

THE IMPORTANCE OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Nurwiati^{1*}, Taufiq Al-Islam Asrul¹, Abinus Sama¹, Robi Mitra¹, Varis Vadly Sanduan²

¹Department of Anthropology Education, International University of Papua, Indonesia

²Department of History Education, University of Banda Neira, Indonesia

*Correspondence E-mail: nurwiati93@gmail.com

Keywords:

Mutual Understanding, Respect, Multicultural Society, Papuan Culture.

Abstract

The implementation of Community Service (PKM) aims to provide a deep understanding to students who join the Damal Student Association (APMD) of Puncak Regency, Papua, in Jayapura City about the importance of development in the Papua region through living in mutual understanding in a multicultural society. The method of implementing this Community Service (PKM) is carried out directly by a team with two competent presenters with lecture techniques, discussions, and students providing opinions, and their respective arguments with problems that occur in the Papua region. Community Service (PKM) was carried out at the Damal Student Dormitory Building located in Prumnas 1, Waena, Heram District, Jayapura City, Papua Province on July 30, 2025. The results and implications of this community service (PKM) program show that students are enthusiastic in discussing Multicultural, Papua, and development. Development in Papua, in various aspects, is very much needed by its people, because it can improve their welfare. Papua does not only live one ethnicity, but has many ethnicities, both indigenous Papuans and non-Papuans. This region is increasingly multicultural, encompassing ethnicities, races, religions, cultures, and more. Therefore, the entire community needs to be educated on the importance of mutual understanding to minimize conflict and division within the community. Through this Community Service (PKM) program, all participants learned that respecting, honoring, and understanding cultural diversity can lead to regional progress, as "our cultures may differ, but we are united in the development of Papua."

Kata Kunci:

Saling Pengertian, Menghormati, Masyarakat Multikultural, Budaya Papua.

Abstrak

Pelaksanaan Pengabdian kepada masyarakat (PKM) bertujuan untuk memberikan pemahaman secara mendalam kepada para mahasiswa yang bergabung dalam Asosiasi Mahasiswa Damal (APMD) Kabupaten Puncak, Papua, di Kota Jayapura tentang pentingnya pembangunan di wilayah Papua melalui hidup saling memahami dalam masyarakat multikultural. Metode pelaksanaan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (PKM) ini dilakukan secara langsung oleh tim dengan dua orang pemateri yang berkompeten dengan teknik ceramah, diskusi, dan mahasiswa memberikan pendapat, serta argumentasinya masing-masing dengan permasalahan yang terjadi di wilayah Papua. Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (PKM) dilakukan di Gedung Asrama Mahasiswa Damal berlokasi di Prumnas 1, Waena, Distrik Heram, Kota

Jayapura, Provinsi Papua pada tanggal 30 Juli 2025. Adapun hasil dan implikasi dari program pengabdian kepada masyarakat (PKM) ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa antusias dalam berdiskusi tentang Multikultural, Papua, dan pembangunan. Pembangunan di Papua, dalam berbagai aspek, sangat dibutuhkan oleh masyarakatnya, karena dapat meningkatkan kesejahteraan mereka. Papua tidak hanya hidup satu etnis saja, namun memiliki banyak etnis, baik etnis asli Papua maupun etnis non-Papua. Wilayah ini semakin multicultural, mulai suku, ras, agama, budaya dan lain sebagainya. Sehingga seluruh masyarakat perlu diberikan pemahaman mengenai pentingnya saling memahami satu sama lain untuk meminimalisir terjadinya konflik atau perpecahan dalam masyarakat. Pada pelaksanaan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (PKM) ini, seluruh peserta juga dapat memahami bahwa menghargai, menghormati, dan saling memahami antar budaya dalam keberagaman dapat menjadikan sebuah wilayah akan maju, karena “budaya kita boleh beda, namun bersatu dalam Pembangunan papua”.

Article submitted: 2025-07-30. Revision uploaded: 2025-08-03. Final accepted: 2025-08-06.

