

## **REVIEW OF JUSTICE FOR COMMUNITY ADVOCACY IN THE DISABILITY INCLUSION VILLAGE PROGRAM IN BAH SULUNG, SIMALUNGUN REGENCY**

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### ***Abstract***

*People with disabilities still do not receive optimal services overall. People with disabilities need to receive space for justice and prosperity from their families and society. This research aims to analyze and explore the justice received by people with disabilities in Bah Sulung Village through the disability inclusive village program. The disability inclusive village program is an effort by the church and community by establishing an RBM (Community Based Rehabilitation) Post in Bah Sulung Village. Data analysis was carried out descriptively qualitatively. In collecting data, the author conducted observations and interviews as well as literature studies in Bah Sulung Village to investigate the fulfillment of rights and equality obtained by people with disabilities. The informants consisted of RBM post administrators, RBM cadres, families of people with disabilities and several communities in Bah Sulung Village, Simalungun. The research results show that people with disabilities and their families gain acceptance and equality through the empowerment of RBM posts. The author uses John Rawls's perspective on justice theory as a basis for analyzing justice issues for people with disabilities in fulfilling equality and rights.*

**Keywords:** *Persons with Disabilities, Justice, Community Based Rehabilitation, Disability inclusive village.*

## INTRODUCTION

Differently *Abled People* are two terms that are used interchangeably to replace the term disabled. This change in terminology aims to change the perception of people with disabilities which has often been accompanied by stigma and negative stereotypes from society. However, they still often experience discriminatory treatment in accessing education, health, employment, physical and social mobility access, and rehabilitation. Individuals with special needs (disabilities) are those who have special characteristics and are different from the majority of people. Because of these differences in characteristics, they need special services to ensure that they get their rights as living human beings. People with mental disabilities have complex problems, such as physical and mental health problems, livelihood problems, empowerment and social relationship problems. On the other hand, they have the same right to obtain well-being . ( Rizky , 2021b) ( Afdal Karim, 2018) ( Pure & Astuti , 2015)

High financing is required for institution-based or orphanage-based services, but these services often have limitations in covering people with disabilities who need them. By involving families and the community, limitations in institution-based services or orphanages caused by limited human resources, budgets, and infrastructure facilities can be overcome. Inclusive societies provide various advantages, such as providing people with disabilities with access to the services they need while still interacting and integrating with other members of society. This allows for the creation of independence for people with disabilities, their families, and the communities in which they live. One of the efforts to build an inclusive society and encourage family and community participation is to facilitate people with disabilities and their families to work together in an easily accessible environment in the community, by utilizing existing resources. The establishment of Community-Based Rehabilitation (RBM) groups is a forum for the active participation of people with disabilities, their families, communities, and the village government in social rehabilitation activities. RBM groups can be done by mobilizing resources and community potential, as well as considering social factors, economic, cultural, geographical, and demographic of the community as well as the needs of local persons with disabilities. In other words, the activities in it are adjusted to the needs and potentials of people with disabilities and the conditions of the region. ( Surwanti & Puspitosari , 2019b)

Bahsulung Hamlet is located in Batu Silangit Village, Tapian Dolok District, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra Province. The northern boundary borders Deli Serdang Regency. The establishment of the RBM post in Bah Sulung Village is an effort to build an inclusive society that encourages the participation of families, communities and churches. It is hoped that this initiative can increase public and church awareness of the importance of inclusivity and attention to this group to perpetuate welfare and justice. GKPS established the RBM post in Bah Sulung Village as a step to implement the vision and mission of RBM, with the aim of realizing an inclusive society for people with disabilities. Creating an inclusive village is a dream, and it is hoped that every activity in this village will be a means to build a sense of togetherness and acceptance of people with disabilities (P. E. J. Saragih, 2023)

