

## **Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 as a Medium to Foster Solidarity, Brotherhood, and the Spirit of Independence at Panau Village, Batam**

Aprizal Djafar<sup>1\*</sup>, A. Ashari<sup>2</sup>, Wina Trisio Simanungkalit<sup>3</sup>, Mustika Maharani Ananda Winayatna<sup>4</sup>, Fadhlan Alfari<sup>5</sup>, Ramdani<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Biology Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Riau Kepulauan University, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Riau Kepulauan University, Indonesia.

<sup>3,4,5</sup>Law, Faculty of Law, Riau Kepulauan University, Indonesia

<sup>6</sup>Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Riau Kepulauan University, Indonesia.

\*Corresponding author: [asharilzp@gmail.com](mailto:asharilzp@gmail.com)

Received: October 2025 | Accepted: November 2025 | Published: January 2026

**Abstract.** Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 was implemented as a medium to foster solidarity, brotherhood, and the spirit of independence in Panau Village, Batam City. This program originated from social conditions in which the community still faces challenges of social fragmentation, limited participation in collective activities, and the lack of public spaces for interaction. The activity was carried out using a participatory approach through collaboration among community service students (KKN), local neighborhood leaders, and community members. The stages included joint planning, socialization, technical preparation, festival implementation, and evaluation. The results indicated strong participation from residents of various age groups, an increase in social cohesion, and the creation of positive interaction spaces that strengthened community solidarity. In addition, the festival encouraged microeconomic opportunities for local vendors during the event. These findings highlight that Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 is not only a commemoration of Indonesia's Independence Day, but also serves as a community empowerment instrument to strengthen social cohesion.

**Keyword:** Solidarity, brotherhood, spirit of independence, Panau Village.

**Abstrak.** Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 dilaksanakan sebagai media untuk memupuk solidaritas, persaudaraan, dan semangat kemerdekaan di Desa Panau, Kota Batam. Program ini berawal dari kondisi sosial di mana masyarakat masih menghadapi tantangan fragmentasi sosial, partisipasi terbatas dalam kegiatan kolektif, dan kurangnya ruang publik untuk interaksi. Kegiatan ini dilakukan dengan pendekatan partisipatif melalui kolaborasi antara mahasiswa pengabdian masyarakat (KKN), tokoh masyarakat setempat, dan anggota masyarakat. Tahapannya meliputi perencanaan bersama, sosialisasi, persiapan teknis, pelaksanaan festival, dan evaluasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan partisipasi yang kuat dari warga berbagai kelompok umur, peningkatan kohesi sosial, dan terciptanya ruang interaksi positif yang memperkuat solidaritas masyarakat. Selain itu, festival ini mendorong peluang ekonomi mikro bagi pedagang lokal selama acara berlangsung. Temuan ini menyoroti bahwa Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 bukan hanya peringatan Hari Kemerdekaan Indonesia, tetapi juga berfungsi sebagai instrumen pemberdayaan masyarakat untuk memperkuat kohesi sosial.

**Kata kunci:** Solidaritas, persaudaraan, semangat kemerdekaan, Desa Panau.

### **How to Citation:**

Djafar A., Ashari A., Simanungkalit WT., Winayatna MMA, Alfari F., Ramdani (2026) Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 As A Medium To Foster Solidarity, Brotherhood, And The Spirit Of Independence In Panau Village. *STICOS: Sustainable Innovation in Community Service*, 1(1), 21-26. Doi. 10.33373/STICOS.v1i1.xxxxx

## **Introduction**

The community is a dynamic social entity, where the success of local development is largely determined by strong solidarity, a sense of kinship, and citizen participation in communal life. Globalization and urbanization often lead to social fragmentation, especially in urban areas such as Batam, which can result in decreased social cohesion at the community level (Putnam, 2000).

This phenomenon is also evident in Panau Village, a region characterized by a heterogeneous population in terms of social, economic, and cultural backgrounds.

Initial observations indicated that the level of community participation in collective activities in Panau Village was relatively low. This situation was further exacerbated by the limited social interaction platforms that could unite various groups of residents. Previous studies have shown that low intensity of social interactions can weaken social bonds and diminish a sense of togetherness within the community (Coleman, 1990; Fukuyama, 1999). Therefore, a social intervention strategy is needed to provide shared spaces for interaction, foster a sense of kinship, and strengthen social solidarity among residents.

In response to this situation, the Community Service Program (KKN) team organized the Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 as a community festival coinciding with the 80th Anniversary of the Republic of Indonesia. The festival was designed not only as a ceremonial commemoration of independence but also as a social empowerment instrument involving active participation from residents, neighborhood (RT/RW) officials, and local partners. The program concept was developed using a participatory approach, which is considered effective in strengthening social capital and community cohesion (Putra & Haryanto, 2021). Thus, the implementation of Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 is expected to serve as a platform for fostering solidarity, enhancing kinship, and revitalizing the spirit of independence among the residents of Panau Village. The objectives of this activity are to create inclusive interaction spaces, reinforce social bonds among citizens, and increase community participation in sustainable social development.