INTRODUCTION

Papua is one of the regions in the Republic of Indonesia that is a primary focus of the central government in national development centered in Indonesia. The Papua region has been home to more than 250 ethnic groups, both indigenous Papuan tribes and tribes that came from outside Papua, such as the Javanese, Bugis, Batak, and others. Therefore, the Papua region can be said to be a region of diversity. Furthermore, the government is also strongly committed to promoting equitable development while reducing inequality or disparities between Western Indonesia (KBI) and Eastern Indonesia (KTI), one of which is on the island of Papua [1]. To date, the government has made various efforts to implement development in Papua. Building Indonesia from the periphery by strengthening regions and villages within the framework of a unitary state [2]. Starting from infrastructure development such as roads, bridges, airports, and cross-border posts (PLBN), to efforts to advance education in Papua, overcome poverty, health, and much more. Of course, this is an ongoing homework. However, building society, especially Papuan society, is certainly not only the responsibility of the government, but the role of scientists from various disciplines who collaborate with the government to advance society.

Development is an activity plan to change an economic, political, social, and cultural situation towards a new situation desired by development planners [3]. Development cannot be carried out by one group alone; it must involve all elements of society, regardless of ethnicity, religion, culture, or race. Everyone must unite, understand, respect, and honor each other, so that development can be achieved according to plan. Unity and living with mutual understanding above differences are the main capital in development. Respecting differences accompanied by willingness and sincerity will greatly encourage communication between cultures [4]. Without mutual understanding, conflict and division will arise. Conflict can act as a catalyst for the process of creating social sustainability. Even if the conflict can be managed well to a certain extent, it can also be used as a tool to unite the life of society (national life). However, on the other hand, social conflict is seen as less normal when the conflict leads to the destruction of national life when accompanied by anarchic and brutal actions [5]. We know that the main task of every scientist is to continue to provide, develop, and devote their knowledge for the benefit and welfare of humanity. As one of the social science disciplines, anthropology, which is rich in experience in researching cultural principles through its concepts and methods, is expected to be able to contribute ideas to solve various development problems

[6]. Likewise, anthropologists, also known as anthropologists, understand the diversity of world cultures, including Indonesia, and therefore have a responsibility to advance Indonesian society in general and Papuan society in particular. The goal of anthropology is to study the culture of a society and then advance it. Armed with knowledge of concepts, theories, and methods, anthropologists can design a model of community development based on a cultural approach.

Papua, as a multicultural region, continues to implement sustainable development, particularly in infrastructure development such as roads, bridges, airports, healthcare facilities, educational facilities, cultural development, and more. However, this has not yet reached remote areas in Papua. Many areas remain undeveloped. This presents a challenge for the central and regional governments. Not only the government but also scientists from various disciplines share a shared responsibility for community development. One such activity is anthropologists, who are responsible for developing communities through a cultural approach, for example, by promoting cultural advancement as a strategy for developing tourist villages/hamlets, designing educational models based on local culture, providing an understanding of the importance of nutrition and a healthy lifestyle for pregnant women, creating a welcoming and respectful community by providing an understanding of cultural diversity, and so on.

The aim of this activity is to educate Papuan students, pupils, and young people about the importance of unity and understanding differences in development, especially in their hometowns. They must recognize that they are agents of change within their communities. They have a role and responsibility to advance their region. They can do many things for their hometowns, such as designing them into tourist villages/hamlets, transforming them into peace-loving villages, designing culture-based education models in their respective hometowns, and so on. With materials provided by lecturers at the Anthropology Education Study Program at the International University of Papua, Papuan students and young people can develop their own regions.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This activity was held in the hall of the Damal Student Dormitory (APMD) in Puncak Regency, Papua, in Perumnas 1 Waena, Heram, Jayapura City. On Tuesday, July 30, 2025, five lecturers from the Anthropology Education Study Program at Papua International University participated in the community service program, along with 15 students from Damal, Puncak Regency, for a total of 20 participants. The method used for this activity was to provide material directly at the location of the activity by lecturers from the Anthropology Education Study Program at Papua International University. Reflective anthropology, grounded in social movements, works collaboratively to discover the "self of society" and also the "self of the anthropologist" [7]. The activity began with an introduction to the university, faculty, study program, and teaching staff. This was followed by a presentation session by the lecturers. In general, the main points of discussion with APMD students regarding capital markets in Indonesia concerned several key points, namely (1) The importance of multicultural education for the younger generation in Papua; (2) Understanding Public Policy through Anthropology.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community service activity, themed "The Role of Anthropologists in Papuan Community Development," was conducted by lecturers from the Anthropology Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Papua International University, Jayapura, Papua Province. This activity was intended to provide students at Damal, Puncak



