

Madani Community Movement (GNM) and Civics Engagement: Prospect and Reality

Isnarmi Moeis^a, Fitri Eriyanti^b, Zikri Alhadi^c, Murniyetti^d, Ramadani Yusran^e, ^{a,b,c,d,e}Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia, Email: ^aIsnarmi123@fis.unp.ac.id

This study aimed to analyse the implementation of the Madani Community Movement (GNM) as a model for civil societies based on local wisdom. It has been implemented in Kabupaten Agam, a district west of Sumatera, Indonesia, over three years. A qualitative approach was used, and data were collected through in-depth interviews, document analysis, and observation, and analysed using QDA Miner 2.05. The result showed that top leadership in the district initiated GNM based on indications of declining morality among the younger generation, in order to prevent it. Providentially, the programs were in line with several religious activities, such as informal education for Al Quranic study, especially for younger kids, with activities such as praying together in the mosque and reading Al Quran after *maghrib* prayers. Even though some obstacles were found during implementation, it has become an alternative civil society movement, needed to solve societal problems.

Key words: *Madani society, civil society, local wisdom, Minangkabau, community movement*

Introduction

The Madani Community Movement (also known as the GNM) is a development policy issued by the local government in the district of Agam. It was launched in 2016 based on local regulation No. 74, directed towards establishing religious values, particularly Islamic values, in the community. The basic idea of the Movement was to create a religious atmosphere, Muslim brotherhood, and advanced society that had once existed in the life of the people in Madinah during the era of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Moeis, 2009, 2014). GNM is the realisation of the core traditions of *Minangkabau* (the major ethnic group in Agam) and their Islamic values (as they call it – *Adat Bersendi Shara'*, *Shara' Bersendi Kitabullah*). The noble values of *Minangkabau*, in theory and practice, always refer to the value of Islam (Kosasih,

2014). Based on this principle, the government has structured the district in such a way that all social activities are centred around the mosque, and people's activities are performed while highly respecting Islamic philosophy.

The bond between the government, society, traditional values and religion of the *Minangkabau* people is symbolic of their cultural heritage and customs. In an ancient script (Hamka, 1984), it was revealed that the religious activities of their *Ulama* (Islamic scholar), which include faith and knowledge, make up their customs and traditions, and it is impossible to separate them from their *shara'* (law). They are oriented towards the philosophical nature of learning from the universe, but ensure this is executed according to their religious values (Attubani, 2017). Four factors make Islam and *Minangkabau* customs easy to unite, namely, the common vision of the importance of noble morality, the common view of reason as the way to differentiate good and bad, the fact that both of them deeply value equality, and the same view of conscience (Fithri, 2013). Therefore, the Madani Community Movement (GNM) is not new, and it was established to revitalise values of a civilised community according to religious and traditional principles.

The Madani community was founded in the same way as civil societies in the western world – consisting of an institution, law enforcement, freedom of expression, individual rights, congregation and tolerance (Sievers, 2010). However, the values of civil society are implicit in the prioritisation of the public, economic welfare, rights to congregate, non-gender biased development distribution, and refreshing democratic ideals by the government (Micielsky, 2016). They help in making sure that the government follows the will of the people (Radon and Pecharroman, 2017). In Indonesia, Madani is a type of civil society which maintains an inclusive community to build communal vision (Agustian, 2016). It was started to realise the principles of social life that are inclusive, tolerant, enhance brotherhood, and improve the welfare of all the members of the society, just as it was in Madinah Al Munawarah under the reign of Islam (Moeis, 2014). The concept of Madani refers to the principles of democracy in Islam, such as justice, equality, tolerance and the recognition of human rights (Muslih, 2010).

