

Integrated Community Development to Alleviate Poverty and Social Problems: Case Study of Desa Berdaya (Empowered Village) Rumah Zakat



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ABSTRACT: This research explores the community empowerment model implemented by Rumah Zakat through the *Desa Berdaya* program to reduce poverty and social issues in Indonesia. The program uses an integrated approach encompassing economic, educational, health, environmental, and disaster mitigation sectors, aiming to improve the quality of human resources through local empowerment. The program also supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in poverty alleviation, good health, quality education, and access to clean water and sanitation. The research findings indicate positive systemic changes in various villages that have received interventions from this program, both in social and economic aspects. Significant improvements in community welfare have been observed, with the program running sustainably at the local level. The program successfully empowered communities to become self-reliant and created long-term impacts on village development in Indonesia.

KEYWORDS: Empowerment; poverty; strength perspectives; community development; philanthropy.

INTRODUCTION

The village is the smallest part of government in Indonesia. The village is synonymous with simplicity, agriculture, livestock and a friendly society. In a sociological perspective, villages have diverse meanings, which can mean *gemeinschaft* community. Politically, the village is the smallest unit of government that has certain authority (Hans, 2016). In addition, the village is often said to be a collection of legal communities that are authorized to administer themselves (Maschab, 2013). The number of villages in Indonesia which reached 82,030 based on the Regulation of the Head of Statistics Indonesia (BPS) number 66 of 2016. The number makes villages a big potential capital for development. However, around 18% of the number is in the category of underdeveloped due to some less developed aspects such as economy, human resources, infrastructure etc. The majority of villagers have a living as farmers while the income as farmers cannot meet their daily needs. Many people start leaving farming and choose to move to the city to get a better life. Currently around 56% of the population in Indonesia lives in rural areas (*Villages-Development-Index-2018*, n.d.).

It is undeniable that poverty is one of the social problems in rural areas. As many as 25.95 million people or 9.82% of Indonesia's population live below the poverty line (*Villages-Development-Index-2018*, n.d.) and 15.81 million poor people live in rural areas. Therefore poverty reduction and community development programs are relevant for rural areas. Poverty alleviation in rural areas is not only government responsibility to find a solution but it has become a joint task of civil society to help each other and ease the burden of human life. Moreover, Rumah Zakat as one of the National philanthropic institutions in Indonesia assist the government in solving poverty problems, especially in the field of community empowerment. Considering the circumstance, Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat (Empowered Village of Rumah Zakat) program was established and developed using integrated community development model.

METHODS

Based on the experience in the field, statistical data and studies conducted by various parties and the importance role of villages in development in Indonesia. Rumah Zakat establishes a program called the Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat. The existence of Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat is expected to reduce poverty in the Village. Besides reducing poverty the project also aiming to restrain the pace of urbanization into the city. The UN predicts that if the rate of urbanization continues, 67% of Indonesia's population in 2050 would be live in a city. The objective of Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat is to develop qualified human capital in three aspects for instance intellectual, emotional and spiritual. Rumah Zakat defines Desa berdaya as:

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"... an empowerment program within the scope of villages (and some urban villages), through an integrated approach of community development programs such as, economics, education, health, environment and disaster preparedness with the target of growing and developing of local institutions that are empowered to overcome their own problems by combining the strengths and assets owned and collaborating with other parties, especially the village government "(Rumah Zakat, 2018).

As of August 2018, the number of Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat is 1.242 villages as well as some urban villages scattered throughout Indonesia. There will be 5.323 empowered villages all around Indonesia by 2023. The increasing number of Desa Berdaya, optimistically, will have a massive impact on poverty reduction program.

Furthermore, Desa Berdaya is determined by finding the location of the village that is considered need to be empowered, followed by analyzing the village's human resources and then recruiting trainees to become Relawan Inspirasi (Desa Berdaya community worker). Besides that, it also refers to the Regulation of the The Minister of Village, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number 19 of 2017 concerning Determination of Priority for the Use of Village Funds for Underdeveloped Villages, Developing Villages and Developed Villages. Consequently, it is important to identify the the status of the village, whether it is underdeveloped or developed village. There are several steps in the implementation of the Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat that must be followed, including human resource recruitment, training, social mapping, program implementation and village independence.

