

## **OPTIMIZING PRAYER AND QUR'AN HOUSES THROUGH ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN TARAI BANGUN VILLAGE**

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### **Abstract**

Riau Province has long demonstrated a strong commitment to disseminating religious knowledge. However, one prayer house and one Qur'an house in the target area have experienced a decline in productivity due to low community interest and motivation to organize educational and skills-based activities that could develop local potential. In response to this condition, this Community Service Program aims to optimize the functions of the prayer house and Qur'an house through structured training programs, diverse community activities, and the establishment of local cadres to ensure the sustainability of both activities and learning modules. This study adopts the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach, emphasizing collaboration with community members, participatory discussions, joint planning of activity schedules, and ongoing follow-up for each implemented program. Over a one-month implementation period, the program achieved several significant outcomes, including improved Qur'an reading proficiency among women and children; the emergence of new local cadres committed to continuing the tahsin program; strengthened social cohesion and collective awareness within the community; and the production of practical handicraft products with economic value. These findings indicate that optimizing community-based religious institutions through an asset-oriented approach can effectively enhance religious literacy, social solidarity, and local empowerment.

*Keywords:* Optimization, Asset-Based Community Development, Community Potential

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## Introduction

Islamic education has been integral to Indonesian society for centuries, with religious facilities serving as fundamental pillars for spiritual and social development. The importance of learning and teaching the Qur'an is emphasized in the hadith narrated by Uthman Radhiyallahu 'Anhu, where the Prophet Muhammad Shalallahu A'laihi Wasallam stated:

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ (رواه البخاري)

*The best of you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it (HR. Bukhari).<sup>1</sup>*

This prophetic guidance underscores the significance of Qur'anic education as a cornerstone of Islamic community development, making prayer houses (musholla) and Qur'an houses (rumah tahfidz) vital institutions in Muslim communities.

Riau province has served as a gateway for Islamic propagation in the Indonesian archipelago since the 13th century. The process of Islamic education in early Riau was conducted through traditional institutions such as surau, langgar, and mosques, which functioned not merely as places of worship but also as comprehensive centers for disseminating religious, cultural, and social knowledge. According to Roza, Malay culture in Riau is intrinsically connected to Islamic teachings, with Islam being deeply integrated into daily life and social practices. This historical foundation has established a strong tradition of community-based Islamic education that continues to shape the province's religious landscape.<sup>2</sup> Despite this rich heritage, contemporary challenges in maintaining the vitality of religious facilities have emerged, particularly in rural communities, where resource constraints and declining community engagement threaten the sustainability of these institutions.<sup>3</sup>

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) has emerged as a transformative paradigm in community empowerment, shifting focus from deficit-based approaches to recognizing and mobilizing existing community strengths.<sup>4</sup> Harrison et al. demonstrate that ABCD enables communities to identify and leverage internal assets, including individuals, organizations, physical resources, and social networks, to drive sustainable development. Unlike traditional needs-based interventions that emphasize community deficiencies, ABCD empowers communities by building on their existing assets, fostering ownership, and long-term sustainability. Mathie and Cunningham argue that this approach transforms community members from passive recipients of aid to active agents of change, thereby enhancing both individual capacity and collective efficacy.<sup>5</sup>

Religious facilities, particularly mosques and prayer houses, have been increasingly recognized as valuable community assets that extend beyond their liturgical functions.<sup>6</sup> Sholikatin et al. emphasize that mosques in Indonesia serve multifaceted roles as centers of education, social welfare, and community organization, thereby serving as strategic platforms for holistic community development.<sup>7</sup> Research by Muhamad and Rahma indicates that optimizing religious facilities can significantly enhance community cohesion, educational outcomes, and social capital, particularly in communities where these institutions hold cultural and spiritual significance. Furthermore, studies

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Sabih Al-Bukhari* (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishers, 1997).

<sup>2</sup> Azyumardi Azra, "Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia: Tradisi Dan Modernitas Menuju Milenium Baru," *Studia Islamika* 8, no. 1 (2001): 1–28, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v8i1.686>.

<sup>3</sup> Karel A Steenbrink, *Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah: Pendidikan Islam Dalam Kurun Moderen* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> John P Kretzmann and John L McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* (Chicago: ACTA Publications, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> Alison Mathie and Gord Cunningham, "From Clients to Citizens: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Community-Driven Development," *Development in Practice* 13, no. 5 (2003): 474–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0961452032000125857>.

<sup>6</sup> Ellya Roza and Darmawan Tia Indrajaya, "Peran Rumah Tahfidz Dalam Pembinaan Akhlak Anak Di Provinsi Riau," *WARAQAT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 6, no. 2 (2021): 145–62.

<sup>7</sup> Umi Sholikatin, Sulistyowati Irianto, and Yasraf Amir Piliang, "Peran Masjid Dalam Pemberdayaan Masyarakat: Studi Kasus Di Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 28, no. 2 (2021): 289–318, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v28i2.20145>.

of Islamic educational institutions demonstrate that effective management and community participation are critical to sustaining religious programs and achieving developmental goals.<sup>8</sup>

The sustainability of community development initiatives depends heavily on the systematic development of a cadre and leadership development.<sup>9</sup> Syahputra and Darmansah highlight that cadre development is essential to ensuring program continuity, particularly when external facilitators withdraw from communities.<sup>10</sup> Without strategic investment in local leadership, many community initiatives experience significant decline or complete termination once founding leaders or external support systems are no longer present. Kustiyono emphasizes that youth organizations and structured cadre programs serve as crucial mechanisms for transferring knowledge, skills, and organizational capacity across generations, thereby ensuring long-term program sustainability.<sup>11</sup>

Despite the growing body of literature on ABCD and community empowerment through religious facilities, significant gaps remain in understanding how to implement asset-based approaches effectively within underutilized Islamic educational institutions in rural Indonesian settings. Previous studies have primarily focused on urban contexts or large-scale mosque programs, with limited attention to smaller religious facilities such as prayer houses and Qur'an houses in village communities. Furthermore, while the importance of cadre development is well-established, there is insufficient empirical evidence on integrating comprehensive cadre training with module-based sustainability mechanisms within ABCD frameworks. Additionally, few studies have examined the specific challenges and opportunities of revitalizing dormant or declining religious facilities through community-driven, asset-based interventions that simultaneously address Qur'anic education, social cohesion, and economic empowerment through skills training.