In many countries, civil society movements play a significant role in solving social, political and communal problems. For example, the immigrant community of Canada came together and succeeded in developing inclusivity (Schmidtke, 2018). In Georgia's post-communist government, civic movements built democracy and raised social trust and institutions (Ishiyama, Mezvrishvili and Zhgenti, 2018). Previous studies have indicated that civil societies help in bridging the gap between people's necessities and the government's economic, social, and political responsibilities (Stewart and Matti, 2017). When they are strong, they can determine the formation of a transparent democratic government (Ingrams, 2018) and influence policies that benefit society (Duvernoy, 2018). The Kazakhstani experience shows the role of civil society as an effort to reduce conflict (Kulsariyeva and Nassimova, 2014). In India, civil society has succeeded in bridging discrimination to maintain sustainable development (Masuki,

2015). These organisations have been discovered to be useful in mediating and defending peace and security in post-conflict situations in Poso, Indonesia (Trihartono and Viartasiwi, 2015). Civil society provides a space for member participation in strengthening the dynamic social and political life, consequently bringing a sense of security.

The GNM is different from other civil society initiatives, as it was established with local government to advance community wellbeing, as stated in local regulation No. 74/2016. As stated in the mission of Agam Regency's Regional Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPD) 2006-2025, it intends to make the district independent, achieve, and become civilised (www.agamkab.go.id). It was implemented because the government wanted to build a religious, prosperous, tolerant, and civilised society. The regulation assigned 82 Nagari, the lowest form of government, to implement this program and require society's participation in order to make everyone benefit from all of its programs. One question that is usually asked, and which needs an answer, is: "how can these programs (GNM) be a model of a unique civil society?". This question is necessary because, on one side, it is an initiative of the government, and on the other, it requires active and high participation of the people in a society. It is a combination of top-down policy and bottom-up movement. Another question that deserves an answer is: "what kind of government-supporting device and community capacity could be advanced to keep the program on track?" This forms the main theme of this research.

Methods

The research was conducted through the use of qualitative design (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Qualitative research is interpretative research, and the researcher is involved intensively with participants. The research informants were selected purposively. They are formal leaders (local government), informal leaders (traditional leaders, religious leaders), and community members. Data was collected using in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. All data were analysed using the QDA Miner 2.25 application.

Result and Discussion

The GNM is a program of the Agam District government, reinforced by regulation No. 74 in 2016, which shows that the word 'Madani' has to do with social life and governance based upon the religious values of justice, discussion and agreement, brotherhood (*ukhuwah*), love for the nation, and human rights admittance, as stated by the Prophet (SAW). Furthermore, Nagari Madani is a region of highly civilised and Islamically religious inhabitants with advanced standing on the traditional ideals of *shara'* based on the *kitabullah* (the Holy Quran). The program aims to bring religious and conventional principles into reality within the social life of the Nagari people.

The GNM has been majorly targeted at Nagari and its people. Based on the local law No. 7 of West Sumatera in 2018, and law No. 6 of Indonesian Republic (UU RI), Nagari is the lowest level of community-based government, with traditional rights and values embedded in local wisdom. According to the head of Centre for Human Empowerment of Agam District, Nagari functions as a centre of material and social resources. 82 Nagari implemented this program, serving as its administrative executor and perpetrator. The program includes government personnel, including an element of administrative government (Wali Nagari), traditional leaders (KAN), Islamic scholars (MUI), security (Parik Nagari), and women (Bundo Kanduang). Meanwhile, the people of Nagari live in and out of the district. For this reason, the GNM attempts to mobilise the Nagari, as an institution, together with its people, to operate within the frame of religious, traditional values that are widely known as *Adat bersendi shara', shara' bersendi kitabullah* (ABS SBK).

To maximise the work of the GNM, the Centre of Human Empowerment of Agam District developed seven indicators of achievement interrelated with the institution, security, individual and social life. They include: 1) optimising informal education specifically through Al Quran; 2) improving the role of the mosque as the centre of social life; 3) protecting Nagari and its people; 4) increasing brotherhood and social care; 5) applying custom, art and sport concerning traditional philosophy, founded on the *kitabullah*; 6) elevating participation of the organisation in the community, and; 7) raising individual and social piety.