Regency, Central Papua Province, with an understanding of the contributions of anthropologists to Papuan community development. The presentation was also intended to enable students currently studying in Jayapura City to return and develop their own communities after completing their undergraduate, master's, or doctoral degrees. As we know, Papua is among the top 10 poorest regions in Indonesia.

The problem of poverty in Papua Province is becoming increasingly complex with the increasing number of workers each year [8]. Puspitasari stated that economic factors and poverty are the main factors contributing to weak family resilience [9]. Poverty in Papua is common knowledge among all Indonesians. To date, the problem of poverty remains unresolved. Therefore, the younger generation of Papuans is needed to address this issue and develop Papua further. The agenda for the community service program conducted by the anthropology team from Papua International University, Jayapura, is as follows:

A. Opening Ceremony

The event began at 1:00 PM WIT at the dormitory building of the Damal Student Association (APMD) in Jayapura City. First, the event was opened by the host named Nopen Labene. The host opened with enthusiasm, because the activity took place during the day and the weather was quite hot, but the participants still received encouragement from the host. The first event was a welcoming speech from the head of the community service team and the general chair of the Damal Student Association (APMD) of Puncak Regency, Papua, Jayapura. In the speech, the general chair of the Damal Student Association (APMD) of Puncak Regency, Papua, Jayapura expressed pride because their organization was chosen as the location for Community Service (PKM) by a team of lecturers from Anthropology Education, University of Papua and Banda Neira University. The general chair also gave encouragement to his members, and he also considered this activity very beneficial for the future, especially in the Papua region which is full of diversity. When the general chair gave his welcoming speech, the APMD dormitory students were also seen enthusiastically welcoming the arrival of the community service team. The team also encouraged the dormitory students to use their knowledge for development in their respective regions, especially their villages, after graduation.

Following remarks from the General Chairperson of the Damal Student Association (APMD) of Puncak Regency, Papua, Jayapura, the MC then gave Mr. Abinus Sama the opportunity to deliver remarks as a representative of the Community Service (PKM) team from the Anthropology Education Department of Papua International University and Banda Neira University. In his remarks, Mr. Abinus Sama explained the team's visit to the Damal Student Dormitory Building (APMD) in Puncak Regency, Papua, Jayapura. He also offered motivational words to the Papuan golden generation. Mr. Abinus Sama, also a lecturer and indigenous Papuan, continues to hope that Papuan youth will achieve their dreams and dedicate themselves to their respective regions, as Papua needs talented young people to develop the region further. The event proceeded very well and according to plan.

B. Socialization With Presentations

This activity included presentations by lecturers from the Anthropology Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Papua International University. The first presentation covered "The Importance of Multicultural Education for the Younger Generation" and the second presentation covered "Understanding Public Policy through Anthropology."



Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat
"Pentingnya Pendidikan Multikultural Bagi Generasi Mudah"

Nurwiati, S.Sos., M.Sos



Figure 1: Presentation by Mrs. Nurwiati, S.Sos., M.Sos.