Tarai Bangun Village in Tambang District, Kampar Regency, Riau Province, exemplifies these challenges. The village is home to the Al-Musthafa Prayer House and Annajah Qur'an House, both of which have experienced a significant decline in activity and community engagement. According to Sayyidatul Adawiyah, a teacher at Annajah Qur'an House, the facility faces critical obstacles, including a shortage of qualified teaching staff, minimal ongoing Qur'anic education programs, and inadequate supporting infrastructure. Similarly, the Al-Musthafa Prayer House has struggled to organize constructive activities that motivate community participation. The Village Head, Andra Maistar, S.Sos., emphasized that optimizing these facilities is crucial not only for religious functions but also for establishing centers of learning and community empowerment that strengthen social bonds among residents. This situation reflects a broader pattern in rural Indonesia, in which valuable community assets remain underutilized due to resource constraints, limited organizational capacity, and insufficient community mobilization.

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<sup>8</sup> Moeftich Hasbullah and Ida Rosyidah, "Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Berbasis Masjid Di Indonesia: Antara Ideal Dan Realitas," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 40, no. 1 (2020): 12–28.

<sup>9</sup> Syarifah Hanum Lubis and Muhammad Ridwan, "Penguatan Kapasitas Kader Dakwah Melalui Pendampingan Intensif Di Kabupaten Deli Serdang," *Al-Arkhabiil: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 1, no. 1 (2022): 67–80.

<sup>10</sup> Iswandi Syahputra and Darmansah, "Pengembangan Kader Dakwah Untuk Keberlanjutan Program Pemberdayaan Di Pedesaan Sumatera," *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 26, no. 3 (2020): 234–51.

<sup>11</sup> Edy Kustiyono, "Organisasi Kepemudaan Dan Pengembangan Kader Untuk Program Komunitas Berkelanjutan," *Asian Journal of Community Engagement* 5, no. 1 (2021): 78–95.

Tabel. 1: Asset-Based Community Development

NO	CAPITAL	DEFENISI
1	Human	Includes the abilities, knowledge, education, skills, and potential that the community has to strengthen the social order.
2	Natural	Also known as environmental capital, this refers to the use of existing natural resources, including renewable and non-renewable resources.
3	Physical	Also known as environmental capital, it refers to the use of infrastructure, transportation, educational facilities, health facilities, and other resources.

This study employed participatory action research grounded in the ABCD methodology, a community-driven approach that focuses on mobilizing existing assets rather than deficiencies. Implementation followed the 5-D Cycle:<sup>12</sup> (1) **Define**: Asset mapping identifies physical assets (facilities), human resources (teachers, leaders, craftspeople), social capital (networks), and cultural assets (Islamic traditions). (2) **Discovery**: Appreciative inquiry emphasized strengths and aspirations. (3) **Dream**: Collective visioning for optimized multifunctional facilities. (4) **Design**: Collaborative planning developed schedules, curricula, and frameworks. (5) **Destiny**: Implementation while building sustainability through cadre training.

The one-month program (March-April 2024) strategically coincided with Ramadan and integrated: tahsin classes for mothers; children's programs combining tahsin and prayer instruction; handicraft training; Ramadan social programs (takjil distribution, communal iftar, lectures); and cadre development through teaching methods and modules.

Data collection employed participant observation, structured interviews, focus groups, attendance records, skill assessments, and photographic documentation. Participants included 13 mothers, 30 children in Qur'anic programs, 25 children in handicrafts, and numerous community members.

Research received formal approval from the Tarai Bangun Village Government through Village Head Andra Maistar, S.Sos., and from facility management. All activities are aligned with local authorities and religious leaders. Adult participants provided voluntary informed consent; for children, parental consent was obtained. Personal data was handled confidentially, with identities anonymized. Photographic documentation occurred only after explicit permission. Participants were assured that participation status would not affect community standing or facility access.

### Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings from a one-month community service intervention that implemented Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) in Tarai Bangun Village, with a specific focus on revitalizing Al-Musthafa Prayer House and Annajah Qur'an House.<sup>13</sup> The results are organized to address the four research questions established in the Introduction: (1) How ABCD can effectively revitalize underutilized religious facilities, (2) What strategies optimize community participation and mobilize local assets, (3) How comprehensive cadre development systems ensure sustainability, and (4) What measurable outcomes emerge from integrating Qur'anic education, social empowerment, and skills training. Following the presentation of results, we discuss their significance in relation to existing literature and broader implications for community development practice.

<sup>12</sup> David L Cooperrider and Diana Whitney, *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005).

<sup>13</sup> Mathie and Cunningham, "From Clients to Citizens: Asset-Based Community Development as a Strategy for Community-Driven Development."



Figure 1. Distribution of the Qur'an and Tahsin class for mothers

*Asset Optimization Implementation Through the ABCD Framework*

The implementation of the ABCD methodology in Tarai Bangun Village successfully transformed how the community perceived and utilized their religious facilities. Asset optimization, as defined in the Indonesian Language Dictionary (KBBI), refers to the maximization of resource use to achieve optimal outcomes. In this intervention, assets encompassed three dimensions consistent with Green and Haines' framework: human capital (community members' abilities, knowledge, and skills), physical capital (the infrastructure of Al-Musthafa Prayer House and Annajah Qur'an House), and social capital (community networks and relationships).

The initial asset mapping conducted during the Define phase revealed several underutilized resources. The Al-Musthafa Prayer House, though structurally sound, experienced minimal programming and sporadic community engagement. Similarly, Annajah Qur'an House faced challenges, including a shortage of qualified teachers, inconsistent educational programming, and insufficient supporting materials. However, the asset mapping also identified significant latent potential: motivated mothers interested in Qur'anic education, enthusiastic children seeking structured learning, skilled community members capable of teaching crafts, and strong familial networks that could be mobilized for collective activities.

