

# SOCIALIZATION OF NEW NORMAL LIFE CONCEPT BASED ON THE LOCAL WISDOM OF GORONTALO DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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## Introduction

In overcoming the transmission of Covid-19, which is still spreading in Indonesia, various ways have been carried out by the government and the community, especially in Gorontalo Province. One of those ways which can be done through this case is to revive local wisdom that develops in the community. According to Van Vollenhoven, a region that is included as a 19 customaries area in Indonesia, Gorontalo has a strong customary background and has a lot of local wisdom as a regional identity. Mentioning the local wisdom and authentic culture that has been rooted, there is culture of mutual cooperation in Gorontalo known as *awota*, *huyula*, and *hulunga*. Correlation between the culture and this pandemic can be seen from a famous story of local wisdom of *huyula* where Gorontalo used to fight the leprosy epidemic. At that time, Nani Wartabone and dr. Aloei Saboe showed the spirit of mutual cooperation in dealing with leprosy sufferers who were ostracized by the community. Another well-known story is when Nani Wartabone's struggled to fight for independence by involving the people through the *hulunga* culture. Through *hulunga*, Nani Wartabone succeeded in liberating Gorontalo on January 23, 1942. This event is known as a patriotic movement that occurred 3 years earlier than the Proclamation of Independence on August 17, 1945. In substance, local wisdom in the form of *awota*, *huyula*, and *hulunga* cultures are still relevant to be applied in the life of the people of Gorontalo, especially to alleviate the impact caused by Covid-19 that has hit the world and Indonesia since the last year. Gorontalo provincial government continues to explore and apply other local wisdom (including the concept of "Bele Huyula Mandiri" and the use of "Bele Uto") that can be applied as an effort to minimize the spread of Covid-19, especially during the New Normal Life. Plays a role as a leading university, State University of Gorontalo, which becomes one of the stakeholders of the Gorontalo government has a moral responsibility to make local wisdom well-implemented through socialization and counseling activities as a form of implementation of Tri Dharma College in terms of community service.

## Discussion

### New Normal Life Concept

New Normal Life is a normal life concept that is added with the implementation of the Health Protocol. The New Normal Life is also defined as a Change of Lifestyle during a pandemic situation by reactivating limited economic, social, and public activities using health standards set by the Government.



The World Health Organization requires a country to implement a new normal life with 6 requirements or conditions: first, Covid-19 transmission is controlled, hospital readiness, risk of transmission is controlled, there is systematic preventive which can be measured, prevents the Import cases, and there is community participation. From a medical perspective of new normal life, it is

necessary to strengthen 4 aspects consist of promotion, primary prevention, secondary prevention, and tertiary prevention/rehabilitative.

A. Promotion

- Making leaflets, pamphlets, or billboards related to the Covid-19 protocol that the public does not yet understand
- Making a Covid-19 protocol pocketbook and distribute it to villages/districts
- Training a number of key figures in the community as Covid-19 cadres for conducting IEC in the community.
- Promoting CTPS, masks, and cough etiquette

B. Primary prevention/ Preventive

- Cross-sectorial supports (heads of the district, sub-district, Village Guidance Officer, Village Guidance Officer for security and community order and neighborhood) in monitoring compliance.
- There are facilities for quarantine place that are managed by the village
- Increased preventive action through the sub-task force technical team that is carried out with social education
- Health protocols that must be continuously campaigned for the community to implement: 1) wear a mask, 2) keep your distance, 3) wash your hands
- Discipline and be responsible in daily activities wherever they are
- Improved environmental cleanliness (public facilities, schools, workplaces)

C. Secondary/ Curative Prevention

- Preventing transmission, falling into a more severe phase, death
- Strengthening the carrying capacity of quarantine or special care places: ODP/ PDP/ LIGHT CONFIRMED
- Proposing Aloi Saboe Regional Hospital to become a center Covid-19 Hospital and Ainun Hospital as a buffer
- Proposing Other hospitals to treat non-Covid-19 cases
- Changing the function of the building for maintenance
- Availability of Isolation Rooms/beds for new cases
- Availability/adequacy of ventilators in hospitals to handle severe Covid-19.
- Swab examination priority scale
- Improvement of the Triage Procedure
- Purchase/request logistic lab
- PPE procurement
- Supply of drugs and medical equipment
- Strengthening the procedure for covering the corpse

D. Tertiary Prevention

- Physical and psychological rehabilitation of post-Covid patients
- Utilization of post-Covid19 patients as covid-19 ambassadors to support the IEC program

**The Concept of *BeleHuyulaMandiri***



The Provincial Government of Gorontalo has adopted the concept of “BeleHuyulaMandiri” to face the new normal era. This concept carries from upstream to downstream approach by prioritizing local wisdom where the prevention of Covid-19 will start from the smallest scope such as family in making promotional, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative efforts. In this concept, the social and economic aspects of the community are strengthened by the involvement and role of the Public Health Center, village/district government, community leaders, and other related elements. The success of this program certainly requires strong support and commitment from the regents and mayors as regional heads.

The concept of *BeleHuyulaMandiri* has several objectives, including building a community paradigm through education based on a family approach, encouraging community independence in facing various risks of disease, and restoring the function of Public Health Center as health facilities for early detection of disease. Those aspects aim to support the achievement of terminating the source of the Covid-19 infection as well as supporting the implementation of provincial and district/ city government programs in the effort to stop the spread of Covid-19.



The implementation of this concept begins with the formation of a village cluster team assisted by a functional technical team under the control of the Public Health Center. Further, technical guidance will be carried out for community leaders as the driving force to change in community behavior. District, village, and sub-district level advocacy will be carried out by the district/city government. Public Health Center nurses would be assisted by village officials to check the readiness and condition of the place for small-scale isolation. Patient supervision is conducted by Public Health Center nurses according to the doctor's direction. For families of patients who are confirmed positive, preventive promotion efforts, tracking, and health services will also be carried out. All stages will be conducted in accordance with the *BeleHuyulaMandiri* concept guidelines.