The above material was presented by a lecturer in Anthropology Education at the International University of Papua, Ms. Nurwiati, S.Sos., M.Sos., explained the importance of multicultural education in community life, especially in the lives of Indonesia's younger generation in the Papua region. As we know, Indonesia consists of various ethnicities, religions, races, and cultures. The Indonesian nation is a heterogeneous nation, home to diverse communities, varying in culture, customs, ethnicity, race, language, and religion, making Indonesia a nation with distinctively diverse characteristics [10]. Papua, as a region of Indonesia, also has this diversity. As young people and educated people, of course, we must provide an understanding of the differences that exist in society, so that life can be peaceful. This cultural diversity also presents a challenge to preserve and pass it on to future generations [11]. The concept of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) must also be understood by every human being. Once everyone has been able to understand multicultural life, then they begin to provide understanding to those closest to them, such as family. Therein lies our role as the younger generation as contributors to domestic peace. The first speaker delivered the material in relaxed and simple language, so that participants could understand it well. Participants also asked several questions regarding multicultural life and cases that occurred in today's era. Questions from participants can be answered directly by the first speaker and assisted by other teams.

**Understanding Public
Policy through
Anthropology**

A Guide for Young People

Abinus Sama
30th July 2024



Figure 2: Presentation by Mr. Abinus Sama, S.I.P., M.I.R.

After the presentation from Ms. Nurwiati, S.Sos., M.Sos., the second presentation was continued by Mr. Abinus Sama, S.I.P., M.I.R. On this occasion, Mr. Abinus Sama provided material on public policy regarding Papuan Development. The progress or decline of the Papua region is in the hands of the Papuan generation. If the Papuan generation remains enthusiastic and prioritizes the common interest, then the Papua region can progress more rapidly. Likewise, if Papuan youth prioritize individual

interests, then the Papua region will experience decline. This second speaker was no less enthusiastic than the first speaker, because he delivered a very relaxed and simple language, so that participants easily understood the material presented by the speaker. Then Mr. Abinus Sama gave advice to the young people present at the event that education is the main capital for advancing Papua.

Papuan children are expected to be able to complete their education as well as possible to a higher level. Currently, many Papuan youths still drop out of school due to various factors, both weak economics and lack of motivation to educate. This problem is our task as the younger generation to solve. At the very least, the attendees could influence their families and those closest to them, motivating young people to pursue higher education. Currently, the Papua region still lacks teachers, healthcare workers, and other experts. If young Papuans aren't enthusiastic about education, who will fill the gap? Therefore, it is hoped that Papuan children will continue to be enthusiastic and tireless. Furthermore, public policy regulated by the government must be based on an anthropological approach, as every policy made must be in favor of the community. Policies made must aim for the welfare of the community, so it is necessary for the younger generation to instill the values of integrity and honesty. Without instilling these values, the community will suffer. The current generation of Papuans studying in Jayapura City will be the leaders of the future. Starting now, aim to be a good leader and side with the community without discriminating against their origins. Good leaders who can develop Papua are urgently needed, because without good leaders, the Papuan region will struggle to progress.

C. Closing of Community Service Activities

The material presented by Ms. Nurwiati and Mr. Abinus Sama enthusiastically engaged all participants, and the material proved highly beneficial for the future of Papuan children. Following the presentation and discussion, the community service program concluded with a closing prayer for God's blessings.



Figure 3: Closing of Community Service Activities

The closing ceremony of the 2025 Community Service Program was conducted by Nopen Labene as the event's MC. Here, the team expressed their gratitude to all participants who had taken the time to attend and follow the activity until the end. The community service team also gave gifts to participants who had asked questions throughout the event. After the activity officially closed, many participants still wanted

to have an informal discussion with the Anthropology Education team from Papua International University and Banda Neira University regarding the future of Papua and its challenges. Time was limited, so the team and participants took a group photo in front of the Puncak Papua Regency Damal Student Association (APMD) dormitory building.