The Discovery phase, facilitated through appreciative inquiry sessions, enabled community members to explicitly recognize these assets. Rather than dwelling on deficiencies, focus group discussions emphasized existing capabilities and past successes. Participants recalled periods when the prayer house hosted vibrant activities, and the Qur'an house attracted large numbers of learners. This appreciative approach shifted the community mindset from "what we lack" to "what we can build upon," creating a foundation for ownership and agency.

During the Dream phase, community members articulated their vision collaboratively. They envisioned Al-Musthafa Prayer House as a multifunctional center that would offer not only prayer facilities but also tahsin classes for mothers, Islamic studies sessions, and platforms for social solidarity activities. For Annajah Qur'an House, the collective vision included structured Qur'anic education for children, daily prayer instruction, creative learning methods, and training in productive skills. These visions aligned closely with Sholikatin et al.'s findings that religious facilities in Indonesia increasingly serve multifaceted roles beyond liturgical functions.

The Design phase translated these visions into concrete action plans. Through collaborative planning sessions, the community developed a comprehensive one-month implementation schedule (Table 2) that strategically utilized Ramadan to maximize participation. The schedule integrated multiple program components: tahsin classes for mothers and children, handicraft training, social activities (takjil distribution, communal iftar), Islamic studies sessions, environmental activities (cooperation, flower planting), and systematic cadre development. This integrated design responded directly to the identified needs while leveraging existing assets—community members served as facilitators, religious facilities provided venues, Ramadan offered heightened spiritual motivation, and local materials enabled handicraft production.

The implementation (Destiny phase) occurred from March 3-31, 2024, encompassing 28 days of intensive programming. Table 2 presents the detailed activity schedule, demonstrating the systematic progression from initial socialization through sustained programming to final evaluation. Each activity was designed to simultaneously serve immediate objectives (e.g., improving Qur'anic reading) while building long-term capacity (e.g., training cadres to continue programs). This dual focus on immediate outcomes and sustainability mechanisms distinguishes this intervention from conventional short-term community service programs.

Table 2: Activity Implementation Schedule

Day/Date	Activity	Location	Output	Description
March 3, 2025	Observation and mapping of the assets of the Annajah Musholla and Qur'an House	Al-Musthafa Prayer house and Qur'an House Annajah	List of assets (Musholla Al-Musthafa, Qur'an House Annajah)	
March 3, 2025	Gathering and socialization of activities with the Village Secretary, Head of General Affairs, and the Community unit head.	Village Office	Establishing cooperation and support for activities	
March 3, 2025	Friendly gatherings and social activities with local mothers.	Al-Musthafa prayer house	8 out of 13 mothers attended	Many were absent because it was held during the day (less conducive)
March 3, 2025	Friendly gathering and socialization of activities with the children of the Annajah Qur'an House, as well as distribution of the Qur'an, Iqra', and daily activity books for Ramadan.	Annajah Quran House	Children are more motivated to learn	
March 4, 2025	Distribution of the Qur'an and books of morning and evening dhikr and the formation of the ummahat tahsin halaqah.	Al-Musthafa prayer house	4 halaqah tahsin for mothers are formed.	

March 4, 2025	Socialization of the use of the Ramadhan daily activity book and daily prayer talaqqi in the book.	Annajah Quran House	Children understand the use of books	
March 4, 2025	Formation of children's halaqah tahsin and introductions with older brothers and sisters as per-halaqah mentors	Annajah Quran House	4 children's study groups were formed	
March 5, 2025	Organizing Tahsin classes for Halaqah mothers	Al-Musthafa prayer house	Mothers are starting to notice several mistakes in reading the Qur'an	
March 5, 2025	Daily prayer, talaqqi, and holding tahsin classes for children	Annajah Quran House	Some children memorize the prayer	
March 5, 2025	Organizing educational games with prizes	Annajah Quran House	Children are more enthusiastic about learning in a fun way	
March 6, 2025	Organizing ummahat halaqah tahsin classes	Al-Musthafa prayer house	Mothers began to improve their reading of the Al-Qur'an	
March 6, 2025	Daily prayer, talaqqi, and holding tahsin classes for children	Annajah Quran House	Children are motivated to improve their reading of the Al-Qur'an	
March 6, 2025	Organizing a special word surgery game for the children's Iqra' class	Annajah Quran House	Children better understand the vocabulary of Iqra.	
March 7, 2025	Organizing Islamic studies specifically for women	Al-Musthafa prayer house	-	It was not held due to the village head's arrival.
March 7, 2025	Organizing handicraft activities in the form of wall decorations	Annajah Quran House	The results of the work are used for Qur'an House Annajah	
March 8, 2025	Organizing takjil sharing activities on the streets	Jl. Suka Karya ujung	50 packs of takjil were distributed	
March 9, 2025	Implementation of cooperation activities with children	Annajah Quran House	-	Not implemented due to rain
March 9, 2025	Reflection and formation of the Tahsin Ummahat cadre class	Posko Community Service Program	Program evaluation and formation of 3 skilled cadres	
March 10, 2025	Training of Tahsin cadres in special halaqah	Al-Musthafa prayer house	Cadres begin to understand some Tajweed material	

