

Article

Implementation of The Green Open Space Development Program (RTH) in Balangan Regency (Case Study of RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau)

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Abstract: The implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program (RTH) in Balangan Regency faces several challenges, including suboptimal target achievement, limited financial resources, inadequate supporting facilities and infrastructure, and low public awareness of environmental cleanliness and maintenance. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program in Balangan Regency and identify the factors that influence its implementation. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation from 11 informants selected using the snowball sampling technique. The data were analyzed through domain, taxonomic, and componential analysis, while data credibility was strengthened through prolonged observation, increased persistence, the use of reference materials, and member checking. The findings indicate that the implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program at RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau has not yet been optimal. Policy objectives are relatively clear and consistent, and the program has an adequate legal basis. However, target achievement remains weak; stakeholder support, especially in financing and infrastructure provision, is insufficient; and the competence of implementers in educating the public still needs improvement. Social conditions, particularly low community participation in maintaining cleanliness, also constrain implementation, although the presence of the green open spaces provides economic opportunities for surrounding small-scale traders. Supporting factors include the strong responsibility and commitment of policy implementers, particularly the Land and Environmental Agency of Balangan Regency. The study recommends stronger budget support, improved facilities and infrastructure, enhanced implementer capacity, more intensive public education and supervision, and greater community participation to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau.

Keywords: Green Open Space, Policy Implementation, Public Policy, Sustainable Urban Development, Balangan Regency

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1. Introduction

Green Open Space (RTH) is an essential component of urban and regional development because it helps maintain the balance between the built and natural environments. Urban green spaces contribute to environmental quality by supporting air purification, temperature regulation, water management, biodiversity, recreation, social interaction, and human well-being [1], [2]. Their ecological and social functions also make green spaces an important element of sustainable urban development [3].

Rapid population growth, land conversion, and the expansion of residential, commercial, office, and infrastructure areas place increasing pressure on the availability and quality of green open spaces. When green areas decline, cities and developing urban

centers can become more vulnerable to heat, flooding, air pollution, reduced biodiversity, and the loss of accessible public spaces. Evidence from green-space interventions also shows that physical improvements are most effective when they are accompanied by social engagement and community participation [4].

In Indonesia, the provision of green open space is supported by Law Number 26 of 2007 concerning Spatial Planning, which establishes a minimum green open-space proportion of 30% in urban areas, consisting of 20% public green open space and 10% private green open space [5]. The policy direction is further operationalized through the Regulation of the Minister of Public Works Number 05/PRT/M/2008 concerning Guidelines for the Provision and Utilization of Green Open Spaces in Urban Areas [6]. These regulations provide an important legal foundation for local governments in planning, developing, utilizing, and maintaining green open spaces.

At the local level, the Government of Balangan Regency has incorporated green open-space development into its regional spatial planning framework. Regional Regulation of Balangan Regency Number 24 of 2013 concerning the Regional Spatial Plan of Balangan Regency for 2013-2032 provides direction for land use, spatial structure, spatial patterns, strategic areas, and community participation in spatial planning [7]. Within this framework, several public green spaces have been developed, including RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, RTH Taman Hijau, RTH Sanggam, RTH Monumen Perjuangan, and RTH Taman Sehati, which function as recreational, social, educational, and environmental spaces for the community.

Despite the regulatory framework, the implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program in Balangan Regency still faces practical challenges. Rapid physical development continues to increase pressure on land availability, while some green open-space areas have not yet achieved their intended ecological and public-service functions. Supporting facilities remain limited in several locations, maintenance is not always optimal, and the use of the areas as comfortable and attractive public spaces still requires improvement.

RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau are among the areas targeted by the local government for development and improvement. These areas are expected not only to provide vegetation and environmental benefits but also to serve as places for recreation, sports, environmental education, and social interaction. Their effectiveness therefore depends on the quality of implementation, the availability of resources, maintenance, stakeholder support, and the extent to which the community participates in protecting and using the facilities responsibly.