Advocacy seeks to identify barriers to the well-being of vulnerable individuals and groups. The term advocacy is often associated with the legal profession, derived from the Dutch, "advocaat" or "advocaat", meaning defender. However, advocacy also refers to efforts to approach individuals or groups that are considered to have an influence on the success of a program or activity. In the context of vulnerable human empowerment, advocacy is not only about advocacy or mentoring, but also involves a concerted effort to systematically and strategically change the system. Basically, advocacy is a defense of public rights and interests, not personal interests. What is fought for in advocacy is the rights and interests of community groups. (Lewis et al., 2011) (Rizky, 2021a) It is estimated that there is an increase in the number of elderly people who suffer from severe disabilities and require long-term care. Although evidence of whether these policies and programs are effective is not present in most cases, it does have the potential to offer promising ideas to be implemented or tested by the United States. Programs always (Lafortune & Balestat, 2007) (Moreno et al., 2014)

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offered in achieving advocacy, Bah Sulung Village has made a program as an alternative step to prosper the community.

Justice according to John Rawls is called *fairness*. Justice as *Fairness* That is, the involvement of cooperation between those who make agreements with predetermined values as the main basic foundation. Everything that is said to be fair is beneficial and equal to all people in accordance with their rights and obligations as a person involved and recognizes the basic principle

of justice. Justice is the first priority of social institutions, as is truth in the system of thought. Justice does not allow the sacrifices imposed on a few to be aggravated by the vast majority of the gains enjoyed by many. (Rawls, 1999) (Rawls, 2006)

The main goal of justice is the needs of society that must be met because it deserves to be accepted as a living human being and its human rights are protected. It is necessary to be a common concern of every institution that behind the purpose of upholding justice must consider that justice is relevant or in accordance with the subject of justice itself. The principles of justice are very important because considering what the main foundations of justice are and their respective weights when they are in conflict, more than just the conception of justice; it is a social ideal. Justice is conceptualized as a balance and is guided to identify every need for relevant rights and in accordance with the needs of each person to achieve the word justice. Justice is conceptualized as a balance and is guided to identify every need for relevant rights and in accordance with the needs of each person to achieve the word justice. (Rawls, 1999) (Rawls, 1999)

There are several previous studies on RBM, the first is Arni Surwanti and Warih who wrote about increasing the role of community-based rehabilitation groups in realizing the welfare of people with disabilities. This paper explores how to overcome the problems faced by people with disabilities by proposing partnership programs such as mentoring. The second is Ulfah Fatmala Rizky wrote about the Inclusive Training on Policy Advocacy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the SOBAT Disabled Community. ( Surwanti & Puspitosari , 2019a) In his writing, he discusses community service which aims to train the skills and capabilities of people with disabilities and

non-persons with disabilities in order to fight for the protection and fulfillment of the rights of persons with disabilities through the policy advocacy process. This community service was carried out online using the Google Meet video conferencing application and the Mentimeter presentation application. Third is Nururrochman Hidayatullah and Pronowo with the title ( Rizky , 2021a) of the article Opening Space for Hope and Welfare for Persons with Disabilities. This research aims to elaborate the main basic needs of persons with disabilities in the context of humanity in

accordance with regulations that mandate that persons with disabilities need to get space for justice and welfare. ( Hidayatullah & Pranowo ,2018)

Based on the gap research, there are still gaps, some of the things that distinguish this paper from the previous writings of authors and researchers are the differences in the approach and theoretical foundation used to study RBM. Thus, this article explores the formulation of the problem, namely:

- 1) What is the background of the life of people with disabilities in Bah Sulung Village, Simalungun Regency?
- 2) How is the Review of Justice for Community Advocacy in the Disability Inclusive Village program in Bah Sulung, Simalungun Regency?