The Madani Community Movement (GNM) was activated by the local government with its community members. This is different from the contemporary civil society movements that are mostly owned by non-governmental institutions. The economy, social and political functions are implicit in the policies of civil societies. It is in line with the potential for decentralisation in government policy, assuming that local governments understand the problems of their communities (Sutiyo et al., 2017). Such a concept had been run within the Ottoman Islamic government. It was implemented through the enforcement of law, proportional management of multi-ethnic society, tolerance and openness to accept different ethnicities and religions, as well as the existence of society having wide autonomy in the fields of religion, economy, and social and religious management (Seyrek, 2010).

From the GNM, it was discovered that the government enables a harmonious hierarchical relationship between the lowest level of government with a higher one. It reflects a matching, and equality in points of view, about the performance of the government in establishing a good life for the community (Green, 2010). In the GNM, the local government also performs a democratic principle, carrying out collaborative and facilitative leadership to improve the quality of people's lives (Bentzen, Lo and Winsvold, 2019). The GNM can be said as a unique movement.

The uniqueness of the civil society movement in the GNM lies in the unity of religion and tradition. It is supported by the fact that the role of the religious body in Indonesia significantly affects political and social life (Sirry, 2010). Also, Islam, as the religion of the majority of the population, influences all aspects of life. The series of Islamic teachings stretches both vertically and horizontally. Social exhaustion is an embodiment of spiritual piety (Dachcolfany, 2012). The GNM helps in establishing two major things on which the values of the community are founded: the religion (Islam) and culture (the tradition of *Minangkabau*). Nevertheless, the findings of this study revealed that all elements of Nagari view the GNM positively by showing that all the programs recommended have applications in their daily life.

From the four villages studied, members and leaders of the society agreed that most of the programs arranged in the GNM had been put into practice. For instance, informal education through the reading of Al Quran, which is known as Taman Pendidikan Al Quran (TPA) is actively run at every mosque and musholla in Nagari or Jorong. It is equipped with complementary activities, such as an Al Quran reading competition held annually to maintain the religious atmosphere and love for *kitabullah*. Another event is Maghrib Mengaji, a program that involves reading the Al Quran after Maghrib prayer, and another involves conducting prayers five times for the congregation in the mosque and musholla. However, the GNM is helping to improve the quality and quantity of existing programs. Therefore, society collectively assumes that it is a positive movement.

Many experts believe that civil societies exist as a third party, between the people and their country (Walton, 2016; Olive and Valentine, 2018). On the contrary, the finding of this research showed the GNM as an alternative civil society, not a third party, but a movement that makes people and government work in unity based on values, religion and customs – local wisdom drives development (Sopanah et al., 2013). Community participation is based on values and potential that already exist in the community (Mengesha, Meshelemiah and Chuffa, 2015). The GNM is a civil society movement based on local wisdom.

People and government maintain an informal relationship by protecting each other based on care and respect instead of high control. Leaders can spur the pace of development because they work with the same vision as the community (Martiskainen, 2017). In this case, cultural factors are critical to the success of formal leaders (Verdier and Zenou, 2018). However, the GNM can act as a model for other civil societies, as it varies from contemporary concepts in western nations.

To organize the GNM perfectly, it is necessary to improve understanding between society members and government personnel. Community participation is needed as the executor of development (Zadeh and Ahm, 2010). It was discovered from observation and interviews with elements of local government that there are weaknesses, such as disagreement on the choice of language between these parties. The provincial government keeps holding on to technical and



rigid terms, while the community suggests the language should be based on necessity. This generates doubts when proposing practical programs and stops existing ones from advancing meaningfully. Therefore, the GNM needs to open opportunity for the involvement of traditional and religious leaders in Nagari, as they are closer to the society. Cultural leaders can influence community participation through their charisma and values (Stephan and Pathak, 2016).

The weaknesses of the existing GNM, which must be corrected, includes the role to be played by people and government through the intervention of a third party. It is recommended that a mentoring model should be introduced to make the program an appropriate alternative, based on local wisdom as is found in ancient Chinese philosophy (Balchindorzhieva and Tsyrendorzhieva, 2016).