Initial observations identified several problems indicating that program implementation has not yet been fully effective. First, program targets have not been optimally achieved, particularly in increasing the attractiveness and number of visitors to RTH Batumandi. Second, limited financial resources constrain the provision and maintenance of facilities and infrastructure. Third, public awareness of environmental cleanliness remains low, as indicated by litter in several park areas. These conditions reduce visitor comfort and weaken the environmental and social functions of the green open spaces.

The implementation of public policy is not determined solely by the existence of formal regulations. It is also influenced by the clarity of objectives, the adequacy of resources, institutional capacity, implementer commitment, stakeholder support, and the surrounding social and economic environment. Public policy analysis therefore requires attention to both policy design and the process through which policy is translated into action [8], [9], [10].

This study adopts the policy implementation framework developed by Sabatier and Mazmanian, which emphasizes the importance of clear policy objectives, a sound causal or theoretical basis, an adequate legal structure, commitment and competence among implementers, stakeholder support, and relatively supportive socioeconomic and political conditions [11]. These dimensions provide an analytical basis for examining why implementation outcomes may differ from the objectives established in formal policy.

Previous research on green open-space policy in Medan similarly identified implementation problems related to the use and management of public space [12]. More

broadly, public policy studies emphasize that implementation should be evaluated by examining the relationship between policy objectives, administrative processes, actors, resources, and outcomes [13]. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program in Balangan Regency through case studies of RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau, and to identify the factors that support or hinder the program. The findings are expected to contribute to public administration and environmental governance studies and to provide practical input for improving green open-space development in Balangan Regency.

2. Materials and Methods

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program (RTH) in Balangan Regency. A qualitative approach is appropriate for examining social and administrative phenomena in their natural context and for interpreting the experiences and perspectives of the actors involved [14]. The descriptive design was used to systematically portray field conditions without manipulating the research object, consistent with administrative research principles [15], [16].

The research was conducted at RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau in Balangan Regency, South Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. These three locations were selected because they are public green-space areas that have become part of the local government's efforts to improve environmental quality while providing recreational and social spaces for the community.

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly through interviews with informants involved in program implementation and with community members who use the green open-space areas. Secondary data were obtained from policy documents, administrative reports, photographs, regulations, and relevant literature. Informants were selected using snowball sampling, beginning with key informants and expanding through recommendations until the information was considered sufficiently saturated. A total of 11 informants participated, including representatives of the Land and Environmental Agency of Balangan Regency and members of the community.

Sabatier and Mazmanian's policy implementation framework was used as the analytical basis [11]. The analysis focused on six aspects: the clarity and consistency of policy goals or objectives, theoretical or causal support for the policy, the strength of the legal basis, the commitment and competence of implementers, stakeholder support, and the stability of social, economic, and political conditions. These dimensions were used to assess the extent to which the program had been implemented in accordance with its objectives.

Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to examine the physical condition of the green open spaces, management activities, available facilities, cleanliness, and patterns of community use. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain information about program implementation, constraints, supporting factors, and improvement efforts. Documentation was used to complement the field data with policy documents, reports, photographs, and other administrative records.

The data were analyzed using domain, taxonomic, and componential analysis. Domain analysis was used to identify broad categories related to program implementation. Taxonomic analysis was then used to organize and elaborate each implementation dimension in greater detail. Componential analysis was used to identify relationships, contrasts, supporting factors, and inhibiting factors across the categories. Data credibility was strengthened through prolonged observation, increased persistence, the use of reference materials, and member checking. These procedures were applied to improve the consistency and trustworthiness of the qualitative findings.

3. Results

The implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program in Balangan Regency was analyzed at RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau using the six dimensions of the Sabatier-Mazmanian implementation framework [11]. The findings show that implementation has progressed in several important areas, but the overall program has not yet achieved optimal results.

Regarding policy goals and objectives, the program has relatively clear and consistent purposes. The green open spaces are intended to provide environmental conservation areas, recreational facilities, social interaction spaces, educational opportunities, and locations that may support small-scale community economic activities. However, the achievement of these objectives remains uneven. Low public awareness of cleanliness and environmental responsibility continues to affect the quality and attractiveness of the areas, as some visitors still dispose of waste improperly. This condition weakens both the aesthetic value and the public-service function of the green spaces.