The objectives of this research should be:

- 1) Analyze and describe the background of the life of people with disabilities in Bah Sulung Village, Simalungun Regency.
- 2) Analyze and describe Community Advocacy in the Disability-Inclusive Village program in Bah Sulung Village using a review of John Rawls Justice.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach. The author also describes, analyzes, and interprets the patterns of behavior, beliefs, and language shared by a community group in Bah Sulung ( Cresswell , 2012) . Next, the author will collect data. In the data collection technique, the author uses two methods. The first is the observation technique, where the author observes the community in Bah Sulung village. Second

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interview, where the author is directly involved by conducting conversations or dialogues with informants who established the RBM post, RBM post daily management, volunteers, and several Bah Sulung village communities. Finally, the author conducted data analysis. This is a continuation of data collection. In data analysis, the author will dialogue theory with field data. Continuing in this data analysis, it includes four parts. First, processing the data that has been obtained through the results of interviews. Second, describe the data. Third

analyze the data in detail. Fourth, verify and draw a conclusion to confirm the answer to the problem formulation. The second method, the author uses a literature study approach, carried out by collecting various data sources and connecting it with the theory used as a basis in researching the Disability Inclusive Village for the Bah Sulung community, reviewed from John Rawls' theory of justice. The data collection technique in this research method is carried out by looking for sources such as books, and journals. ( Bungin , 2015) ( Adlini et al., 2022)

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **History of the RBM Post in Bah Sulung village**

Bahsulung Hamlet is located in Batu Silangit Village, Tapian Dolok District, Simalungun Regency, North Sumatra Province. The northern boundary borders Deli Serdang Regency. Based on the author's observations during his one-year internship in Bah Sulung hamlet, the majority of the people adhere to Islam and many people with disabilities. Thus, the author sees the solidarity system or actions that exist in Bah Sulung who have an attitude of caring about the religious differences embraced by each individual in society.

The inaugural meeting to design a program to accelerate the formation of an inclusive village has several forms of programs that will be carried out, namely: waste banks, making organic fertilizers, art performances, meetings with community leaders. The training was devoted to two representatives of the congregation at GKPS Resort Bah Sulung, with waste bank training materials facilitated by Evangelist Lamria Sitanggang and organic fertilizer farming which will be presented by Pelpem GKPS and Mr. Rusliadi. The second art performance involves participation

community in Sijambe and Bah Sulung hamlets, as well as a meeting of community leaders which is planned to be attended by the sub-district government, religious leaders and community leaders.

Through the meeting, I hope that the programs that have been designed by the committee will further open up space and opportunities for the community and all parties for the realization of the village

inclusion, and Bah Sulung village will soon be realized as an inclusion village and become a model for other villages. Volunteers or companions of the RBM post of Bah Sulung consist of 13 people and

The disabled members consist of 15 people (people with both physical and mental disabilities). Thus, the Inclusion Village Committee was formed at the Bah Sulung Resort and was inaugurated on Sunday, July 31, 2022 ( Sipayung , 2023)

The RBM post was temporarily held in the GKPS Bah Sulung Elementary School Building which is located next to the GKPS Bah Sulung Church Building. The Bah Sulung RBM Post, along with the time of collecting data on people with disabilities and their families, there are also several programs given to them. For example, providing funds for raising livestock to families, providing financial assistance to people who are able to work to open mini businesses, for example selling ketengan oil and ketengan cigarettes for adults. In addition, volunteers are also assisted by giving corn seeds and then replaced by the central RBM when it has been harvested as the first capital and the profits are used for the family. This assistance is called a revolving fund. (H. Saragih , 2023)

Heterogeneous villages have various differences in terms of economy, education, religion and most importantly differences that are psychologically and physically disabled (disabled) so that sometimes people with disabilities feel alienated from the world of human life. Overcoming people who experience disabilities/disabilities, villages that inspire through village programs are expected to be able to innovate to create programs that touch the equitable distribution of the community regardless of gender differences, social status, and people with disabilities for the community. ( *Program Village Inclusive* , n.d.)

One form of accommodation for people with disabilities listed in Law Number 8 of 2016 concerning Persons with Disabilities is an inclusive life in various aspects. The fulfillment of the right of persons with disabilities to development must start from the smallest government unit, namely at the village level. Moving on from this, Rehabilitation

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GKPS Human Resources (RBM), which is a special service unit to church members and people with disabilities, started a big step to initiate the establishment of an inclusion village, in Bah Sulung hamlet, Dolok Maraja village, Tapan Dolok District, Simalungun Regency. Thus, the Inclusion Village Committee was formed at the Bah Sulung Resort and was inaugurated on Sunday, July 31, 2022. ( *Bah Sulung Ready Towards Village Inklusif*, n.d.)