## **Methodology**

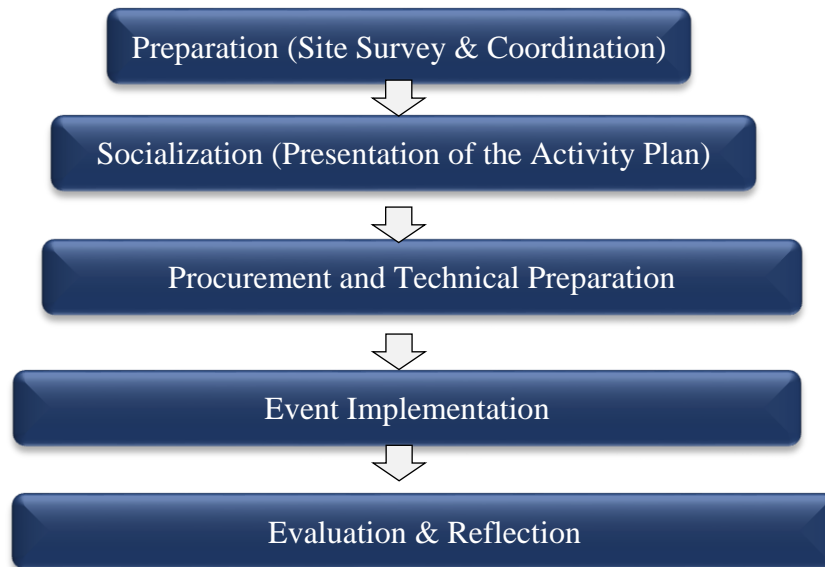
The implementation of Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 employed a participatory approach involving Community Service Program (KKN) students, neighborhood (RT/RW) officials, community leaders, and all layers of the Panau Village population. The event was held in Panau Village, Batam City, Riau Islands, on August 30–31, 2025, coinciding with the 80th Anniversary of the Republic of Indonesia. The location was chosen based on initial observations indicating low community participation in collective activities and limited social interaction spaces, highlighting the need for a social intervention that provides inclusive spaces for togetherness (Coleman, 1990; Fukuyama, 1999).

The initial stage of the activity began with problem identification through discussions with RT/RW officials and community leaders to map existing issues. Subsequently, the Community Service Program (KKN) team and partners designed the festival concept to involve all community components, emphasizing the values of mutual cooperation and kinship. Program socialization was conducted through community meetings, local communication media, and the distribution of information via banners installed at the entrance of Panau Village. Technical preparations, such as creating competition equipment, decorations, and logistical arrangements, were carried out collaboratively, involving both youth and parents, making the activity a shared community effort.

The festival featured various agendas, including community competitions, sports activities, and social events designed to engage all age groups. The peak event on August 31, 2025, served both as an Independence Day celebration and a symbol of renewed community solidarity. This process not only generated momentary enjoyment but also created new social interaction spaces that brought together residents from diverse backgrounds.

To support activity analysis, data collection methods included participatory observation, informal interviews with residents and community leaders, as well as photo, video, and field note documentation. Evaluation was conducted through a reflective forum after the event, where residents shared experiences, benefits, and suggestions for future implementation. This reflective approach is believed to strengthen the sustainability of the activity, as Pretty (1995) emphasizes that community participation in evaluation can enhance long-term program effectiveness.

Thus, the methodology of Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 can be illustrated in the following simple flowchart:



*Figure 1. Flowchart of Activity Stages*

## **Results and Discussion**

The implementation of Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 received full support from the Panau Village community as well as various sponsors who contributed to event funding. Community participation was very high, as seen in the enthusiasm of children, teenagers, adults, and the elderly in taking part in the series of activities. Traditional competitions such as sack races, tug-of-war, and cracker-eating contests successfully fostered a sense of togetherness that transcended age and social status. In addition, local entertainment showcased the creativity of youth and reinforced local cultural identity. The involvement of residents at every stage, from preparation to execution, demonstrated an increased sense of ownership over the program. This aligns with Putnam (2000), who posits that collective participation is a key indicator of strengthened social capital within communities. Furthermore, active community participation reflected growing social cohesion, consistent with Coleman (1990), who emphasizes that repeated social interactions foster trust and solidarity among residents.

An equally important aspect was the presence of local and regional sponsors, including private companies and community leaders, which enhanced the vibrancy of the event and added value by strengthening relationships between businesses and the surrounding community. Sponsor involvement illustrates the synergy between the community, higher education institutions, and the private sector, in line with studies on the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in social development (Haryanto & Putra, 2021). From an economic perspective,

the festival provided business opportunities for small vendors around the venue. During the event, local traders were able to sell food and beverages, which increased their daily income. This phenomenon is consistent with research by Astuti and Wibowo (2019), which shows that community-based activities can act as a stimulus for micro-level local economies.

