

Water Project, Solution to Drought in Gunung Kidul Regency

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Students of Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) that undergo a Community Empowerment program (KKN-PPM) seek to address the problem of drought in the Giripurwo village, Purwosari, Gunung Kidul regency. Through Water Project, they try to help local community by making artesian wells, water reservoirs, pipelines, and provision of public toilets and sanitation in order to cope with water shortages.

Water Project Coordinator, Wildan Salsabila, revealed the condition of people of Giripurwo who always experience water shortages throughout the year. In fact, Giripurwo is an area which experienced the worst drought in Gunung Kidul Regency. This is due to the limited water source in the village beside their karst structure soil. These conditions lead to direct water flow towards the underground river with a depth of 100 meters.

"As a matter of fact, shallow wells made by citizens are limited," he explained on Wednesday (31/8) at UGM.

Wildan mentions that in every village there are only a few wells to meet the daily needs of its



residents. But these wells were only able to survive during the rainy season. When the dry season comes, the wells dried up so that residents lose their only source of water.

"People usually buy water or wait for help," he said.

Usually people buy water that has been provided by the Regional Government of Gunung Kidul. The water is sold at Rp120 thousand to 200 thousand per 5,000 liters. The disadvantaged people usually wait for government assistance or rely on the limited water.

Drought conditions and water shortages have been going on for decades in Giripurwo. Generally, the residents already give up on the situation.

"Actually, people have made efforts to overcome this problem by creating deep wells down to 30 meters underneath, but it did not change anything," he explained.

Starting from these issues, the UGM student community service program tried to find solutions to overcome the problems. The program is expected to encourage self-reliance and prosperity of Giripurwo people in a sustainable manner.

From the results of exploration in the field, they found that making new wells is relatively not efficient and not beneficial. Therefore, the UGM team tried to find long-term solutions to cope with the drought issue. They found a potential source of underground water in the Giripurwo village from Bekah Sea. This water source is an underground river beneath a cliff with a height of 80-100 meters above sea level.

"UGM with Giripurwo residents initiated to bring up the water resource," he explained.

Bekah water source is known to have a minimum flow of 30 liters per second throughout the year. The amount is enough to meet the needs of 3,000 families and water needs in Purwosari district.

"The project is made to meet the water need of three villages in the districts of Purwosari and Panggang which faces water shortage. The distribution pipelines are made as long as 14 km," he said.

Implementation of Water Project is started by building a capacity of 5,000 liter water tanks placed in several hamlets. The water reservoir is used as a reservoir of water from wells in the rainy season and water assistance in the dry season. "Through this project, we hope Giripurwo will no longer experience water shortages, especially during the dry season," he concluded. (UGM / Ika)

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