### **1) Background of the Life of Persons with Disabilities in Bah Sulung village**

Bah Sulung Village is one of the villages programmed by RBM GKPS to become an inclusive village for people with disabilities. Bah Sulung Village has been developed by RBM GKPS into a disability-inclusive village. Persons with disabilities are considered a vulnerable group that often experiences discrimination and infulfillment of rights. In the Bah Sulung community, both people with physical and mental disabilities who live with their families, are often considered helpless and lack their rights in both the community and the church. Lack of care leads to the perception that people with disabilities are different and have a lower quality of life, creating a stigma that they cannot fully participate in society.

Members of the RBM Bah Sulung post involve people with disabilities from the age of 7 to the elderly, with the majority from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Most of their families worked as farmers, causing their children to stay mostly at home. Many members with disabilities at the Bah Sulung post are unable to continue their education due to economic limitations, so they cannot afford to pay school fees at SLB (Special Schools). An RBM member at the post, who is Muslim and has a mental disability, does not have the funds to get therapy, although it is likely that it can still be treated, as his parents admitted. (J. Saragih, 2023) The design of the learning media began with the return of a video demonstration of the subject matter by SLB teachers who are experts in sign language. (Marzal, 2014). The volunteers become social capital in the village to collaborate with other people with disabilities in the village. (Qualified et al., 2023) Volunteers who have a teaching field also replace learning media for people with disabilities in Inclusion Village.

At the RBM Bah Sulung post, programs and activities involve meetings twice a week, which are usually held in the church building and the school building of SD GKPS Bah Eldest. The meeting with volunteers from various fields, such as health, education, and representatives of the GKPS Bah Sulung congregation, lasted for two to three hours. The activity includes learning for people with disabilities who drop out of school, dancing, singing, health checks, and eating together. Elderly persons with disabilities who are unable to attend meetings are still visited to find out their needs, both spiritually and financially, by providing assistance. Service activities (Sitinjak, 2023)



community to people with disabilities by providing training in making herbal supplements to improve the immune system. This training aims to educate the community, train and improve skills to be independent for people with disabilities. Training is very important for people with disabilities, in the Inclusion Village program seeks training for people with disabilities in accordance with their respective talents and interests. (Goddess et al., 2022)

Living life is an absolute right for every human being living in this world. But in reality, these rights cannot be felt by everyone. One of them is someone who has physical limitations or a person with a disability. People with physical disabilities receive special training such as sewing and making dish soap, providing them with activities and helping them become independent and qualified. Some people with disabilities also get business funds for capital such as selling ketengan oil and ketengan cigarettes for youth with physical disabilities. The RBM GKPS program was applied to the RBM post in Bah Sulung even though it did not run completely smoothly. Parents or families of people with disabilities who are economically disadvantaged get revolving funds, both in the form of financial and plant seed assistance. After the harvest effort is successful, the revolving funds can be returned. It is important to note that there is no element of coercion in this case, but rather an effort to apply concern for minorities in need. A 7-year-old child with mental disabilities attends education at SD GKPS Bah Sulung. Some of the teachers at the elementary school are also volunteers from the RBM of the Bah Sulung post. Through (Nanda & Herawati, 2021) (Csy . L. Saragih, 2023)

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guidance from teachers, volunteers, and parents, creating an inclusive atmosphere in schools and around the community. (R. Sinaga, M. Ancient, R. Marbun, 2023)