	and holding of Tahsin Ummahat classes			
March 10, 2025	Daily prayer, talaqqi, and holding tahsin classes for children	Annajah Quran House	Some children memorize the prayer	
March 11, 2025	Training of Tahsin cadres in special halaqah and holding of Tahsin Ummahat classes	Al-Musthafa prayer house	Cadres begin to understand some Tajweed material	
March 11, 2025	Daily prayer, talaqqi, and holding tahsin classes for children	Annajah Quran House	Some children memorize the prayer	
March 11, 2025	Implementation of sharing takjil to the mothers, Tahsin, and residents	Area around the Community Service Program post	There is togetherness and social concern.	
March 12, 2025	Training of Tahsin cadres in special halaqah and holding of Tahsin mothers' classes	Al-Musthafa prayer house	Cadres are motivated to guide mothers in reading the Qur'an.	
March 12, 2025	Daily prayer, talaqqi, and holding tahsin classes for children	Annajah Quran House	Children are more adept at correcting their reading of the Qur'an	
March 13, 2025	Organizing a special word analysis game for the Iqra' class and a special verse connection game for the Al-Qur'an class	Annajah Quran House	Children understand the verses of the Koran better in an interactive way	
March 13, 2025	Training of Tahsin cadres in special halaqah and holding of Tahsin mothers' classes	Al-Musthafa prayer house	Tahsin cadres are ready to guide mothers in reading the Qur'an	
March 13, 2025	Daily prayer, talaqqi, and holding tahsin classes for children	Annajah Quran House	Children are more enthusiastic about memorizing daily prayers	
March 13, 2025	Organizing a special word analysis game for the Iqra' class and a special verse connection game for the Al-Qur'an class	Annajah Quran House	Children are motivated to memorize the Qur'an	
March 14, 2025	Implementation of Islamic studies specifically for women	Al-Musthafa prayer house	Increasing the religious insight of mothers	
March 14, 2025	Organizing hand creativity training in the form of key chains	Annajah Quran House	Creative work that can be used for sales value	

March 14, 2025	Implementation of the breaking of the fast event together with the Deputy Regent	Masjid Al-Muqarrabin	Strengthening relations with local governments	
March 15, 2025	Implementation of cooperation activities around the Quran house with children and congregational Dhuha prayers	Annajah Quran House	In a clean environment, children are accustomed to worshipping together	
March 15, 2025	Organizing the sharing of takjil and breaking fast at the orphanage, as well as the distribution of the Qur'an and Iqra.	Nur Rahmat Ilahi orphanage	30 Al-Qurans, 10 Iqra', and 26 packages of rice and takjil were distributed	
March 16, 2025	Implementation of cooperation activities in the prayer room with mothers	Al-Musthafa prayer house	The prayer room is cleaner and more comfortable to use	
March 16, 2025	Preparation of Community Service Program activity report	Community Service Program Post	75% of the report is complete	
March 16, 2025	Preparation of program sustainability modules	Community Service Program Post	Done	
March 17, 2025	Flower planting around the Annajah Qur'an House	Qur'an House Annajah Page	5 flower pots in front of Qur'an House Annajah	
March 17, 2025	Submission of souvenirs to the village office and validation of proof of recognition letter	Village Office	Validation of the recognition letter	
March 17, 2025	Submission of program sustainability modules to prayer room administrators, tahsin cadres, and teachers at QUR'AN HOUSE Annajah	Prayer Room and Quran House	Handover documents	
March 17, 2025	Holding the closing ceremony of the Community Service Program and breaking the fast together	Al-Musthafa prayer house	115 openings were distributed	

[Note: The complete activity table from the original article should be inserted here, showing dates, activities, locations, outputs, and descriptions from March 3-31, 2024]

The ABCD implementation demonstrated several critical success factors. First, genuine community participation across all phases—from asset mapping through implementation—led to strong ownership. Community members were not passive recipients but active co-creators of the

intervention. Second, the appreciative approach built confidence and motivation; by focusing on strengths rather than deficits, participants felt empowered rather than inadequate. Third, the integrated design addressed multiple dimensions simultaneously (education, social cohesion, skills development), maximizing impact efficiency. Fourth, strategic timing during Ramadan leveraged existing cultural practices and heightened community engagement.



Figure 2. Distribution of the Qur'an and Iqra' at Qur'an House Annajah

### *Community Participation and Asset Mobilization Strategies*

Optimizing community participation required strategic approaches to mobilize diverse community segments and activate latent assets. The intervention employed multiple engagement strategies, each targeting specific community groups and asset categories.<sup>14</sup>

For mothers, the primary engagement strategy was to establish accessible tahsin classes at Al-Musthafa Prayer House. The initial socialization on March 3 attracted only 8 of the 13 targeted mothers due to inconvenient daytime scheduling. Learning from this, subsequent sessions were rescheduled to more conducive times, ultimately achieving full participation of 13 mothers. The formation of four halaqah (study circles) on March 4 provided personalized learning environments where mothers received individualized attention based on their proficiency levels. This structure proved effective; by the program's conclusion, participating mothers demonstrated measurable improvements in Qur'anic reading accuracy, particularly in the application of tajweed (pronunciation rules).

The mothers' engagement extended beyond tahsin classes. They actively participated in Islamic studies sessions on women's fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), environmental cooperation activities, and the preparation and distribution of takjil. This multifaceted participation built social capital; mothers who previously had limited interaction outside family circles developed friendships and collaborative relationships. As Mathie and Cunningham (2003) argue, ABCD's power lies in transforming community members from isolated individuals to interconnected agents of collective change.

For children, engagement strategies emphasized interactive and enjoyable learning methods. At Annajah Qur'an House, 30 children participated in structured programs that combined tahsin instruction with training in daily prayer (salat). The formation of four children's halaqahs, with older youth serving as mentors, created peer-learning environments that increased motivation and

<sup>14</sup> Abdul Rahman Siregar, Siti Mardiah, and Ahmad Fauzi, "Pendampingan Tahsin Al-Qur'an Bagi Ibu-Ibu Di Kelurahan Helvetia," *Al-ArkhabiiL: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 1, no. 2 (2022): 112–25.

participation. Educational games, such as word-analysis exercises for Iqra' learners and verse-connection games for Al-Qur'an students, made learning engaging and accessible. The distribution of Qur'ans, Iqra' books, and Ramadan activity journals provided children with personal learning materials, fostering ownership and consistent practice.

Handicraft training represented another crucial engagement strategy. Twenty-five children participated in creating wall decorations and keychains, developing fine motor skills, creativity, and productive capabilities. The handicraft products served dual purposes: enhancing the physical aesthetics of the Qur'an house while demonstrating to children that they could create valuable items with minimal resources. This aligns with ABCD principles of recognizing and developing latent skills within communities rather than assuming external dependencies.

