2. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF KARO LAND

2.1 The Geography

Karo regency is located about 77 Km from Medan city, the capital of North Sumatera. The area of karo regency is bounded by mountain range that is situated about 600-1400 m above the sea level, spreading out to Bukit Barisan area. The temperature of karo upland is quid cool, it is around 16°-17° C with the humidity around 28%. The rainy season is longer than the dry season, the first rainy season starts from March to May every year with rainfall around 1000-4000 mm/year. That is why Karo highland has wet tropical climate.

Geographically, Karo district is situated between 2° 50° LU – 3° 19° LU and 97° 55° BT – 98° 38° BT. Karo district is 2.127,25 Km² in width with the amount of people about 500,000 peoples. Karo district consists of seventeen subdistricts, we can see with the number of population and population density of each subdistricts

**Number of Population by Sub District On 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Kecamatan/Sub District</th>
<th>Laki-Laki/Male</th>
<th>Perempuan/Female</th>
<th>Jumlah/L + P</th>
<th>Distribusi/Distribution</th>
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<td>Banyaknya Desa/Total Village</td>
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<td>Luas Wilayah/Area (Km²)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kepadatan Penduduk/Population Density</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mardingding</td>
<td>8.526</td>
<td>8.546</td>
<td>17.072</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Laubaleng</td>
<td>8.889</td>
<td>8.815</td>
<td>17.704</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on the spread out nature and topography situation, Karo area is divided into three morphology, they are:

1) Lowland morphology in Lau Baleng area. It is located in west of Kuta Buluh area, where its high is 48-147 from above sea level and consists of small rivers and hill.

2) Highland morphology in Kabanjahe. Its area cover up Tiga Panah and Simpang Empat.

3) Mountain morphology in Sinabung and Sibayak mountain.

Looking at the map of North Sumatera in eastern part of Bukit Barisan, we will see the location in Karo area, such as:

Sumber/Source: SENSUS PENDUDUK 2010, BADAN PUSAT STATISTIK KABUPATEN KARO
1) The Northern part of Karo land borders on Langkat and Deli Serdang regency.

2) The Southern part of Karo land borders on Dairi and North Tapanuli regency.

3) The Western part of Karo land borders on Southeast Aceh regency (Aceh Province).

4) The Eastern part of Karo land borders on Deli Serdang and Simalungun regency.

Karo district has many interesting places such as hot water bathing in Debuk-Debuk, Lau Kawar Lake in Lau Kawar village (Simpang Empat subdistrict), the famous cities are Berastagi and Kabanjahe. Berastagi is one of tourist towns in North Sumatera that are very famous for their agricultural products, such as fruits, vegetables, and beverage products that is Marquisa Juice which known until the entire archipelago.

In Karo upland we can find some of famous mountains is the pride of Karonese. Some of them are located in the north, they are Barus mountain, Pinto mountain, Sibayak mountain, Simole and Sinabung mountain, in the south there is Sibuaten mountain. In this district we also can enjoy the beauty of Sibayak volcano that is still active. This mountain is located on 2,127 m above the sea level. The meaning of Sibayak is a king, it means that Sibayak mountain is the king mountain according to Karonese ancestor.

2.2 The Religion and System of Belief

Before Christian, Islam, Hindu, and Chatolic spread to Karo land, Karonese society believed in animism. Beside that there are still many gods and spirits that are related to their forefather spirits. Whenever they need them, the sprits can be called.
The calling of the forefather spirit is holding ritual ceremony, where the spirit comes through an intermediary or shaman.

*Perbegu* religion is one of the system of belief of karonese, they believe that every people has soul (*tendi*), when somebody pass away their soul will change to be *Begu*. In 1946, *Perbegu* religion in Karo land had changed become *Pemena by Guru-Guru Mbelin*. The change of this name because there are so many pressure from Belanda Colonial. They express that *Perbegu* is a idolatry religion (Putra 1979:32).

At present time, Karonese have followed Protestant, Catholic, Islam and Hindu religion

In the past time, when the modern religion spread in Karo batak, the people rejected it. Nowadays, most of them believe in Christianity. They believe in Jesus Christ as Human savior. To get the eternal life, people must believe in Him. However, it is difficult for them to forget the old belief and to practice the teaching.

Karo Batak Society adopts the Patrilineal system. Each members of the society follows his or her hereditary family name. All sons and daughters use their father’s clan. After getting married, a daughter has no right anymore to use her father’s clan, but sons have to use their father’s clan forever, although they are married or not.

2.3 The Livelihood

Karo regency is most interested in agriculture. Karonese society was born as agricultural society, since years ago Karo society had been able to cultivate their farmland. They will go to the farmland with some people or with their family to plant the rice, corn, vegetables, and fruits, they go home on the afternoon, maybe at 05.00
Karonese society has many similarities with Chinese in habit to economize and their desire to collect the money (Anderson, 18243).