CONCLUSION

The community service program organized by the anthropology team of the Papua International University was held at the Damal Student Dormitory (APMD) building in Puncak Regency, Jayapura City, and went according to plan. This Community Service (PKM) was carried out with the aim of enabling the younger generation to respect, understand, and appreciate the existing diversity. Papua is home to diverse tribes and cultures, so the community needs to be educated about living in diversity to minimize conflict. Living in harmony among various tribes, religions, and cultures can support the development of Papuan human resources and other development initiatives. In addition, unity is very necessary in the development of Papua regardless of origin, tribe, religion, race, and so on. The content of this article is in line with Papua today, because Papua is one of the regions that has diversity that must be maintained together. Our team recommends that the content of this Community Service article can be read and understood by the general public, especially the younger generation throughout Indonesia to be able to respect, honor, and understand each other without regard to race, tribe, religion, and culture. This Community Service was carried out with a limited number of participants. In the future, the team hopes that its implementation will involve a larger number of participants and use adequate facilities.

ASSOCIAMENT

The community service team from the Undergraduate Program in Anthropology Education at Papua International University would like to thank all the students of the Puncak Papua Regency Damal Student Association (APMD) in Jayapura who welcomed and welcomed the team, ensuring the smooth completion of the program. May God continue to protect us all. Amen.

REFERENCE

- [1] Imelda Wenda. (2018). Percepatan Pembangunan Sebagai Penunjang Kemajuan Di Daerah Papua. *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan*, 2(1), pp. 11–13. <https://journal.upy.ac.id/index.php/pkn/article/view/356>
- [2] S. A. Ghassani, D. S. Priyarsono, W. Rindayanti, and A. U. Seminar. (2022). Analisis pembangunan wilayah melalui program dana desa di Kabupaten Bogor: pendekatan teori kelembagaan. *Majalah Geografi Indonesia*, 37(1), p. 48. <https://doi.org/10.22146/mgi.75432>
- [3] Enos H. Rumansara. (2015). Memahami Kebudayaan Lokal Papua: Suatu Pendekatan Pembangunan Yang Manusiawi Di Tanah Papua. *Jurnal Ekologi Birokrasi*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 47–58. <https://ejournal.uncen.ac.id/index.php/JEB/article/view/491>
- [4] Dea Varanida. (2018). Keberagaman Etnis dan Budaya sebagai Pembangunan Bangsa Indonesia. *Proyeksi-Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora*, 23(1), pp. 36–46. <https://jurnafis.untan.ac.id/index.php/Proyeksi/article/view/2444>
- [5] K. Widen. (2024). Peranan Kebudayaan dalam Pembangunan: Perspektif Antropologi. *Journal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Pemerintahan*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 487–499. <https://doi.org/10.37304/jispar.v13i2.14699>



-
- [6] Koentjaraningrat. (1982). *Lima Masalah Integrasi Nasional, Masalah-masalah Pembangunan*. Jakarta: LP3ES.
- [7] I Ngurah Suryawan. (2015). Menafsirkan Papua (Lebih) Emansipatif dan Reflektif: Perspektif Antropologi. *Jurnal ETNOHISTORI*, 2(2), pp. 98–115. <https://ejournal.unkhair.ac.id/index.php/etnohis/article/view/829>
- [8] F. Hardinandar. (2019). Determinan Kemiskinan (Studi Kasus 29 Kota/Kabupaten Di Provinsi Papua). *Jurnal REP (Riset Ekonomi Pembangunan)*, 4(1), pp. 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.31002/rep.v4i1.1337>
- [9] P. W. Arthur Josias Simon Runturambi. (2022). Ketahanan Sosial Budaya Dan Pembangunan Papua Dalam Perspektif Ketahanan Nasional. *Syntax Literate: Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*, 7(10), pp. 15867–15881. <https://jurnal.syntaxliterate.co.id/index.php/syntax-literate/article/view/9894>
- [10] C. N. Lubis and M. Albina. (2025). Upaya Meningkatkan Persatuan Keragaman Budaya. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Humaniora dan Seni*, 3(4), pp. 934–937. <https://doi.org/10.62379/jishs.v3i4.2591>
- [11] M. Guntoro, Zuki Kurniawan, and Mia Rosalina. (2022). Warisan Budaya Dan Pengembangan Seni Kreatif. *Jurnal Suara Kampus Merah Putih*, 4(2), pp. 274–280. <https://jurnal.publikasi-untagcirebon.ac.id/index.php/psuntag/article/view/232>