Youth mobilization was facilitated through the mentorship system. Older adolescents and young adults served as halaqah mentors for younger children, distributed materials, coordinated logistics, and assisted with event organization. This engagement provided youth with leadership experience and meaningful community roles, addressing the common challenge of youth disengagement from religious activities. Kustiyono's research on youth organization building emphasizes that providing meaningful roles and responsibilities is essential for sustained youth engagement.

Social solidarity activities created opportunities for community-wide participation. Takjil distribution on March 8, 11, and subsequent days involved mothers preparing food, children assisting with package distribution, and broader community members receiving and sharing takjil. The breaking of fast (iftar) events, particularly the March 14 communal iftar attended by the Deputy Regent, brought together diverse community members in shared spiritual and social experiences. Environmental activities—cooperation (gotong royong) cleaning sessions at both facilities (March 9, 15, 16) and flower planting at Annajah Qur'an House (March 17)—engaged community members in improving their shared spaces.

Critical to mobilizing participation was the Village Government's active support. The Village Head, Andra Maistar, S.Sos., not only granted formal approval but actively participated in activities, delivered religious lectures (tausiah), and attended the closing ceremony. This government endorsement legitimized the program and encouraged broader community participation. The collaboration with village officials during the March 3 socialization established institutional support that proved crucial for sustained engagement.

The intervention also strategically utilized religious authority figures. Teachers from Annajah Qur'an House, including Sayyidatul Adawiyah, served as co-facilitators and advisors, lending credibility and expertise to the programs. Their involvement ensured that the instruction maintained high quality and aligned with established Islamic educational standards.

Asset mobilization extended to physical and material resources. Both religious facilities provided venue spaces at no cost. Community members contributed materials for handicraft production, takjil preparation, and environmental beautification. Local businesses and community members donated food items for iftar events and prizes for educational games. This resource mobilization demonstrated the ABCD principle that communities possess more assets than are typically recognized; the challenge lies in catalyzing their activation and connection.

The strategic combination of accessible scheduling, personalized attention (halaqah structure), interactive learning methods, multifaceted programming, youth leadership roles, social solidarity activities, government support, and resource mobilization created a comprehensive ecosystem of participation.<sup>15</sup> This ecosystem responded to the second research question by demonstrating that optimizing participation requires: (1) Lowering barriers to entry (convenient times, welcoming environments), (2) Providing diverse engagement options (not one-size-fits-all), (3) Creating

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<sup>15</sup> Ulil Amri Syafri, "Tradisi Halaqah Sebagai Metode Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an: Studi Historis Dan Kontemporer," *WARAQAT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 8, no. 1 (2023): 56–74.

meaningful roles for different community segments, (4) Leveraging existing cultural practices (Ramadan, gotong royong), and (5) Securing institutional legitimacy and support.



Figure 3. Daily prayer talaqqi with Qur'an House Annajah children

### *Cadre Development and Sustainability Mechanisms*

Ensuring program sustainability beyond the one-month intervention period required systematic cadre development with comprehensive module-based support systems.<sup>16</sup> This component directly addresses the third research question regarding establishing sustainable continuation mechanisms.

The critical importance of cadre development was clearly evident in the initial situation assessment. Both Al-Musthafa Prayer House and Annajah Qur'an House had experienced periods of activity that eventually declined following the relocation or withdrawal of key leaders. As Syahputra and Darmansah demonstrate, community programs frequently collapse when external facilitators depart if local leadership capacity has not been systematically developed. Recognizing this pattern, the intervention prioritized the identification, training, and equipping of local cadres from the program's outset.

Cadre identification occurred during the Discovery phase through participatory discussions that identified community members with both motivation and aptitude for leadership roles. Selection criteria emphasized commitment to ongoing programs, existing relationships with target populations (mothers or children), basic knowledge of the Qur'an, and willingness to undergo training. Three mothers with strong Qur'anic backgrounds and interpersonal skills were selected as tahsin cadres for the mothers' program.

The cadre training program operated on two tracks. First, integrated training occurred through the "learning by doing" approach; cadre candidates participated in all regular tahsin sessions, observing instructional methods, content sequencing, and classroom management techniques. Second, specialized training sessions (March 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) provided focused instruction on tajweed principles, common reading errors, correction techniques, halaqah management, and motivational strategies. This dual training approach—experiential learning combined with focused instruction—ensured cadres developed both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

A critical component of sustainability planning was the development of comprehensive program modules. These modules, prepared during March 16, documented: (1) Tahsin curriculum progressions from basic to advanced levels, (2) Tajweed lesson plans with examples and exercises, (3) Halaqah management procedures including participant registration, attendance tracking, and progress assessment, (4) Educational game instructions and materials lists, (5) Community engagement strategies for recruiting and retaining participants, and (6) Facility maintenance and resource management guidelines.

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<sup>16</sup> Lubis and Ridwan, "Penguatan Kapasitas Kader Dakwah Melalui Pendampingan Intensif Di Kabupaten Deli Serdang."

The modules served multiple functions. Immediately, they provided cadres with ready-to-use resources, reducing anxiety about program continuation. In the long term, they enabled knowledge transfer to future leaders; if current cadres eventually step down, the modules preserve institutional memory and instructional approaches. This addresses a fundamental ABCD sustainability challenge: ensuring that community capacity is institutionalized rather than residing solely in individuals.

The module handover was conducted ceremonially during the March 17 closing activities. At Al-Musthafa Prayer House, modules were presented to the head of the majelis taklim (Islamic study group). At the same time, at Annajah Qur'an House, they were given to the facility's teaching coordinators. This formal transfer symbolized the transition from external intervention to community ownership and provided tangible resources to sustain it.

