

Non-State Actors in De-radicalization Efforts in Indonesia: The Movement Dynamics and Strategies

Yuyun Sunesti¹, Mokhammad Zainal Anwar², Muh Shofiyuddin³

(yuyun_sunesti@staff.uns.ac.id)

Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta¹, Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said, Surakarta², Universitas Islam Nahdlatul Ulama, Jepara³

Abstract. The program for de-radicalizing extremist ideologies in Indonesia has evolved into a collaborative effort involving numerous parties in the country. This initiative engages not only state actors, which are official institutions with the formal authority to combat these ideologies, but also non-state actors. The involvement of non-state actors is considered crucial because many of them can more effectively access communities with extremist ideologies through their specific approaches. This article delves into the extent of non-state actors' participation in countering extremist ideologies in Indonesia. The research adopts a qualitative study approach using a literature review method. By analyzing previous studies on this issue, the article maps out the various non-state actors involved, their forms of intervention, and the opportunities and challenges they encounter in the efforts to de-radicalize extremist ideologies in Indonesia.

Keywords: de-radicalization, extreme radicalism, non-state actors, radical ideology, strategies

1 Introduction

This article synthesizes empirical evidence regarding the extent of the contribution of non-state actors in de-radicalization efforts towards followers of extreme radicalism in Indonesia, focusing on the dynamics and forms of movements and strategies implemented thus far. De-radicalization efforts to counter extreme radical ideas have long been underway in Indonesia, involving both official state initiatives and those led by non-state actors. Each party employs distinct strategies and encounters challenges while grappling with the prevalence of extreme radical ideologies in society. Despite these efforts, radicalism and terrorist activities persist in today's society.

Radicalization is the process of adopting an extremist belief system, often accompanied by a willingness to use, support, or facilitate violence as a means of achieving societal change [1]. De-radicalization, therefore, can be understood as the process of relinquishing extremist worldviews, emphasizing the unacceptability of employing violence for societal impact [2]. Additionally, the National Counterterrorism Agency/BNPT emphasizes that de-radicalization is

an endeavor to diminish and eradicate an individual's radical beliefs [3]. Consequently, it is evident that de-radicalization constitutes a collective effort to neutralize extreme radical thoughts.

De-radicalization efforts have shown significant progress in Indonesia. According to the BNPT National Survey conducted in collaboration with the Nasaruddin Umar Office and Alvara Strategi Indonesia in 2020, there was a decrease in the potential for radicalism compared to 2019. The survey recorded a reduction in the potential for radicalism from 38.4% to 12.2%, with an index of 14 [4]. However, the persistence of radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia indicates that the state's de-radicalization program has not achieved substantial success. [5] criticized de-radicalization as being falsely successful, citing the program's inefficacy in reforming the entrenched ideologies of terrorists.

Beyond the discourse surrounding the effectiveness of de-radicalization efforts implemented by various entities in Indonesia, de-radicalization has been an ongoing process since the mid-2000s. Numerous studies analyzing the roles of state and civil society in de-radicalization efforts are also available. This study identifies at least three emerging forms of contribution in Indonesia: de-radicalization led by the state, non-state actors, and collaborations between the two. These actors encounter diverse forms and challenges in their de-radicalization activities. This article aims to synthesize the various de-radicalization efforts initiated by civil society organizations in Indonesia through a systematic literature review method.

2 Methodology

A systematic literature review is a methodical approach used to identify pertinent studies, summarize their findings, and subject them to critical analysis [6]. The objective of this literature review is to delineate the roles of non-state actors in de-radicalization endeavors within Indonesia. The systematic literature review involves several stages, which include: 1) conducting a comprehensive search for articles pertaining to de-radicalization programs in Indonesia, 2) utilizing platforms such as Google Scholar, 3) saving the identified articles in a database for the purpose of analyzing and synthesizing literature reviews, 4) systematically organizing and extracting data to procure comprehensive insights into the de-radicalization efforts undertaken by non-state actors in Indonesia.

3 Results and Discussion

The genesis of de-radicalization initiatives in Indonesia dates back to the mid-2000s, emerging in response to the 2002 Bali Bombing. De-radicalization, as a concept, embodies efforts to counteract ideologies and actions rooted in violence, aiming for societal transformation. In Indonesia, the focus of de-radicalization efforts primarily revolves around terrorist movements and the proliferation of extremist radical ideas within the Indonesian society. Officially, de-radicalization efforts in Indonesia are spearheaded by the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT), established through Presidential Regulation No. 46 of 2010. However, these programs are not exclusively administered by the state. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) also play a pivotal role in the de-radicalization landscape. As per the United Nations, CSOs or NGOs are non-profit organizations, led by volunteer groups operating at the local, national, or international level, driven by shared interests, humanitarian

values, governmental policy monitoring, advocacy for citizens' concerns, and fostering political engagement at the grassroots level (UN, n.d.). Based on the literature review, various forms of CSOs have been identified, each employing diverse strategies to facilitate de-radicalization programs.

