



# Community Empowerment Through Legal Counseling: Increasing Legal Awareness and Justice for Women and Children in Cijeruk Hamlet, Tasikmalaya City

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## Abstract

Legal education about justice for women and children is an important step in understanding the Cijeruk Hamlet community about the rights and obligations of women and children in a legal context. This activity aims to fill this gap in understanding and increase understanding about the equal rights and obligations of women and children. In this activity, Article 30 of Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage was socialized as a legal basis that guarantees equal rights for women and children. This activity also involved PKK women in Cijeruk Village, who have an important role in spreading information and understanding about justice for women and children in their environment. In addition, group counseling is carried out to provide opportunities for group members to share knowledge and experiences in overcoming family problems. The result of this legal education activity is an increase in public awareness, especially PKK women, about the rights and obligations of women and children under the law. The impact is the formation of a women's group that cares about justice for women and children.

*Keywords:* Legal counseling, justice for women and children, understanding the law.

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## 1. Introduction

Building legal awareness is an integral component of community empowerment efforts. In this context, legal development does not just include the formation of legal norms, but also involves the process of socializing legal values to individuals in society. Legal awareness, as a key element in this case, reflects an understanding and appreciation of the values contained in the legal system that exists or is expected to exist (Moustafa, 2013; Hirsh and Lyons 2010).

The importance of development in the legal sector is becoming increasingly urgent in line with the rapid dynamics in the movement of society. Modern society which continues to change requires a legal system that can follow and adapt to these changes. Failure to fulfill these demands can result in a legal vacuum that has the potential to cause chaos in society (Gallahger, 2006; Deka, 2008; Dunlap, 2013).

The importance of legal awareness in the process of forming and implementing law cannot be separated from legal politics. The interrelated relationship between legal awareness and legal politics indicates that the process of law formation is not only technical, but is also influenced by political and ideological factors that exist in society (Merry, 2003; Lageson, 2017; Chamallas, 2000). Therefore, understanding and strengthening legal awareness is a crucial step in ensuring that the laws that are formed and implemented can provide the greatest benefit to society.

To achieve the goal of comprehensive legal development, involvement from all parties is very important. This includes the role of government officials in formulating legal policies, law enforcers in enforcing the law, and society in internalizing and complying with legal norms. Collaboration from various elements of society is a solid foundation for realizing common goals in building an effective and fair legal system.

If legal awareness can grow and develop from each individual, the vision of a family that is strong in faith and devotion to God Almighty will be achieved. Apart from that, a family will be formed that prioritizes noble morals, nobility, physical and psychological well-being, progress, independence, gender justice, as well as having legal awareness and concern for the environment. Furthermore, this will create an orderly, peaceful and harmonious hamlet in diversity.

In Siddharta's understanding, legal awareness is the process of forming legal rules in society. This relates to an individual's ability to differentiate between right and wrong, good and bad, just and unjust, and humane and inhumane. This awareness results in the belief that in certain situations, individuals should behave in a certain way because it is considered fair (Cowan, 2004). This indicates the existence of personal legal awareness, namely awareness that in a certain context, individuals should behave in accordance with the demands of justice.

By interacting in society, individuals gradually develop shared perceptions about what is considered fair or unfair. They also begin to have an understanding of what they should or should not do in certain situations to maintain order in society. This is known as general legal awareness or people's legal awareness. Furthermore, Latuconsina (2017) added that one indicator of the level of legal awareness in society is knowledge about the law. Strong legal awareness has positive implications for the social and political stability of society.

Community empowerment is an effort to guide and enable people to live in a state of health, prosperity, progress and independence. Success in community empowerment will encourage the achievement of family prosperity. The term "empowerment" comes from the word "empowerment," which lexically means strengthening or development. Family welfare is a condition where the basic needs of each family member, whether material, social, mental or spiritual, are met so that they can live with dignity as human beings who are beneficial to society. This family welfare also contributes to the realization of prosperity at the hamlet level.

A prosperous family, by definition, is a family that is legally valid, able to fulfill their life needs materially and spiritually, and has harmonious relationships between family members and with the community and surrounding environment. In the context of building legal awareness as part of community empowerment, understanding of law, justice and family welfare are interrelated factors (Nawi et al., 2019). By increasing legal awareness in society, it is hoped that it can make a positive contribution to the realization of social and political order and family welfare, which are important aspects in the development of society and the country. Overall in the Windujanten Village community. Meanwhile, the KKN PPM community service in Cijeruk Village aims to build legal awareness of the Jetis Hamlet community regarding the importance of hamlet mapping, justice for women and children, as well as understanding the rights and obligations between residents.

This community service is based on observations of the potential and willingness of the Cijeruk Village community to develop their hamlet. This potential includes demographic aspects, a relatively stable economy, agricultural activities, and active community participation in daily activities. Citizens' economic activities are adjusted to the conditions and situations they experience. Residents who own agricultural land use it for seasonal farming, while those who do not own land choose to become agricultural laborers at harvest time. Mothers who are not involved in agriculture usually choose to focus as housewives or trade.

The results of the interview with Mrs. Dusun Jetis also show that although several activities have been running, they have still not reached optimal levels. Therefore, empowering PKK member mothers is considered to be able to utilize the potential that exists in Jetis Village to improve the quality of activities that have been carried out. Apart from that, outreach and assistance activities regarding justice for women and children as well as legal education aim to build legal awareness in society. Legal awareness, according to various views such as those expressed by Sidharta, Mertokusumo, Soekanto, and Marwan Mas, is the understanding and values internalized in humans regarding the laws that exist or are expected to exist. This includes awareness of legal obligations towards fellow humans. Legal awareness also includes attitudes of tolerance and abstract values regarding order and peace in society.