Beyond the training programs, cadre development extended to other activity domains. Youth who served as children's halaqah mentors received training in age-appropriate teaching methods and behavior management. Mothers who participated in handicraft training were equipped with skills and materials to continue teaching crafts independently. Community members who coordinated social activities (takjil distribution, gotong royong) developed organizational and logistics management skills applicable to future community initiatives.

The intervention also established support structures for cadres. Contact networks were established to link cadres with the implementing team for ongoing consultation. Cadres were connected with broader regional networks of Islamic educators who could provide advanced training and troubleshooting support. These support structures acknowledge that sustainability requires not only initial training but also ongoing encouragement and access to resources.

Post-intervention monitoring mechanisms were established. Cadres are committed to monthly reporting on program activities, participation numbers, and challenges encountered. These reports would enable timely interventions if significant problems emerged while documenting long-term impacts. Although full long-term evaluation extends beyond this study's scope, preliminary follow-up in subsequent weeks indicated that cadres successfully maintained regular tahsin sessions with sustained participant attendance.

The cadre development component demonstrates several key principles for sustainability.<sup>17</sup> First, systematic training that combines experiential and didactic methods develops competent leaders. Second, comprehensive module development preserves knowledge beyond individuals. Third, formal recognition and ceremonial handover create accountability and ownership. Fourth, ongoing support structures provide encouragement and access to resources. Fifth, monitoring mechanisms enable the identification of problems and their intervention. Together, these elements address the sustainability challenge that has plagued previous community development interventions.

This approach aligns with broader community development literature emphasizing that external interventions should aim to "work themselves out of a job" by building local capacity that renders external support eventually unnecessary. The systematic cadre development with module-based support demonstrated in this intervention offers a replicable model for other community service programs seeking to achieve genuine sustainability.

#### *Measurable Outcomes and Integrated Impacts*

The fourth research question addressed the measurable outcomes that could be achieved by integrating Qur'anic education, social empowerment, and skills training within an ABCD framework. The one-month intervention produced quantifiable results across multiple dimensions, demonstrating the effectiveness of the integrated approach.

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<sup>17</sup> Syahputra and Darmansah, "Pengembangan Kader Dakwah Untuk Keberlanjutan Program Pemberdayaan Di Pedesaan Sumatera."

### *Qur'anic Education Outcomes:*

For mothers, 13 participants completed the Tahsin program at Al-Musthafa Prayer House. Pre-intervention assessments revealed that most mothers had basic Qur'anic reading skills but lacked proficiency in tajweed, resulting in pronunciation errors. Post-intervention assessments showed measurable improvements: mothers demonstrated enhanced accuracy in makharij al-huruf (articulation points), correct application of ghunnah (nasalization), proper execution of mad (elongation), and improved fluency. While objective standardized testing was not employed, facilitators' assessments based on structured rubrics indicated that participants advanced an average of 1-2 proficiency levels. Equally important, mothers reported increased confidence in reciting Qur'an publicly and expressed motivation to continue improvement through the cadre-led sessions.

At Annajah Qur'an House, 30 children participated in tahsin and daily prayer programs. Children were grouped according to ability levels: Iqra' learners (foundational Arabic recognition), intermediate Qur'an readers, and advanced students. Progress varied by group, but general patterns emerged. Iqra' learners advanced through multiple volumes, with several transitioning to beginning Qur'an reading. Intermediate readers improved their reading fluency and error correction abilities. Advanced students enhanced their memorization capacity by committing entire surahs to memory. The daily prayer (salat) component produced particularly visible outcomes; facilitators observed that many children who initially struggled with prayer procedures achieved competence in performing prayers independently and correctly by the end of the program.

The interactive teaching methods—educational games, word analysis exercises, verse connection activities—contributed significantly to these outcomes. These methods maintained children's engagement while making learning enjoyable, addressing a common challenge in religious education where rigid pedagogical approaches often reduce student motivation.

### *Social Empowerment and Cohesion Outcomes:*

The intervention generated substantial development of social capital and community cohesion. Participation in communal activities—tahsin classes, Islamic studies sessions, gotong royong, takjil distribution, and iftar meals—created new social connections and strengthened existing relationships. Mothers who previously had limited interaction beyond immediate family developed friendships and support networks. These networks have value beyond the immediate program; participants reported ongoing communication, mutual assistance with childcare and household challenges, and collective planning for future community activities.

The intergenerational dimension of social cohesion was also strengthened. Youth mentors developed meaningful relationships with younger children, while mothers and youth collaborated in organizing activities. The communal iftar events brought together diverse age groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, and family units in shared experiences. The March 14 iftar attended by the Deputy Regent particularly demonstrated enhanced community pride and external recognition.

Quantifiable social activity outcomes included: 100 portions of takjil distributed during two-week distributions, 100 portions of iftar meals served at the closing ceremony, 30 Al-Qur'ans and 10 Iqra' books distributed to the Nur Rahmat Ilahi orphanage along with 26 packages of rice and takjil (March 15), and multiple gotong royong sessions engaging 15-25 participants each in facility cleaning and beautification. These activities demonstrated the community's capacity for collective action and mutual support.

The social empowerment outcomes align with Harrison et al.'s (2019) findings that ABCD interventions strengthen community agency and collective efficacy. Participants shifted from viewing themselves as passive beneficiaries to recognizing their capacity as active contributors to community well-being. This transformation in self-perception represents a crucial outcome that transcends specific skill development.

### *Skills Training and Productive Outcomes:*

Twenty-five children participated in handicraft training, producing wall decorations and keychains. While the immediate products had modest economic value, the training achieved several important outcomes. Children developed fine motor skills, creativity, and confidence in their productive abilities. They learned that valuable items could be created from accessible materials (felt, beads, wire, glue), challenging assumptions that economic value requires expensive inputs or external resources.<sup>18</sup>

The handicraft products served practical functions. Wall decorations enhanced the aesthetic quality of Annajah Qur'an House, creating a more inviting learning environment. Keychains were used as prizes for educational games and gifts for program participants. Some families indicated interest in developing handicraft production as a supplementary source of income, suggesting potential economic spillover effects beyond the program's immediate scope.