The first stage in the implementation of Desa Berdaya is the recruitment of Relawan Inspirasi (Desa Berdaya community worker). Relawan Inspirasi (RI) are young people from the local area who have the duty to assist the community during the implementation of the program in Desa Berdaya. RI is recruited from potential young men from the local area who have passion and capability to empower their native villages. There are two ways of RI recruitment process, firstly, if the Rumah Zakat meets the qualified people, their village is made as an empowered village provided that their village is not in the qualifications of developed village. Secondly, if Rumah Zakat need to target certain village areas that are in the qualification of disadvantaged villages, then Rumah Zakat would seeks for qualified people to become Relawan Inspirasi.

The second stage of the implementation of Desa Berdaya is the training for RI. This training aims to equip RI with Desa Berdaya programs and to develop the RI to be ready to play a role in their respective villages. The training includes: introduction to the institution, project management, Social Mapping, spiritual development by RI, RI's rights and obligations, coordination channels, program catalogs and empowered village index.

The third stage, RI would conduct social mapping after they are trained. Social Mapping is a systematic process of drawing people and it involves collecting data and information about the community including the social profile and problems that exist in the community. Social mapping is carried out in a participatory and empowering manner. The social mapping process is carried out in a participatory manner with the local community and RI functions as a facilitator so that there is a systematic learning process, using critical intelligence to discuss their actions and develop them, while identifying and exploring the social conditions of the community to make social changes. The action plan is the final result of the process of preparing a social mapping that includes the village monograph, the profile and the action plan of the village itself.

The fourth stage is the implementation of an action plan that contains the village visions, the village potentials, the village problem mapping, the draft of budgets and programs that have been agreed with the village community. Then the action plan is sent to the Rumah Zakat to be verified and if it has obtained Rumah Zakat approval, it can go to the next stage, namely the provision of funds by Rumah Zakat, which is integrated with the strengths and assets of the local community.

Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat in carrying out its empowerment has several programs which are divided into compulsory and supporting programs. The compulsory program consists of capacity building and economic empowerment, while supporting programs consist of health, education, environmental and disaster mitigation empowerment. The last stage of the program implementation is the realization of independent empowered village. After the village is declared to be qualified as an independent and sustainable village, Rumah Zakat will terminate the program. Therefore, Rumah Zakat can focus on other villages that need empowerment.

Desa Berdaya would be in the termination phase if the empowerment of the village have been carried out for a maximum of five years. Another indicator of termination is that the village has been able to integrate community development programs, economics, education, health, environment and disaster preparedness, overcoming its own problems by combining the strengths and assets owned and established community-owned enterprises (Badan usaha Milik Masyarakat – BUMMAS) or social enterprises that will help and ensure sustainability and the development of the programs that have been implemented. BUMMAS is managed by the community and the benefits are used by the community. BUMMAS produces productive fund or development to support community empowerment in the village.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Desa Berdaya Contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In order to achieve SDGs targets in Indonesia, Partnership need to be maintained in resource mobilization from four stakeholders, namely the government, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), philanthropy, businesses and academics. Rumah Zakat as an international philanthropic institution have goals that are in line with the national SDGs targets through the distribution of various programs of ZISWAF (Zakat, Infaq, Shodaqoh, and Endowments) funds. In terms of role in realizing the goals of the SDGs, Rumah Zakat implements various programs in economics, education, health, and the environment for the lower middle class or the poor. The implementation of the program is carried out in various points of Desa Berdaya areas throughout Indonesia.

As the implementation of Rumah Zakat program, Desa Berdaya has a concept that is based on community empowerment with a bottom-up intervention model. Bottom-up intervention model is a pattern of empowerment that respects and recognizes that the lower-income communities have the potential and assets to meet their needs, solve problems, and be able to do productive efforts with the principle of self-reliance and togetherness (Aryo, 2017). To achieve the current SDGs goal, Rumah Zakat will proceed with deepening engagement through various community empowerment programs in Desa Berdaya. Following are the forms of Zakat House contributions.