3.1 Civil Society Organizations and De-radicalization

In Indonesia, civil society organizations (CSOs) have increasingly taken on roles in de-radicalization programs, often in response to the perceived shortcomings of state-led initiatives. [7] highlights that when government efforts falter, CSOs are crucial in filling the gaps. With their extensive local networks and contextual knowledge, CSOs possess the experience necessary to confront extremism in Indonesia. Notably, collaborative endeavors between CSOs and the government, particularly the BNPT, are a prevalent approach in the country. Various forms of CSOs engaged in de-radicalization activities encompass religious and non-religious organizations, women's groups, and university-based institutions.

Religious-Based CSOs

Among the actively involved religious-based CSOs are Indonesia's two largest Islamic organizations, NU and Muhammadiyah, along with their affiliated groups like Fatayat NU, as well as foundations such as the Wahid Institute and Maarif Institute [8][7]. The two major religious organizations in Indonesia are renowned for their moderate perspectives, tolerance, and patriotic sentiments. Consequently, various de-radicalization initiatives undertaken by these organizations and their affiliated wings primarily focus on inculcating moderate values, promoting tolerance, and fostering love for the country, all in accordance with Islamic doctrine. These efforts aim to instill these values not only in individuals who have been exposed to radicalism but also in those who have not. Additionally, pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) play a role in de-radicalization activities. Pesantren contribute to the promotion of peaceful Islamic values through their dual roles—educational and social functions [9]

Non-Religious-Based CSOs

In addition to religious-based CSOs, several non-religious NGOs also actively contribute to de-radicalization activities in Indonesia. Notably, foundations established by influential figures in society, including the Prasasti Peace Foundation/the Institute for International Peace Building founded by Noor Huda Ismail, the Peaceful Indonesia Alliance/Alliance of Peaceful Indonesia (AIDA), Ruangobrol.id, and the Circle of Peace Foundation, play crucial roles in fostering deradicalization efforts [7] [10].

Women's Organizations

Women's organizations actively participate in de-radicalization activities, primarily focusing on family-based interventions. [11] identifies two women's organizations, namely Fatayat NU and PKK/Family Welfare Empowerment, as instrumental in conducting intensive de-radicalization work within society. Both organizations concentrate on enhancing family resilience, catering to families both exposed and unexposed to the influence of extreme radical ideologies.

Additionally, the women's wings of prominent organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama, including Aisyiyah and Nasyyatul Aisyiyah from Muhammadiyah, are actively engaged in de-radicalization initiatives [12].

University-Based Organizations

Apart from community-based organizations, universities actively engage in de-radicalization programs through dedicated study centers. The University of Indonesia houses the Research Center for Police Studies (PRIK), founded by renowned psychologist Sarlito Wirawan, which focuses on mindset transformation through various programs, particularly aimed at the young student population in Indonesia. Additionally, the university's Division for Applied Social Psychology Research (DASPR) concentrates on prison-based initiatives. At Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University in Yogyakarta, two study centers, namely the Center for the Study of Islam and Social Transformation (CISForm) and the Kalijaga Institute for Justice (KIJ), spearhead de-radicalization efforts. CISForm utilizes cartoon films distributed on social media, while KIJ designs school-based de-radicalization programs [7] [10].

3.2 Strategies and Approaches

The approach and strategy employed by CSOs and state-CSO collaborations target two distinct groups: individuals exposed to radicalism and those not yet influenced by extremist ideologies. De-radicalization initiatives for individuals who have been exposed to radicalism aim to eliminate their extremist views and behaviors, facilitating their reintegration into society. Conversely, de-radicalization efforts for those not exposed to radical ideologies focus on fostering an understanding of the pitfalls of radicalism, preventing their potential involvement and adoption of extremist views.

De-radicalization of Individuals Exposed to Radical Ideologies

The de-radicalization process primarily targets individuals directly involved in extremist activities. Several strategies are implemented to disengage radicals from their extreme ideologies, including:

Prison-Based Activities

This approach involves direct engagement with terrorist detainees in prison. While the BNPT primarily focuses on ideological aspects, CSOs such as the Division for Applied Social Psychology Research (DASPR) emphasize the economic and psychological dimensions [10]. Support extends not only to prisoners but also to their spouses, providing psychological aid and promoting economic empowerment. Within the prison setting, selected religious leaders facilitate discussions and exchange of ideas. Additionally, initiatives like the Search for Common Ground (SFCG), the Research Center for Police Studies (PRIK), and the Alliance of Peaceful Indonesia (AIDA) have conducted short courses in conflict management within 20 prisons in Indonesia since 2010 [7].

Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment initiatives aim to foster financial autonomy for terrorist prisoners, equipping them with the necessary economic skills for their post-release livelihoods. This comprehensive approach not only targets prisoners directly but also extends to their spouses, who may receive financial support or entrepreneurship training [13]. The ultimate goal is to instill economic resilience within the individual and their family unit.

Transforming Ex-Jihadists into Anti-Radicalism Ambassadors

In addition to employing ideological, psychological, and economic approaches, the strategy involves engaging disengaged jihadists as proponents of peace and tolerance. CSOs like the Research Center for Police Studies (PRIK) collaborate with former terrorists and victims of terrorism, facilitating public discussions on campuses and in community forums where they share their experiences [10] [14]. Similar initiatives have been undertaken by the Alliance of Peaceful Indonesia (AIDA) and the Prasasti Peace Foundation (YPP).

De-radicalization of Individuals Not Exposed

Apart from directly engaging individuals exposed to radical ideology and terrorism, de-radicalization activities also aim to inoculate the general public against the influence of radical ideologies. These efforts encompass various activities, including public awareness campaigns, discussions, and media initiatives.

Anti-Violence Campaigns Led by Former Extremists

A crucial strategy to counter radical ideologies involves former extremists leading campaigns that promote anti-radicalism views. By sharing their personal narratives, disengaged ex-jihadists and victims of terrorism evoke a powerful emotional response, effectively reaching a broader audience [10] [7].

Targeting Youth in De-radicalization Campaigns

Numerous CSOs concentrating on de-radicalization prioritize young people in their peace campaigns. Organizations such as the Wahid Institute, Maarif Institute, the Peaceful Indonesia Alliance (AIDA), the University of Indonesia's Research Center for Police Studies (PRIK), the Search for Common Ground (SFCG), the Peace Prasasti Foundation, the Center for the Study of Islam and Social Transformation (CISForm), and the Kalijaga Institute of Justice [10] [7] direct their efforts at schools and universities across Indonesia, advocating for peace and tolerance.

Global Collaboration

A key strategy involves convening religious leaders worldwide to discuss their roles and explore opportunities in combating extremist ideologies across different nations. In 2016, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) organized The International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL), drawing 300 Muslim leaders from 33 countries. The summit resulted in The Nahdlatul Ulama

Declaration, which outlines eight key points aimed at eradicating Islamic radicalism on a global scale [8].

Media Campaigns

Several CSOs utilize media platforms to propagate the ideals of peace, non-violence, and a nuanced understanding of Islam. Notably, NU actively combats extreme radical ideologies through various media initiatives, such as the production of the film "Rahmat Islam Nusantara." Through this cinematic endeavor, NU aims to advocate for a moderate interpretation of Islam, countering extremist viewpoints [15]. Efforts to counter radical views through the medium of film have also been undertaken by the Center for the Study of Islam and Social Transformation (CISForm) and the Prasasti Peace Foundation (YPP). CISForm produced a cartoon film titled "Jihad fi Sabilillah," distributed across social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. Additionally, the YPP released documentary films, including "Jihad Selfie" (2015), "Pengantin" (2017), and "Seeking the Imam" (2020) [10]. Ruangobrol.id contributed to the media campaign by creating a dedicated website to promote peace. The platform hosts discussions on various topics related to radicalism, terrorism, and intolerance.

3.3 State-Society Partnership as the Optimal Approach

While numerous de-radicalization programs are initiated by CSOs, collaborative efforts between the state and these organizations are considered the most effective approach, as highlighted by [16] [17]. This collaborative model has demonstrated a significant impact on de-radicalization activities, extending from the government level down to grassroots society [6]. Recognizing the value of this collaboration, the BNPT and the police prioritize partnerships with influential organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah, leveraging their strong local networks that extend to the grassroots level. Notably, [10] emphasizes that the government alone cannot fully address the challenges of de-radicalization, necessitating the active involvement of CSOs in engaging with local communities.

4 Conclusion

Through a comprehensive literature review, this paper affirms the instrumental role of CSOs in de-radicalization initiatives in Indonesia. It is crucial to highlight that the involvement of CSOs does not seek to supplant the government's efforts in combatting the propagation of extreme radical ideologies. Rather, CSOs serve as amplifiers, enhancing the effectiveness of government-led programs. Leveraging their strong local networks and profound community penetration, CSOs play a pivotal role in the success of de-radicalization efforts. By facilitating collaborations with the government, bolstered by essential resources such as funding, expertise, legality, and structure, CSOs can further optimize the impact of de-radicalization initiatives at various societal levels.

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