Conclusion

Indonesia is a multi-local ethnic country with a unique culture and values. One of these is the *Minangkabau*. The traditional principles or local wisdom of this ethnic group founded on Islamic ideals was used to develop the GNM, a civil society movement. The movement was able to create unity between society and the government (the cultural leader and facilitator), based on religious values, tradition and harmony. However, it must be amended to include cooperation and understanding among stakeholders. Conclusively, the GNM is a civil society movement that emerged from local culture and operated differently from contemporary cultures in the western world.

Acknowledgement

We express our deepest gratitude to the State University of Padang for supporting this article through the university's research funding (PNPB Funds 2018).

REFERENCES

- Agustian, H. Y. (2016). Redefining disability in the context of “masyarakat madani ”, an Indonesian model of inclusive society. *British Journal of Special Education*, 43(4), p. 359. doi: 10.1111/1467-8578.12152.
- Attubani, R. (2017). *Adat dan Sejarah Minangkabau*. 1st edn. Padang: Media Eksplorasi.
- Balchindorzhieva, O. B. and Tsyrendorzhieva, D. S. (2016). *Harmonious Society and Ecological Civilization : The concepts*. 01011, pp. 0–4. doi: 10.1051/shsconf/20162801011
- Bentzen, T. Ø., Lo, C. and Winsvold, M. (2019). *Strengthening local political leadership through institutional design: how and why*. Local Government Studies. Routledge, 00(00), pp. 1–22. doi: 10.1080/03003930.2019.1690994.
- Creswell, J. W. and Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approches*.
- Dachcolfany, M. I. (2012). Konsep Masyarakat Madani Dalam Islam. *Akadmika Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 17(1).
- Duvernoy, I. (2018). *Land Use Policy Alternative voices in building a local food policy : Forms of cooperation between civil society organizations and public authorities in and around Toulouse, Land Use Policy*. Elsevier, (January), pp. 0–1. doi: 10.1016/j.landusepol.2018.01.019.
- Fithri, W. (2013). *Mau Kemana Minangkabai: Analisis Hermenitika dan Perdebatan Islam dan Adat Minangkabau*. Yogyakarta: Gre Publishing. Available at: <http://grepublishing.com>.
- Green, M. (2010). Cultures of Governance and the Representation of Power in Tanzania. 54(1), pp. 15–34. doi: 10.3167/sa.2010.540102.
- Ingrams, A. (2018). Democratic transition and transparency reform : An fsQCA analysis of access to information laws in twenty-three countries. *Government Information Quarterly*. Elsevier, (December 2017), pp. 0–1. doi: 10.1016/j.giq.2018.05.001.
- Ishiyama, J., Mezvrishvili, L. and Zhgenti, N. (2018). Communist and Post-Communist Studies An oasis of democracy in an authoritarian sea ? Civil society , social , and institutional trust in Georgia. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. Elsevier Ltd. doi: 10.1016/j.postcomstud.2018.01.005.
- Kosasih, A. (2014). Upaya Penerapan Nilai-Nilai Adat Dan Syarak Dalam Penyelenggaraan Pemerintahan Nagari. *Humanus*, 12(2), p. 107. doi: 10.24036/jh.v12i2.4030.
- Kulsariyeva, A. T. and Nassimova, O. (2014). The role of civil society in preventing conflicts : Kazakhstan experience. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Elsevier B.V., 143, pp. 921–926. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.528.