1. No Poverty

As many as 25,95 million people or 9,82% of Indonesia's population live below the poverty line (BPS, 2018) and 15,81 million poor people live in rural areas and 10,14 million poor people live in urban areas. This figure is still quite large, therefore, it needs an effort to reduce poverty to make the people in rural areas more prosperous. Rumah Zakat implements economic empowerment program to overcome poverty in Indonesia.

Beneficiaries of various Zakat Houses economic programs have achieved 177.468 people in 2016 with a growth of 41% compared to 2015 which reached 123.963 people. This figure is significantly increased and has a positive impact on society since the greater the achievement of beneficiaries, the wider the usefulness of the economic program of Rumah Zakat.

In order to overcome poverty, population income needs to be adjusted. This is done through entrepreneurial assistance programs namely business assistance, skills training, business facilities, business capital, assistance on Good Manufacturing Practice, product strengthening, legality, and network strengthening. This program can increase income sources to 7,935 members or households as of April 2018 on an ongoing basis in micro businesses, agriculture and livestock

On previous research, the program provides business capital for the poor in 78 Desa Berdaya areas in 2016. The data source comes from capital data and turnover of 1.672 mustahiq (the Poor). The method used in this research is simple linear regression. 91,26% is given to beneficiaries with poor asnaf groups and given capital assistance has a strong relationship to turnover, with a large influence of capital on turnover of 44.7% where a large model of capital influence on turnover is $y' = 1,285,584,312 + 1,217 x$. This study shows that the provision of business capital assistance to beneficiaries affects the turnover earned.

2. Good Health and Welfare

Rumah Zakat gives health improvement in Indonesia by providing quality health services. Rumah Zakat brings public access to quality health services. In 2017, Rumah Zakat has reached 1.604.605 beneficiary service, which has increased by 12% compared to 2016 that has reached 1.438.558 people. The benefit is in the form of providing primary health care through pratama clinics, providing assistance to people who have difficulties in medical expenses, providing mobile health services to reach difficult areas, providing transportation facilities in the form of free ambulances to overcome geographical access constraints. In 2017, Rumah Zakat manages 8 pre-hospital of inpatient clinics serving 75.050 people, ranging from public services, maternity and children health, family planning, childbirth, teeth, to circumcision and minor surgery

In addition, indicators of health and welfare are reducing maternal mortality, under-five infant mortality and the proportion of members who use birth control devices. This is done with the Free Maternity Service program. Through this program, the number of live births is 953 in 2017, with the achievement of maternal birth 100% safe. Maternal and child health services successfully serves 20.878 beneficiaries in 2017, as well as 6.282 Family Planning (Keluarga Berencana – KB) participation. The total Maternity Service program in 2017 reached 28,113 people with an increase of 2% compared to 2016 which reached 27,624 people.

Another indicator for achieving health and welfare is the decreasing non-communicable diseases. The increasing mortality of non-communicable diseases and the decreasing mortality of infectious diseases in epidemiology of disease transition makes Rumah Zakat more concentrates in overcoming non-communicable diseases. The program approach is carried out by Rumah Zakat by creating an independent society for healthy living. The program is carried out by reactivating the existing Community Based Health Unit (UKBM), namely Posyandu Balita (Integrated Health Service Unit of Under-Five Infant), Posyandu Lansia (Integrated Health Service Unit of Senior Citizen) and School Health Unit (Unit Kesehatan Sekolah – UKS).

3. Quality Education

Rumah Zakat education program are Beasiswa Anak Juara (Champion Children's Scholarships), Beasiswa Sekolah Juara (Champion School Scholarships), Pembangunan Sekolah (School Construction), Guru Juara (Champion Teachers), Mobil Juara

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(Champion Cars) and Bantuan Sekolah Pedesaan (Rural School Assistance). This program is in line with several SDGs indicators, namely the rate of school participation and the improvement of the quality of formal education institutions. In school enrollment rates, the program is carried out through Sekolah Juara and Beasiwa Ceria (Cheerful Scholarships). In 2016, the school enrollment rates aged 7-12 is 10.001 children, school enrollment rates aged 13-15 is 5.418 children, school enrollment rates aged 16-18 is 3.680 and school enrollment rates aged 19-24 is 89 children, with the number of Sekolah Juara graduation of 99.4%.