The people who suffer the most from mental retardation are the parents and families of the children. A time of crisis is when families first realize that their children are usually not like other children. Parents' reactions vary depending on various factors, such as whether the disability is easy to recognize or late to recognize. Another very important factor is the degree of underdevelopment and the absence of defects that are visible to others. People who are mentally retarded feel inferior with other friends, so they feel depressed and far from well-being. (Susanto, 2018) Improvement in the welfare and prosperity of the community, seen from increasing income,

health, and getting jobs, and so on. Welfare has increased due to the existence of the Inclusion Village library program. ( Wulansari et al., 2022)

## **2) Disability-inclusive villages create justice for people with disabilities**

Justice is a complex concept that cannot be defined singly due to a variety of different interpretations. However, in a community or institution, justice can be realized through mutual agreement to improve common welfare. It is important to understand that the creation of justice requires the active participation of each individual personally. In the context of Bah Sulung Village, there are serious problems related to discrimination and marginalization of people with disabilities. They are often seen as different and insignificant human beings in social participation, even considered a burden to their own families. This worsens the condition of people with disabilities in the village. (Rawls, 2006)

In the Infodadin, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia states that the Ministry of Health collects data on people with disabilities through Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) in 2007, 2013 and 2018. In Riskesdas 2018, 3.3% of children aged 5-17 years old have disabilities, at the age of 18-59 years in Indonesia by 22.0%, while in the elderly as many as 74.3% of the elderly can carry out daily activities independently, 22.0% experience

light resistance; 1.1% moderate resistance; 1% heavy resistance; and 1.6% experienced total dependence. The awareness movement is also carried out based on research. Fighting for the rights of people with disabilities on International Day of Persons with Disabilities, ( Ndaumanu , 2020) ( Dawami et al., 2019)

Therefore, it is necessary to design a visual identity to build brand awareness of people with disabilities in the form of

A logo based on visual characters that carries a community care movement for people with disabilities.

In an effort to improve the welfare of people with disabilities in Bah Sulung Village, the establishment of the RBM post as an inclusive village initiative for disabilities is an advocacy step carried out by the community and the church. By referring to John's theory

Rawls about the concept of justice as equality of rights and needs, it is important to make the necessary adjustments. Research has shown that through programs and activities that empower families and people with disabilities, the RBM post in Bah Sulung Village can be a vehicle to realize justice in terms of equality of rights and needs. The goal of disability-inclusive villages is to create change for the better and progress. The word transformation is an absorption of the word transformation, which means change. Of course, the change in question is in a better direction than the previous condition. The term disability is believed to inspire positive things because it encourages changes in the environment, mindset, positive community imagery and attitude. recommends the need for these colleges to address these challenges as urgent if they want to respect the rights of people with disabilities and provide an environment that supports them to succeed academically. (Rawls, 1999) (Food, 2017) (Widinarsih, 2019) (Vincent & Chiwandire, 2019)

The RBM post in Bah Sulung Village plays an important role in providing equal rights to people with disabilities. With the historical background of RBM Bah Sulung which comes from the RBM Synod of the Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS), efforts to make the village inclusive, one of which is through the Inclusive Village program. The purpose of the formation of a disability-inclusive village through the RBM program is to ensure justice for people with disabilities by creating conditions that allow them to have a life

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who are worthy and dignified. Through community service, it was analyzed that when students are involved in games, they tend to become more active, excited, and actively involved in the learning process. Games can turn learning into (Giofanny et al., 2023) practical and interactive experiences, allowing students to apply the concepts they learn in real-life situations. This is one of the effective steps so that people with disabilities feel comfortable.

Equality of rights provided by RBM includes the fulfillment of basic needs such as education, health facilities, and independence efforts. Self-reliance efforts include training in various skills such as sewing, farming, raising livestock, and farming for people with physical disabilities. In addition, people with mental disabilities also receive assistance from cadres who are experts in various fields. This mentoring program is carried out periodically with two meetings a week, where these cadres provide instruction according to their field of expertise. Other equality

is realized through financial assistance to elderly people with disabilities for business capital to meet their living needs and their families. RBM also provides assistive devices such as wheelchairs, canes, hearing aids, and AFO shoes in collaboration with the Central RBM from the Pematang Siantar GKPS Synod.