Karonese is very expert in gold trade, we can find it in Kabanjahe, central market of Medan, Peringgan market, Kampung Lalong market, Pancur Batu market and the other places. Karonese is also expert with agricultural produce trade of Karoland, especially vegetables and fruits, it called Perengge-rengge (trader), relaier and distributor of agricultural produce to go out of Karo regency. The economy of Karonese society in nowadays not only in that aspects but also in a lot of economy sector.

Beside that, Karo has mineral industry that can become livelihood source, such as Marble in Muara Sipongi subdistrict used as building materials; Dolomit in Kuta Buluh is used as dung, to arrange Soil ph, and to make paint, plastic, paper, and cement; Phospat in Lau Baleng village is used as dung; Tross in Tiga Panah, Simpang Empat, Kabanjahe, Payung and Munthe subdistrict is used to make cement, as whitening materials and killing paint, glass, plastic, and lining paper.

Transportation is the other livelihood of Karonese. They, especially men has already managed some public transportation company in Medan, Kabanjahe, Jakarta, they can also become a driver in transportation.

2.4 The Education

For Karonese society, education is very important in their life, because it can increase the knowledge and the level of everyone. They want their children to go to the collage and get the successful in their life so that they can make a proud for their
parents and their family also and they can develop Karo land in many aspects, such as tourism objects, potential places, and the culture too.

By getting the best education in the collage and they got their academic title, it will very helpful them to apply for the job, and to develop their prosperity in the future. They will go to work in young age and after they getting the retirement they can enjoy their life with all that they have.

2.5 The Kindship System of Karo Batak Society

The very important thing in Karo Batak society is Merga Silima, Tutur Siwaluh and Rakut Sitelu. Karonese has clan, called “merga” is used for man and “beru” for woman. Merga or beru is used at the end of someone’s name and also will inherit with “bere-bere”, beru from their’s own mother.

The clan (merga) in karo society consists of five groups, they are Ginting, Karo-karo, Perangin-angin, Sembiring and Tarigan, the fifth of this clan known as Merga Silima. Each clan has subclan (sub-merga) and every karonese has one of that clans (merga, beru and bere-bere).

Merga is the important thing in Karonese society life. It is very useful to express one’s identify and also its relation to find the kindship system (ertutur). In ertutur there are some lining to find our position when we introduce each other. The lining process of ertutur are:

1) Merga or beru, is a family name that is inherited to someone from his father’s family name or from generation to generation, and woman can not inherit to her children.

2) Bere-bere, is a family name that is inherited from beru of their mother.
3) *Kempu (perkempun)*, is a family name that is inherited to someone from mother’s bure-bure.

4) *Kampah*, is a family name from *beru* of great-grandparent (father’s grandmother).

5) *Binuang*, is a family name that is inherited from father’s bure-bure.

6) *Soler*, is a family name which is inherited from *beru* of grandmother (mother’s grandmother).

According to the lining, someone will know his/her position and level, such as father (*bapa*), mother (*nande*), uncle (*mama*), aunt of uncle’s wife (*mami/bibi*), *bengkila* (the designation of wife to father in law), *bibi* (the designation of wife to mother in law), *senina or sembuyak* (a person that has same level), *turang* (a man to his sister or those who have the same *merga* or *beru*), *impal* (the man who has bure-bure same with *beru* of one woman), *silih* (brother in law), *bere-bere*, son/daughter, grandchild (*kempu*), great-grandchild (*ente*), great grandparents (*entah*), *turangku* (the relation that is regarded taboo, for example, one’s husband his my brother’s wife), younger brother and sister (*agi*), brother and sister (*kaka*), *permen* (the designation of father in law to daughter in law), grandfather (*nini bulang*), grandmother (*nini tudung/nondong*), *empung* (father’s and mother’s grandfather), *beru* (father’s and mother’s grandmother). The position of *ertutur* will be different to each person according to the people that is invited to introduce.

*Tutur Siwaluh* is the kindship system concept of Karonese society which is related to introduction process (*ertutur*) and it consists of eight groups, they are *Puang Kalimbubu, Kalimbubu, Senina, Sembuyak, Senina Sipemen, Senina*
Sipengalon/Sendalanen, Anak Beru and Anak Beru menteri. In traditional ceremony, 
Tutur Siwaluh can be divided into specific group depending on necessity in 
traditional ceremony.

The other important things in kindship system of Karonese society is Rakut 
Sitelu or Daliken Sitelu. The meaning of Rakut Sitelu is Sangkep Nggeluh (the 
completeness of life) for karonese society and it consists of three groups, they are 
Kalimbubu, Senina / Sembuyak, and Anak Beru. Eventhough Karonese society can be 
Kalimbubu, Senina/Sembuyak, and Anak Beru, it depends on the situation and 
condition at the time.