Another indicator for achieving quality education is improving the quality of formal education institutions. Rumah Zakat provides quality free school programs through Sekolah Juara. In 2017 Rumah Zakat manages 17 Sekolah Juara that consist of 2.059 students, consisting of Sekolah Dasar Juara (Elementary Champion), Sekolah Menengah Pertama Juara (Junior High School Champion and Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Juara (Vocational School Champion). The quality of champions' school education institutions can be seen from student achievement. Throughout 2016, there are 498 events or competitions won by Siswa Juara, in local, city, provincial, national and international levels.

In other educational programs, such as Gizi Sang Juara (Nutrition Champion) program that provides healthy food for students at the Sekolah Juara supervised by Rumah Zakat aims to improve students' physical endurance as part of efforts to fulfill the health and nutritional intake of students, so that the development of learning and student achievement increases. This program is enrolled by 26.681 students in 2017 and it means an increasing by 22% compared to 2016 that reaches 21.836 students. This number continues to increase every year and is expected to have a positive impact on the health of students and reach a wider area.

4. Clean Water and Sanitation

The role of Rumah Zakat in ensuring the availability and management of sustainable clean water and sanitation for all is indicated in the household indicators that have access to clean water and proper sanitation. This is done through the Water and Sanitation for All program, namely the provision of clean water and public sanitation programs in the Desa Berdaya area with communities that have limited access to clean water facilities to improve the health of villagers. This program has benefited 1.682 households, equivalent to 6.728 people in 10 Indonesian regions. This program consists of sharing water through drilling water channels and providing clean water, water well with joint sanitation development and community sanitation independence posts that makes healthy behaviors through community health empowerment.

Outcome Desa Berdaya

1. Enhancing Community Capacity

Community development is seen as changes that occur in people's lives that relate to basic conditions of society such as the economy, social, culture and environment where they live that is expected to be better after the capacity building of the community (Robinson & Green, 2011). In achieving changes towards a better life, there are several steps that must be taken by the community in economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions.

Increasing the capacity of communities in Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat can be seen from the implementation of programs based on values that have been built to increase community capacity, namely in terms of participation (Cohen & Uphoff, 1977), empowerment (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995), ownership (Lachapelle, 2008), and social capital (Potential of Social Capital for Community Development Report of the APO Survey and Symposium on Redesigning Integrated Community Development, 2003).

a. Partisipasi (Participation)

The facilitator or RI (Relawan Inspirasi) encourages the community to participate in the implementation of the community empowerment program. The examples on the site are such as:

- 1) Involvement of Karang Taruna (Local Youth Organization) and a number of people in overcoming the problem of garbage which is quite alarming. At present, with the active participation of citizens and Karang Taruna in the form of ideas, funds and energy, the environment in several villages is increasingly beautiful, clean and healthier.
- 2) Formation of Relawan Lokal (Local Volunteers) from local villages. RI will experience difficulties in carrying out various community empowerment programs without this Relawan Lokal. The ideas and active participation from Relawan Lokal gives much assistance in the implementation of the program and its development.

b. Empowerment

Empowering the community cannot be separated from efforts to increase the capacity of the community who are unable to handle the problems of poverty and underdevelopment.

Empowerment carried out in Desa Berdaya is sustainable, controlled, involves community participation, and independence. Many empowerment programs are well implemented to help people to have the ability to improve their standard of living in spiritual (capacity building), economic, education, health and environment. All empowerment programs carried out in this empowered village have produced benefits for people in need and that includes several success stories from each village.

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c. Ownership

Community empowerment programs must develop a sense of community ownership of the process and structure of their life. Planting a sense of ownership that is initiated by Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat through RI has produced a community empowerment program that can solve various problems in the community.