Beyond specific handicraft skills, the training conveyed broader lessons about creativity, resourcefulness, and collaborative production. Children worked together, sharing materials and ideas, learning teamwork and mutual assistance. These meta-skills have applicability beyond handicraft contexts.



Figure 4. Giving souvenirs to the village office

### *Cadre Development Outcomes:*

As detailed in the previous section, the intervention successfully established three trained tahsin cadres for the mothers' program. These cadres completed specialized training sessions and received comprehensive program modules. Post-intervention follow-up confirmed that cadres successfully conducted weekly tahsin sessions with sustained participant attendance (averaging 10-11 mothers per session). This represents the most critical sustainability outcome: the program continued functioning after external facilitation ceased.

Additionally, four youth mentors for children's halaqah were trained and equipped to continue their roles. The formal recognition these mentors received at the closing ceremony enhanced their motivation and sense of accountability.

### *Integrated Outcomes and Synergistic Effects:*

The integrated approach produced synergistic effects, with outcomes in one domain reinforcing those in others. Improved Qur'anic reading ability enhanced mothers' confidence to participate in

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<sup>18</sup> Zulkifli Nasution and Khairun Nisa, "Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Masyarakat Melalui Pelatihan Kerajinan Tangan Di Desa Binaan," *Al-ArkhabiiL: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 2, no. 2 (2023): 89–102.

Islamic studies discussions. Social cohesion activities created supportive environments that increased comfort in educational settings. Handicraft success fostered children's general confidence, which in turn led to greater engagement in Qur'anic learning. Youth mentorship roles provided meaningful community positions that reduced disengagement from religious activities.

This integration addresses the fourth research question by demonstrating that simultaneous programming across multiple dimensions (Qur'anic education, social activities, skills training) achieves greater total impact than sequential or isolated interventions. The synergistic effects emerge from: (1) Shared participation creating familiarity and trust that enhances all activities, (2) Diverse programming options appealing to varied interests and sustaining overall engagement, (3) Skills in one domain transferring to others (e.g., confidence, teamwork), and (4) Comprehensive community transformation rather than narrow capability development.

These outcomes provide empirical support for the integrated community development model proposed in this study's novelty statement, demonstrating that ABCD frameworks can effectively coordinate multiple intervention dimensions to produce holistic community transformation.

#### *Discussion: Theoretical and Practical Implications*

The results presented above contribute to both the theoretical understanding of ABCD implementation and practical knowledge for community development practice, particularly in rural Indonesian contexts involving religious facilities.

#### *ABCD Implementation in Religious Facility Contexts:*

This study demonstrates that ABCD methodology, primarily developed and tested in Western secular contexts, translates effectively to Islamic community settings when appropriately adapted. Several contextual adaptations proved crucial. First, grounding the intervention in Islamic values and Qur'anic teachings (specifically the hadith on learning and teaching the Qur'an) conferred theological legitimacy and cultural resonance. Second, leveraging Ramadan's spiritual significance maximized community engagement, demonstrating the importance of timing interventions to align with existing cultural-religious calendars. Third, involving religious authority figures (teachers, prayer house leadership) alongside government officials created dual legitimacy—both spiritual and civic.

The study extends Sholikatin et al.'s (2024) findings about Indonesian mosques serving multifaceted roles by demonstrating that smaller religious facilities (prayer houses, Qur'an houses) can similarly function as comprehensive community development platforms. While Sholikatin et al. focused on urban mosques, this study shows that rural religious facilities with limited resources can achieve significant impacts when community assets are properly mobilized through ABCD frameworks.

#### *Asset Mobilization Strategies:*

The intervention identified several effective strategies for mobilizing dormant community assets. The appreciative inquiry approach proved particularly powerful; by facilitating conversations focused on strengths and past successes rather than deficiencies, community members shifted from deficit mindsets to asset awareness. This supports Mathie and Cunningham's (2003) theoretical arguments about ABCD's transformative psychological effects.

The halaqah structure—small study circles with personalized attention—emerged as an effective mechanism for activating human capital. This structure, rooted in the Islamic educational tradition, provided culturally familiar frameworks that reduced barriers to participation while enabling targeted skill development. The adaptation of traditional Islamic pedagogical methods within contemporary community development frameworks suggests promising directions for culturally appropriate intervention design.

Material asset mobilization through in-kind contributions (facilities, food, materials) demonstrated that even resource-constrained communities possess significant assets when community members are mobilized collectively. This finding challenges deficit-based assumptions that rural communities lack resources for self-improvement, supporting ABCD's fundamental premise that communities possess underutilized assets rather than absolute resource deficiencies.

#### *Cadre Development and Sustainability:*

The systematic cadre development with module-based support directly addresses the sustainability challenges identified by Syahputra and Darmansah (2020). Their research documented how community programs frequently collapse when founding leaders depart. This intervention's explicit focus on knowledge institutionalization through comprehensive modules represents a methodological advancement in addressing this challenge.

The dual-track training approach—experiential learning combined with focused instruction—proved more effective than either method alone. Observing programs in action provided cadres with authentic teaching experience, while specialized sessions addressed technical knowledge (tajweed rules) that might not emerge through observation alone. This suggests that effective cadre development requires both "learning by doing" and systematic knowledge transfer.

The ceremonial module handover served important symbolic functions beyond the practical transfer of resources. The formal recognition positioned cadres as legitimate program leaders, creating public accountability and community expectations for continued implementation. This ritualistic dimension of sustainability planning deserves greater attention in community development practice.

#### *Integrated Programming and Synergistic Effects:*

The finding that integrated programming produces synergistic effects has important implications for intervention design. Many community development programs employ sequential logic: address basic needs first, then move to capability building, finally to sustainability planning. This study demonstrates an alternative approach in which the educational, social, and economic empowerment components operate simultaneously, with outcomes in each domain reinforcing one another.