### The Use of *BeleUto*

Get into a new normal life order, the Provincial Government of Gorontalo has local wisdom to deal with. One of them is the use of traditional *Beleuto* clothing for employees in the Provincial Government. *BeleUto* is a garment that uses a sarong or slipcover to cover the bodies and faces of Gorontalo people in the past. Gorontalo government considers this clothing is suitable for warding off Covid-19 because it functions like Level II Personal Protective Equipment. Using this *beleuto* is the same as wearing a mask. People who wear it are expected to be protected from droplets. In general, *beleuto* is referred to *wuloto* or blanket that covers the body along with the sarong. Depart from *beleuto*, there is also something called *Teyabuto*. *Teyabuto* is a curved cloth on the body. Its function is to cover or hide items.





In Gorontalo language, *beleuto* means batik patterned cloth or sarong that is used to cover the head, body, and thighs. In contrast, *bele-beleuto* means covering the body with a sarong or batik. By wearing *beleuto*, there only two eyeballs that are uncovered. *Beleuto* consists of two words, namely *bele* which means house (shelter) and *uto* which means part of the body which may not be visible (in Islamic term, it calls *aurat*). If those words are combined, *beleuto* means protecting genitals or *aurat*.

The tradition of *beleuto* has been known to the Gorontalo community, especially women, since the 13th century before Islam entered Gorontalo. After Islam entered Gorontalo around 1495 or the 15th century and became a religion embraced by the people of Gorontalo, it is strengthened by the philosophy of "*Adati hula-hula'a to syara'a, syara'a hula-hula'a to Quru'ani*" in Indonesian *Adat Bersendikan Syara, Syara Bersendikan Kitabullah* (Custom is rooted in Syari'a, and Syari'a is rooted from Al-Qur'an). From the aspect, *beleuto* increasingly existed among women.



Initially, *beleuto* functioned as a cover for genitals and hid the identity of women. In terms of customs and culture, *beleuto* describes the loyalty of women to protect their genitals (*aurat*) and always obey their parents' recommendations. In ancient times, Gorontalo consisted of large families living in large houses with high poles called *Lahiye*. Before the formation of large families, parents at that time

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imposed an obligation for their daughters to wear *beleuto*. *Beleuto* is a tradition for Gorontalo women, where every time they leave the house, they are required to wear *beleuto*. For Gorontalo women, especially those who are still teenagers, to leave without a mahram (blood relation) is taboo. In fact, the ancient Gorontalo women could only go out of the house as long as the sun (*dulahu*) was shining brightly. When the sun set or changed into the night, Gorontalo women should stay at home. Another source elaborates that *beleuto* was used by Gorontalo women in the past to travel to places that have strangers.

The essence of *beleuto* consists of several things such as covering women's genitals (*aurat*) which can protect themselves from sunburn, especially women who are approaching marriage; maintain women's skincare because they always wear *bada'a/yilamahu* (face powder). In the past, *beleuto* was a custom applied by Gorontalo women to protect themselves from the male's gazing. At first glance, *beleuto* looks like a long veil or veil that covers the entire body except for the eyes. But the difference is, *Beleuto* uses a sarong or batik cloth that conceal the body from head to toe.

*Beleuto* has a *wolo-woloto* model, with the elbows open at the level of the ears or eyes. *Beleuto* consists of batik patterned cloth with *bide* (tightening the sarong around the hips). The color of the batik used also tends to custom colors such as yellow, red, green, and purple. *Beleuto* is usually worn with *bide* where *beleuto* covers the top and *bide* covers from the hips to the ankles. For the upper part, women usually wear *bate* (batik cloth) *ortunggohu*, meanwhile, the lower part or the *bide* wears *bate* (batik) *panja* (long batik cloth). *Batetunggohu* is a sarong with a batik pattern, while *batepanja* is a cloth with an elongated batik pattern.

Gorontalo itself consists of two custom territories, namely Hulonthalo and Limutu. The way to use *beleuto* from these two custom territories is also different. Each of them has an authentic feature. In Hulonthalo custom, the upper part may use regular sarong with any pattern, while the lower part or *bide* uses batik patterned cloth. On the other hand, for the Limutu custom area, the upper part or *beleuto* uses a batik or *bate* patterned sarong, and the lower part or *bide* uses a regular sarong with any pattern.

The use of *beleuto* is shifting on its function from time to time. From the 1970's to the 1990's, *beleuto* was used only to cover the body from the sun. After the 1990s, *beleuto* began to disappear, especially in sub-district centers and in cities due to the presence of various hijab models, which were considered a fashion trend. Currently, *beleuto* can still be found in villages. Usually, they use *beleuto* in traditional "drive-in" movies (*layartancap*), watch music performances at wedding receptions, and events in other villages. Furthermore, *beleuto* can be found when Gorontalo women come to the houses to deliver marriage invitations (*mohama-hama*). As its function to cover the body, some people think that *beleuto* is the traditional name of veil. Whereas, *beleuto* is more than a veil that covers, it is a symbol of a Gorontalo woman who is protecting herself and her honor, which during the Covid 19 pandemic was revived as a local wisdom-based Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## Conclusion

Through the socialization of the *belehu yulamandiri* concept and the use of *beleuto* as a form of local wisdom to the people of Gorontalo, the new normal life during the Covid-19 pandemic is expected to be understood and well-implemented by every citizen. Therefore, it can help the government to break the transmission of Coronavirus in Gorontalo province in particular and Indonesia in general.

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