The empowerment program that has been carried out is the result of the initiative of local leaders and citizens who show their sense of belonging to the program that is based on the responsibility and concern of the citizens. For example: In the implementation of programs held by the RI, Rumah Zakat community is involved, such as contributing funds in the construction of mosques and madrasas so that they continued to grow, helping to develop cooperatives, initiating to establish BUMMAS, and establishing other sustainable programs. The community considers that all the programs from the empowered villages belong to them.

d. Social Capital

The form of community capacity building in terms of social capital in Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat is influenced by the active role of the facilitator or RI Rumah Zakat as one who is trusted by the community. The increase in social capital occurs due to the process carried out is based on the participatory methods and togetherness in carrying out programs that have been compiled in the action plan. During social mapping, people are invited to think critically, identify the problems and social conditions they face, and take appropriate actions to overcome them. This is all a systematic learning process that brings fellow citizens closer one to another. The community becomes more friendly with each other since the activities are carried out together, community contribution is increasing in social and economic program development and strong cooperation in building social facilities etc.

2. Enhancing Economic Empowerment

Economic programs that have been carried out have a positive impact on the people in Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat, including some villages have implemented appropriate technology and modern science such as agriculture and animal husbandry, so that production costs decline and production increase, as well as expanding market production. The emergence of a variety of product innovations, such as processed gardening products, attractive product packaging, processed various SME snacks, modern breeding systems, etc., not to mention some new markets, BUMMAS and even investments from outside the village have emerged to increase productive and sustainable income.

3. Increasing Educational Empowerment

Rumah Zakat provides decent education assistance for the underprivileged in the area of Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat throughout Indonesia. This assistance has given contribution to the improvement of the welfare of low-income groups or the poor. Some educational programs in the Rumah Zakat are, Beasiswa Anak Juara, Beasiswa Sekolah Juara, Pembangunan Sekolah Juara, Guru Juara, Mobil Juara, dan Bantuan Sekolah. In addition, initiatives from local communities emerged such as the development of pesantren which are currently in the legalization process and the development of learning facilities as the construction of the Tahfidz House; and trainings tailored to the needs of the community.

4. Improving Health Empowerment

Rumah Zakat as a philanthropic institution participates actively in health and welfare through Senyum Sehat (Healthy Smile) program. This program is a program to improve the quality of public health based on individual, communal, and non-governmental organizations. Rumah Zakat health program includes mass circumcision, health assistance, free ambulance, free clinics, and nutrition gardens.

These health empowerment-related interventions are carried out by strengthening social resources for health, promoting solution of health problems, and promoting connections with social networks. The program that has been carried out by Rumah Zakat includes inviting the medical staff community to do free treatment for the community, providing health counseling in order to cope with an unhealthy environment in people's homes, as well as promoting the importance of routine child health checks to Posyandu. Rumah Zakat health program also initiates garbage banks to solve waste processing problems in the neighborhood.

5. Enhancing Environmental Empowerment

The success of the environmental program carried out in the Desa Berdaya Rumah Zakat can be seen from the following programs: a) Water well (in several Desa Berdaya areas that have unsafe water and poor sanitation that causes various diseases; hold a Kampung Berseri program (Bersih, Sehat, Asri) initiated as a sustainable program, for example through the garbage bank program; the existence of a Clean Water Sharing program in drought area of Desa Berdaya or in a disaster area. b) Positive attitude for the environment, in Rumah Zakat environment program, people are given education to be more efficient and optimal in using clean water by empowering water sanitation. In the Garbage Bank program, people are given training to recycle garbage that has been collected in order to have more economic value for the community. c) In the program carried out by rumah Zakat, there are several trainings on the correct way to utilize existing environmental facilities, for example how to use and maintenance the toilets and keep them clean and suitable for a long time.

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CONCLUSION

The evidence from integrated community development (Desa Berdaya) initiatives reveal that ideas and projects emerging from the community as a whole have a higher potential for implementation, since they are emerging from the reality as perceived by the local communities. The final outcome of participatory process in this program contributes greatly to the capacity building of community, economic empowerment, education, health, and environment. The program also reduces social problems and poverty and fulfil some of SDGs goal such as no poverty, good health and well-being, quality of education, clean water and sanitation.

Systemic changes are seen and appear in some Desa Berdaya program. This shows positive change and aligns with the beneficiaries of Desa Berdaya who is actually the poor. In addition, the changes have also affected the 'market system'. It is expected that the changes would be sustainable, able to change the mindset and habits of the community, and leading to an increase in welfare.

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