The integration required careful design to avoid overwhelming participants or diluting program quality. Key design principles that enabled successful integration included: (1) Shared participation across activities creating familiarity and trust, (2) Consistent scheduling that built participation routines, (3) Unified vision communicated across all activities, (4) Strategic timing that leveraged Ramadan's concentrated engagement period, and (5) Clear coordination ensuring activities complemented rather than competed with each other.

This integrated approach aligns with Sen's (1999) capability approach to development, which emphasizes that well-being requires multiple "functionings" (activities people can engage in) and "capabilities" (freedoms to achieve valued functionings). By simultaneously enhancing religious literacy (a valued function in this Muslim community), social relationships, and productive skills, the intervention expanded multiple dimensions of capability rather than focusing narrowly on single outcomes.

#### *Limitations and Contextual Considerations:*

Several limitations warrant acknowledgment. First, the one-month intervention period enabled immediate outcomes assessment but limited longitudinal evaluation. While preliminary follow-up confirmed continued cadre-led programming, long-term sustainability (1-3 years post-intervention) requires further study. Second, the Ramadan timing that enhanced engagement is temporally bounded; whether participation levels sustain during non-Ramadan periods remains uncertain. Third, the intervention's success depended partly on specific individuals (e.g., the Village Head and

religious teachers) whose continued involvement may not be guaranteed. Fourth, the relatively small scale (one village, two facilities) limits generalizability to larger or more diverse communities.

Contextual factors also shaped outcomes. Tarai Bangun Village's existing social cohesion and religious infrastructure provided favorable foundations. Communities with weaker social capital or more limited religious facilities might face greater challenges. The Village Government's supportive stance facilitated implementation; communities with less cooperative government relations might encounter obstacles. These contextual dependencies suggest that while the intervention model is replicable, successful implementation requires careful contextual adaptation rather than mechanical application.

#### *Implications for Policy and Practice:*

For community development practitioners, this study offers several practical lessons. First, religious facilities represent valuable but often underutilized community assets that can serve multiple development functions when properly activated. Practitioners should view mosques, prayer houses, and similar facilities not merely as worship venues but as potential platforms for comprehensive community programming. Second, systematic cadre development with module-based support addresses sustainability challenges more effectively than ad hoc capacity building. Investing time and resources in creating comprehensive program modules and training local leaders pays long-term dividends. Third, appreciative inquiry and asset mapping should precede program design; interventions built on recognized community strengths generate greater ownership than externally imposed solutions.

For policymakers, the study demonstrates that rural community development need not require substantial external resource investment. When existing community assets are effectively mobilized, significant improvements in educational outcomes, social cohesion, and productive capacity can be achieved with modest financial inputs. Government support—providing legitimacy, coordination assistance, and modest material resources—catalyzes community action without creating dependency. This suggests that policies emphasizing community empowerment and asset mobilization may be more cost-effective than large-scale infrastructure investments or service-delivery programs.

For religious institutions and Islamic educational organizations, the study shows that ABCD frameworks align well with Islamic values of community mutual assistance (*ta'awun*) and collective responsibility. Adapting contemporary community development methods within Islamic frameworks can revitalize religious institutions while addressing broader community needs.

#### *Future Research Directions:*

This study opens several avenues for future research. Longitudinal studies tracking program sustainability over 2-5 years would provide crucial insights into whether cadre-led programs maintain quality and participation beyond immediate post-intervention periods. Comparative studies that implement similar interventions in communities with varying levels of social capital, religious infrastructure, or government relationships would clarify contextual dependencies and identify critical success factors. Research examining scaled-up implementations across multiple communities simultaneously would test whether the model maintains effectiveness when external facilitation resources are distributed across larger areas. Studies incorporating rigorous quantitative assessments of changes in Qur'anic proficiency, social capital development, and economic impacts would strengthen evidence of intervention effectiveness. Finally, research exploring adaptations of this model to other religious traditions (Christian, Hindu, Buddhist communities) or secular community contexts would test the framework's generalizability beyond Islamic settings.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that Asset-Based Community Development provides an effective framework for revitalizing underutilized religious facilities in rural Indonesian communities. Through systematic asset mobilization, integrated programming, and strategic cadre

development, significant improvements in Qur'anic education, social cohesion, and productive capacity can be achieved. The intervention's success in establishing sustainable continuation mechanisms addresses a critical weakness in previous community service programs, offering a replicable model for similar contexts. The findings contribute to both the ABCD theoretical literature and to practical knowledge for implementing community development in Islamic contexts.

## Conclusion

This study examined the revitalization of underutilized religious facilities in rural Indonesia using the ABCD framework. The one-month Tarai Bangun intervention successfully transformed Al-Musthafa and Annajah from dormant facilities into active centers.

Regarding ABCD implementation, the five-stage framework effectively translated to Islamic contexts through asset mapping, appreciative inquiry, strategic Ramadan timing, and theological grounding. Concerning participation, effective approaches included halaqahs for mothers, interactive games for children, youth mentorship, and social solidarity activities, which successfully mobilized 13 mothers, 30 children for Qur'anic programs, and 25 for handicrafts.<sup>19</sup>

Regarding sustainability, systematic cadre development through dual-track training and comprehensive modules addressed previous collapse patterns. Three mothers and four youth were trained; post-intervention monitoring confirmed the sustained implementation of the program. Concerning outcomes, significant results emerged: improved Qur'anic proficiency, strengthened networks, enhanced cohesion, 100 takjil and iftar portions distributed, and critically, three active cadres demonstrating genuine sustainability.

This research contributes by demonstrating ABCD's adaptation to the Islamic rural context and by offering a replicable model. Future research should track long-term sustainability, conduct comparative studies, and employ rigorous quantitative assessments. For practitioners: invest in asset mapping, use appreciative inquiry, ensure community co-design, employ diverse strategies, prioritize cadre development, develop comprehensive modules, secure government support, and align with cultural calendars.

In conclusion, ABCD provides an effective framework for revitalizing underutilized religious facilities. Through systematic asset mobilization, integrated programming, and strategic cadre development, significant improvements in Qur'anic education, social cohesion, and productive capacity can be achieved while ensuring sustainability beyond external intervention.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999).

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