Human behavior as a social creature is basically influenced and determined by its interaction with its social environment, both as an individual and as a member of a group. The overall equality obtained by persons with disabilities is the result of the active participation of individuals and communities in advocating for their rights, as well as collaboration with institutions such as churches and other institutions. Thus, the activities in the Bah Sulung RBM Post are adjusted to the needs and potentials of people with disabilities as well as the conditions of the Bah Sulung Village area, which is the implementation of community advocacy. The main subject of this justice effort is the individual who experiences injustice, namely people with disabilities. Advocacy measures are actively carried out by organizations and groups of people with disabilities at various levels through their groups and associations, with active participation in various government and non-government activities, one of which is HDI (Rough, 1996)

(International Day of Disabilities). The goal is to achieve equality in all fields in society. (Dawami et al., 2019)

The RBM Bah Sulung Post affirmed its commitment to support individuals vulnerable, poor, and weak, especially people with disabilities. They often face unpleasant treatment in society, such as exclusion, unfair treatment, and limitations in social participation. This adversely affects their lives, increases low self-esteem, and deepens inequality. Therefore, the RBM Bah Sulung Post acts as a forum to promote inclusion, which aims to uphold justice and secure the rights of people with disabilities to live prosperously and happily. In achieving this goal, support and collaboration from families are essential so that people with disabilities feel valued and supported. Families participate in supporting every activity and program organized by the Bah Sulung RBM Post. Human resources as the main support in development towards prosperity. (Raya et al., 2024)

The concepts and principles of justice are at the core of great importance because they

guide social ideals and are broadly connected to society's view of how society should be governed. The various views of justice reflect the diversity of understandings within society, which are influenced by various perspectives on human needs and life opportunities. Therefore, the Bah Sulung RBM Post is establishing relationships with the Church, Government, and Donor in response to this diversity of views and to expand the support network needed in an effort to carry out the mission of inclusion and justice. Inclusion has the requirements of a positive social environment, accessibility and affordability of the physical environment in the form of buildings and infrastructure. In developing accessibility, the Inclusion Village collaborates with donors so that they can reach the needs of the incumbent. (Rawls, 1999) ( Andriani , 2017)

The success of the RBM Post program or activity in Bah Sulung Village is the result of active advocacy of the community who are able to carry out a responsible approach. This community is willing to give time and energy to build a village that is inclusive to people with disabilities. This initiative shows the commitment and struggle of the community and

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family to fight for the rights and interests of the community as a whole, not just for personal interests. The implementation of community advocacy can be realized through the establishment of the RBM Post in Bah Sulung Village, with a focus on identifying obstacles.

welfare barriers faced by people with disabilities. This is done through increasing awareness, support, and active involvement of local communities in an effort to create an inclusive and supportive environment for people with disabilities. Initiatives to form inclusion villages have emerged in several areas driven by awareness to increase the fulfillment of the rights of persons with disabilities, especially the involvement of persons with disabilities in the development process. The inclusion village in question does not mean a village that is specifically for people with disabilities, but a village that provides friendly services for people with disabilities. ( Probosiwi , 2017)

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions of this study show that: 1) The lives of people with disabilities have changed for the better. This can be seen through the welfare of families and communities that are able to accept people with disabilities. Furthermore, economically it is also more prosperous due to empowerment through Inclusion villages. 2) Justice will result in social equality for all

individuals, demonstrating the human dimension by referring to the principles of equality and solidarity. Collaboration with advocacy for the vulnerable is an instrument to create inclusive villages. Everyone must practice justice to ensure that the needs and rights of individuals and groups, especially to vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, are met fairly. Thus, justice will lead to the development of a just and prosperous society, as well as providing recognition, acceptance, and respect for human rights for persons with disabilities.

It is recommended to future researchers who discuss inclusive topics specifically for people with disabilities so that they can be more in-depth. This is because research on the implementation of disability-inclusive villages has not been widely elaborated. Thus, the writing of the research results can be a pilot literature in forming inclusive programs, to create equality and prosperity in society

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