From the perspective of theoretical and policy support, the program reflects the broader principle that urban green spaces should contribute simultaneously to environmental quality, public well-being, and sustainable development. This orientation is consistent with evidence showing that well-designed and well-managed green spaces can generate ecological, social, and health benefits [1], [2], [3], [4]. In Balangan Regency, however, these benefits depend on whether physical development is followed by effective maintenance, community engagement, and continuous management.

In terms of legal basis, the program is supported by national spatial-planning regulations and the regional spatial plan of Balangan Regency [5], [6], [7]. Regional Regulation Number 24 of 2013 provides the local spatial-planning framework that guides land use and development. The existence of this legal foundation gives the local government formal direction and legitimacy in developing, managing, and utilizing green open-space areas.

The findings concerning implementer commitment and competence are mixed. Officers generally demonstrate a reasonably strong commitment to carrying out their duties, but their capacity to educate and engage the community still needs improvement. Inadequate socialization concerning the functions, benefits, and responsibilities associated with green open spaces contributes to low public participation. This finding is consistent with the view that successful policy implementation requires not only formal authority but also capable implementers, effective communication, and organizational commitment [17].

Stakeholder support remains a major constraint. Local-government support in the form of budget allocation, facilities, and infrastructure has not yet fully met program needs. Several areas require additional playground equipment, seating, waste-disposal facilities, and other amenities to improve user comfort and accessibility. Budget limitations also affect routine maintenance and the ability to upgrade the areas. From an implementation perspective, these resource constraints can reduce the ability of policy actors to translate objectives into consistent service outcomes [8], [9], [10], [11].

Social conditions also influence program performance. Public concern for environmental cleanliness is still limited, creating recurring problems in maintaining the quality of the RTH areas. At the same time, the green spaces generate local economic opportunities, particularly for small traders operating around the sites. This indicates that green-space development has both environmental and socioeconomic implications and that management strategies should balance conservation, public use, and community benefit [2], [3].

The main inhibiting factors identified in this study are inadequate supporting facilities and infrastructure, budget constraints, limited public participation, and insufficient public education. In contrast, the main supporting factor is the commitment and responsibility of the policy implementers, particularly the Land and Environmental Agency of Balangan Regency. The program therefore continues to operate despite

resource and participation constraints, but stronger coordination and support are required to improve implementation outcomes.

4. Discussion

Overall, the implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program in Balangan Regency can be considered partially effective. The program benefits from relatively clear policy objectives, a formal regulatory basis, and committed implementers. Nevertheless, its effectiveness is constrained by resource limitations, gaps in facilities and maintenance, limited implementer capacity for community education, and low public participation. Improving these aspects is essential if RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau are to function as sustainable, inclusive, and attractive public green spaces.

5. Conclusion

The implementation of the Green Open Space Development Program (RTH) in Balangan Regency at RTH Batumandi, RTH Mantimin, and RTH Taman Hijau has not yet been optimal. Based on the Sabatier-Mazmanian implementation framework, the aspects of policy objectives, theoretical support, and legal basis are relatively strong because the program has clear purposes and is supported by spatial-planning regulations. However, implementation continues to face several problems, including suboptimal target achievement, limited implementer competence in educating and engaging the community, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, budget constraints, and low public participation in maintaining cleanliness and environmental sustainability. The primary supporting factor is the strong commitment and responsibility of the Land and Environmental Agency of Balangan Regency, while the principal inhibiting factors are limited resources and insufficient community involvement. These findings indicate that stronger institutional capacity, resource support, public education, and community participation are needed to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of green open-space development in Balangan Regency.

The Land and Environmental Agency of Balangan Regency should strengthen the provision and maintenance of supporting facilities and infrastructure, including playground equipment, seating, waste-disposal facilities, and other amenities required by users. Regular public education and outreach should be conducted to improve awareness of cleanliness, environmental responsibility, and the shared value of green open spaces. Program implementers should also strengthen routine monitoring and evaluation so that maintenance problems and development needs can be identified early. In addition, the community should be encouraged to participate actively in maintaining cleanliness, protecting public facilities, and using the green open spaces responsibly. Stronger collaboration between the local government, implementers, community groups, and other stakeholders will help ensure that the program delivers sustainable environmental, social, and economic benefits.

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