KKN PPM community service in Cijeruk Village, Kawalu District, Tasikmalaya City aims to build legal awareness of the Jetis Hamlet community by focusing on the importance of hamlet mapping, justice for women and children, as well as understanding the rights and obligations between residents. This goal is based on the potential and desire that exists in Cijeruk Village to develop their hamlet. Thus, it is hoped that this service activity can make a positive contribution in strengthening legal awareness in the Jetis Hamlet community.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Population and Sample**

The population targeted for community service activities is the people of Cijeruk Village, Tasikmalaya City. Respondents were selected based on considerations from Mr. and Mrs. Kadus, as well as the results of discussions with community leaders. The sample consisted of hamlet administrators, the general public, and PKK women from Cijeruk Village.

### **2.2. Materials and tools**

Materials used for outreach activities include outreach materials prepared in PowerPoint format. Technical tools such as LCDs, laptops, pointers are also needed to support counseling. Apart from that, tables, chairs, glasses, water jugs, buckets and mats are also needed to facilitate activities.

### 2.3. Activity Stages

- a) **Socialization and Presentation of Work Program**  
Carried out in the first week involving hamlet administrators, neighborhood associations and Cijeruk Village residents. This activity is guided by KKN 002 students under the guidance of field supervisors.
- b) **Population Profile Data Collection for RT 01-09**  
Carried out through observations and interviews with residents in each RT. The recorded data includes the name of the head of the family, family members, place and date of birth, level of education, livelihood, land ownership, agricultural land, plantations and livestock.
- c) **Capture Population Profile Data**  
Data collected from the population is summarized in preparation for data input. Grouping and adjusting the data to actual conditions were carried out.
- d) **Data Analysis and Application of 4 Norms**  
The data collected was analyzed qualitatively to identify the potential of the Cijeruk Village community. Furthermore, religious norms, decency, manners and law are applied to create order and order in society.

This method is designed to fulfill the objectives of community service activities in Cijeruk Village, Tasikmalaya City. With structured steps, it is hoped that this activity can provide maximum benefits for the local community.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Legal education about justice for women and children is an important step in understanding the Cijeruk Hamlet community about the rights and obligations of women and children in a legal context. Legal counseling, as explained by Sudjana, is the process of institutionalizing or "institutionalizing" written law, and this institutionalization process is a stage that a social norm must go through to become part of a particular social institution.

In Cijeruk Hamlet, there is still a lack of understanding about justice for women and children. This activity aims to fill this gap in understanding and increase understanding about the equal rights and obligations of women and children. In this activity, Article 30 of Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage was socialized as a legal basis that guarantees equal rights for women and children.

This outreach activity involved Cijeruk Village residents and PKK mothers. Through socialization, it is hoped that society can understand the importance of equal rights and obligations between women, children and other legal subjects. Awareness of the law, especially awareness of justice and equality of rights and obligations of all citizens, is expected to support the realization of an orderly, orderly and peaceful Hamlet.

The expected results of this outreach activity are increased fair behavior towards women and children, as well as increased awareness of the rights and obligations of citizens in society. In this way, it is hoped that families and communities will be created that live in order and order. An approach that emphasizes that the family is the first place for children to learn to interact with the environment. Through the family, children learn to respond and adapt to the environment, including understanding their rights and obligations in society.

The impact of the legal counseling activities carried out raised awareness for PKK mothers in Cijeruk Village to be more active in holding meetings and encouraging each other to maintain peace, order and order in the family and community. In the end, a women's group was built that cared about justice for women and children. In this activity, group counseling is carried out so that members can share and share knowledge and experience in overcoming family problems. This group counseling process is a dynamic interpersonal interaction that focuses on conscious thinking and behavior. Functions such as permissiveness, orientation to reality, mutual understanding, mutual acceptance, and helping are important elements in this process.

It is hoped that the results of this counseling process can create legal awareness and social awareness for the community. Social awareness is the result of creating norms that are in accordance with society's values and fulfill the need to create a well-functioning legal system. When these norms are recognized and obeyed, then this is a form of pure obedience in accordance with the values recognized by society.

### 4. Conclusion

From the results and discussion of the activities that have been carried out, it can be concluded that the existence of legal counseling activities, hamlet mapping, and increasing legal awareness of the Cijeruk Village community has had a significant positive impact. Conclusions from this activity include:

- a) **Increasing Legal Awareness:** Legal education activities regarding justice for women and children have a positive impact on the level of legal awareness in society. Society better understands rights and obligations, especially regarding justice for women and children.
- b) **Understanding Hamlet Maps:** Hamlet mapping provides significant benefits in terms of understanding the territorial boundaries of each hamlet. This is important in planning and developing the hamlet, as well as gaining support from the community.

- c) Family Economic Empowerment: Awareness of rights and obligations, especially in terms of justice for women and children, encourages growing concern in protecting and developing the family economy. This is expected to increase the family's economic income.
- d) Increased balance and conflict resolution: Society increasingly understands the importance of balancing rights and obligations. They are also better able to resolve conflicts peacefully, so that order and order are maintained in society.
- e) Development of Family and Hamlet Potential: Legal awareness and understanding of hamlet potential is the basis for hamlet officials to develop programs and activities that are beneficial to human resources in the community.

Thus, these activities make a positive contribution in forming a society that is more legally aware, organized, and able to develop existing potential in order to advance Cijeruk Village as a whole.

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