In detail, the results of the activity implementation can be illustrated in the following table:

Tabel 1. Results of Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 Implementation in Panau Village

Aspect	Description of Results	Impact on the Community
Community Participation	High enthusiasm across all age groups: children, teenagers, adults, and the elderly.	Increased solidarity; residents felt ownership of the event.
Social Activities	Traditional competitions (tug-of-war, sack race, volleyball, etc.)	Created new interaction spaces; strengthened community kinship.
Local Economy	15 local MSME vendors sold food and beverages during the festival.	Daily income of vendors increased by 20–40%.
Sponsor Involvement	Support from companies and CSR funding the event.	Made the event more festive and enhanced social legitimacy.
Evaluation & Reflection	Post-event discussion forum with residents and RT/RW officials.	Developed recommendations for future event implementation.

Ultimately, the festival successfully created interaction spaces that brought together residents from diverse backgrounds. This is particularly important given the heterogeneity of the Panau Village community, which often leads to social distance. Through the festival, intensive interactions were fostered, cultivating a sense of kinship (Fukuyama, 1999). These findings confirm that collective activities based on community participation can serve as an effective instrument to strengthen social solidarity and community cohesion (Pretty, 1995). Overall, there were three main achievements from this activity. First, increased community participation in collective activities. Second, the creation of social interaction spaces that reinforced solidarity and kinship. Third, the involvement of sponsors and microeconomic participation, demonstrating multi-stakeholder collaboration. These outcomes align with the initial objectives of the program, namely to provide a platform that fosters solidarity, kinship, and the spirit of independence in Panau Village.



Figure 1. Competition Implementation

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **Conclusion**

The implementation of Panau Merdeka Fest 2025 in Panau Village has proven to be an effective platform for fostering solidarity, kinship, and the spirit of independence within the community. The event successfully engaged residents across various age groups, strengthened social bonds through competitions and traditional entertainment, and provided inclusive interaction spaces. Furthermore, sponsor support and the presence of local vendors added economic benefits and demonstrated positive synergy among higher education institutions, the community, and the private sector. These achievements indicate that a community-based festival can function not only as a ceremonial celebration but also as a social empowerment tool and a means to strengthen community cohesion.

### **Recommendations**

Nevertheless, several aspects require attention. Technical coordination during preparation faced limitations in resources and time, suggesting the need for more structured and thorough planning in future activities. Additionally, the sustainability of such events heavily depends on collective commitment, so post-event evaluation results should be used as a reference for designing subsequent activities in the following years. Engagement of sponsors and strategic partners should also be continuously expanded to maximize the benefits of the event and reach a broader segment of the community.

### **Acknowledgements**

The writing team extends their sincere gratitude to the Panau Village community, RT and RW officials, and community leaders for their full support in the implementation of Panau Merdeka Fest 2025. Special appreciation is also conveyed to the sponsors who contributed through financial support. Without their assistance, this event would not have been successfully and festively realized.

Thanks are also extended to Riau Kepulauan University, particularly the Research and Community Service Institute (LPPM), for providing guidance, support, and facilitation, enabling the activity to run according to plan. Furthermore, recognition is given to all Community Service Program (KKN) Group 1 students of Riau Kepulauan University who collaborated with dedication to ensure the success of this program.

### **References**

- Coleman, J. S. (1990). *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Fukuyama, F. (1999). *The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order*. New York: Free Press.
- Glass, L. M. (2023). "MSPs for the SDGs – Assessing the collaborative dimensions." *ScienceDirect / artikel kerjasama multi-stakeholder*
- Muyanja-Ssenyonga, J. (2022). *Social Capital in Development: Why the Government Matters*. (SSRN) (keterkaitan kebijakan pemerintah dan modal sosial)
- Ngoma, C., et al. (2024). "Enhancing public health through multi-stakeholder collaboration." *PMC / artikel kesehatan kolaboratif* (menunjukkan bagaimana kolaborasi lintas aktor bekerja dalam konteks pembangunan publik)

- Narayan, D. (1999). *Social Capital and Poverty*. World Bank Working Paper 2167. (konsep bridging & bonding social capital serta dampaknya bagi kelompok miskin)
- Ordoñez-Ponce, E., et al. (tahun tidak disebut). “Stakeholder Roles in Community Development.” *Sustainable Development Journal / artikel dari Wiley*. (Referensi ini digunakan untuk mendukung peran berbagai aktor dalam pembangunan komunitas)
- Ratner, B. D., et al. (2022). “Multistakeholder platforms for natural resource governance.” *Ecology & Society*, 27(2) (ilustrasi peran platform kolaboratif dalam tata kelola bersama)
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Pretty, J. (1995). Participatory learning for sustainable agriculture. *World Development*, 23(8), 1247–1263.
- Wanner, M. S. T., et al. (2025). “Unlocking the transformative potential of multi-stakeholder partnerships.” *Sustainable Development / jurnal terkait* (membahas efektifitas kerjasama lintas aktor)
- Zhu, L., et al. (2021). “The Impact of Social Capital on Residents’ Supportive Attitudes.” *SAGE Open / artikel tentang modal sosial dan dukungan warga*