Research, and Development Agency (BAPPEDA)**

Plays a crucial role in the planning and budgeting the independent Rukun Tetangga program. It is responsible for preparing the Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) for the program's implementation and coordinating and communicating with relevant SKPDs.

#### **3. Subdistrict Head**

Observer subdistrict head holds the position of Sub-district Head in the Banjarbaru City Government. The primary responsibility of the Head of the Sub-district in the



Independent Neighborhood Program is to assess and authenticate the administrative aspects and the fulfillment of the necessary criteria for social assistance applications. The evaluation is conducted by verifying the minutes of the review conducted by the Village Head and the required technical SKPD Team, reviewing application materials, and visiting the location of the Independent Neighborhood program support applicant.

#### **4. Sub-District**

The sub-district plays a crucial role in facilitating the formation of POKMAS based on the outcomes of the village deliberation or musyawarah kelurahan (MUSKEL) meetings. It also encourages POKMAS to become self-reliant, provides support and guidance, and evaluates the activities of POKMAS.

#### **5. The Community Group (POKMAS)**

The Community Group, also known as POKMAS, is a structured neighborhood community group with the shared objective of managing and developing sustainable economic potential. The purpose of POKMAS is to execute business endeavors that have been granted financial aid. POKMAS Mekatama Raya Mandiri in Guntung Manggis Village is an enduring example of a POKMAS that remains engaged in its economic operations. The POKMAS engages in Papuyu fish farming, as depicted in picture 1:



**Picture 1. The POKMAS Mekataman Raya Mandiri in Guntung Manggis Village**

(Soure : Researcher Documentation, 2023)

#### **6. Receives assistance from various Regional Work Units (SKPD)**

In the form of a community group. The mentorship process comprises multiple extension workers from different SKPDs. The primary responsibility of extension workers is to offer guidance, instruction, and support tailored to the specific needs of the businesses they serve. This aims to ensure the viability, growth, and competitiveness of the enterprises operated by POKMAS, enabling the community to achieve economic self-sufficiency. The Banjarbaru City government designates extension workers from various SKPDs, including the Cooperative and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Office, the





Agriculture and Food Security Office, and the Banjarbaru City Trade Office, based on their respective business sectors. An instance of the support provided by the independent neighborhood program is the engagement in baking cookies in Landasan Ulin Tengah Village. This activity aims to enhance the proficiency and ingenuity of the community in the MSME business domain, as depicted in picture 2 below:



**Picture 2. Mentoring Activities for Enhancing Community Competence**

(Source: Researcher Documentation, 2023)

The execution stages of the Independent Neighborhood Association have demonstrated the significance of involvement from all stakeholders, including the local government as the leading sector and the community as the implementers of government initiatives. Adopting the independent neighborhood program promotes community engagement in managing enterprises within their specific domains, fostering their growth and long-term viability. Despite the presence of several hurdles, the main obstacles to implementation include the need for coordination among community members, the presence of inexperienced POKMAS members, uneven expertise of POKMAS members in specific business domains, and challenges faced by community groups in accessing marketing opportunities for their products and business outcomes.

#### 4. Conclusion

The independent neighborhood program is an initiative by the Banjarbaru city government to stimulate and strengthen the local economy by implementing various development activities. The program's primary objective is to enhance the well-being of community organizations, foster economic self-sufficiency within the community, and support development initiatives centered around the Rukun Tetangga area. Community engagement is crucial for this program as the majority of POKMAS are still in the process of being implemented and have yet to be able to contribute to development initiatives actively. The effectiveness of the program hinges on the active involvement of all stakeholders in the execution of the Rukun Tetangga Mandiri initiative. The initiative has achieved a high level of community engagement in decision-making, where community organizations have complete autonomy in administering the business field.



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