- Martiskainen, M. (2017). The role of community leadership in the development of grassroots innovations. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*. Elsevier B.V., 22, pp. 78–89. doi: 10.1016/j.eist.2016.05.002.
- Masuki, Y. (2015). The role of civil society for community development in contemporary India : a case of an NGO for the sweeper caste in Rajasthan. *Procedia Environmental Sciences*. Elsevier B.V., 28(Sustain 2014), pp. 106–114. doi: 10.1016/j.proenv.2015.07.016.
- Mengesha, S. K., Meshelemiah, J. C. A. and Chuffa, K. A. (2015). Asset-based community development practice in Awramba, Northwest Ethiopia. *Community Development*, 46(2), pp. 164–179. doi: 10.1080/15575330.2015.1009923.
- Micielsky, M. (2016). The Crisis of European Identity and Awakening of Civil Society. *European View*, (15). doi: 10.1007/s12290-016-0409-3
- Moeis, I. (2009). Multiculturalism in Liberal and Islamic Perspectives : A Philosophical Review. *International Journal for Educational Studies*, 2(1), pp. 17–24.
- Moeis, I. (2014). *Pendidikan Multikultural transformatif*. Padang: Universitas Negeri Padang.
- Muslih, M. (2010). Wacana Masyarakat Madani: Dialektika Islam dan Problem kebangsaan. 6(1).
doi: 10.21111/tsaqafah.v6i1.142
- Olive, A. and Valentine, K. (2018). Energy Research & Social Science Is anyone out there ? Exploring Saskatchewan ' s civil society involvement in hydraulic fracturing. *Energy Research & Social Science*. Elsevier, 39(July 2017), pp. 192–197. doi: 10.1016/j.erss.2017.11.014.
- Radon, J. and Pecharroman, L. C. (2017). Civil society the pulsating heart of a country, its safety valve'. *Journal of International Affairs*. 71(1).
- Schmidtke, O. (2018). The Civil Society Dynamic of Including and Empowering Refugees in Canada ' s Urban Centres. 6(1), pp. 147–156. doi: 10.17645/si.v6i1.1306.
- Seyrek, D. M. (2010). The Roots Of Turkish Civil Society: The Ottoman Period, Turkish Studies International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish, 5(4). doi: 10.7827/TurkishStudies.1262
- Sievers, B. B. (2010). What Civil Society Needs. pp. 49–54.
- Sirry, M. (2010). The Public Expression of Traditional Islam : the Pesantren and Civil Society in Post-Suhart. *The Muslim Word: Religion Data Base*, 100(1), p. 60. doi: 10.1111/j.1478-1913.2009.01302.x
- Sopannah, A. et al. (2013). Beyond Ceremony: The Impact of Local Wisdom on Public Participation in Local Government Budgeting. *Journal of Applied Management Accounting Research*, 11(1), pp. 65–78.



- Stephan, U. and Pathak, S. (2016). Beyond cultural values? Cultural leadership ideals and entrepreneurship', *Journal of Business Venturing*. The Authors, 31(5), pp. 505–523. doi: 10.1016/j.jbusvent.2016.07.003.
- Stewart, S. and Matti, J. (2017). Communist and Post-Communist Studies Civil society development in Russia and Ukraine : Diverging paths. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. Elsevier Ltd, pp. 1–14. doi: 10.1016/j.postcomstud.2017.08.001.
- Sutiyo et al. (2017). *Policy Options for Decentralization and Rural Development in Indonesia, Decentralization and Rural Development in Indonesia*. doi: 10.1007/978-981-10-3208-0_12.
- Trihartono, A. and Viartasiwi, N. (2015). Engaging the quiet mission : Civil society in breaking the cycle of violence in the post-conflict Poso, Indonesia. *Procedia Environmental Sciences*. Elsevier B.V., 28(Sustain 2014), pp. 115–123. doi: 10.1016/j.proenv.2015.07.017.
- Verdier, T. and Zenou, Y. (2018). Cultural leader and the dynamics of assimilation. *Journal of Economic Theory*. Elsevier Inc., 175(324004), pp. 374–414. doi: 10.1016/j.jet.2018.01.019.
- Walton, G. W. (2016). Gramsci's activists : How local civil society is shaped by the anti-corruption industry , political society and translocal encounters. *Political Geography*. Elsevier Ltd, 53, pp. 10–19. doi: 10.1016/j.polgeo.2016.01.009.
- Zadeh, B. S. and Ahm, N. (2010). Participation and Community Development. *Current Research Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(1), pp. 13–14.