



NEW SECURITY CHALLENGES
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Countering Violent and Hateful Extremism in Indonesia

Islam, Gender and Civil Society

Edited by
Greg Barton · Matteo Vergani ·
Yenny Wahid

palgrave
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Countering Violent Extremism in Indonesia: The Role of Former Terrorists and Civil Society Organisations

Muhammad Wildan

INTRODUCTION

Many initiatives have been introduced by both government institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs) to respond to the challenge of radicalism and violent extremism in Indonesia. The National Counter Terrorism Agency (*Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Terorisme*, BNPT) is the lead agency overseeing initiatives both within and outside of prisons. As many observers and scholars have identified, however, BNPT programs tend to be top-down approaches and lack any ongoing commitment (Sumpter, 2017). By contrast, many CSOs engaged in Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE) activities have concentrated their efforts at either the level of deradicalisation or prevention (Hikam, 2016). But many of these P/CVE programs operated by

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CSOs tend to be fragmented and suffer from a general lack of coordination within and between CSOs. Given the inherent complexities and challenges of dealing with radicalism, terrorism and violent extremism, a comprehensive approach to P/CVE should include a wide range of actors, including government, CSOs, *ulama*, families and young people.

This chapter focuses on the role of rehabilitated former terrorists—‘formers’—within a range of P/CVE programs. BNPT, as well as a number of CSOs, have begun to trial the involvement of former terrorists in their P/CVE programs. Up until now, however, it has been very difficult to obtain a clear overview of what has, and is, being done. Based on my research, there are several types of initiatives in which former terrorists have been involved, including prison-based programs, youth programs and economic empowerment programs. By identifying these three categories, this chapter explores the extent to which these CSOs have involved former terrorists within their P/CVE programs, what the programs of each of the CSOs actually involve with respect to the participation of formers, and what initiatives are the most effective among each of these efforts.

When P/CVE initiatives first commenced in Indonesia in the late 2000s, the field was sparsely documented and poorly understood. Since 2015, however, some very significant and innovative research has been conducted on the issue of counter terrorism and P/CVE in Indonesia. Chernov-Hwang (2015), for example, has focused on the pathways of disengagement for Indonesian jihadists, especially those from the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and Mujahidin KOMPAK (a Poso-based JI affiliate) networks. Ian Chalmers (2017) has explored the experiences of disengaged and deradicalised jihadists after being treated during or after their time in jail. Based on his research, Chalmers offers a policy regarding which programs are most effective for dealing with jihadists. And Cameron Sumpter (2017), has provided a comprehensive overview of the various P/CVE programs and initiatives conducted by CSOs to fill the gaps left by government bodies. Using the work of Hwang, Chalmers and Sumpter as a starting point, this chapter will focus specifically on the role of former jihadists in P/CVE programs.

In order to establish a comprehensive understanding of these themes, I have combined library research, participatory observation and interviews in order to build up a more complete picture. Analysis of the existing literature in this field provides a foundational background for this article, while my own involvement in and observation of, several of

these P/CVE initiatives provides additional insights. Finally, I have also conducted online and on-site interviews with both former terrorists themselves and the caretakers of the CSOs dealing with former terrorists. It is hoped that this chapter may enrich and enlighten the existing understanding of many government bodies and policymakers on the various approaches to P/CVE in Indonesia.

DE-RADICALISATION AS A COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGY

In Indonesia, the growth of ultra-conservative ideologies in a political and social context of democratic contestation has created a hot house for radicalisation into hateful and violent extremism. In the 1950s, the home-grown radical Islamist group Negara Islam Indonesia (Darul Islam, NII) gave rise to several generations of close-knit extremists. This led ultimately to the formation of a new spin-off group Jemaah Islamiyah, in 1993 in part as a result of the experiences of Darul Islam mujahideen in the 1978–1992 Afghanistan war. It was formed by two prominent Darul Islam activists, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Baashir, who had gone into exile (*hijrah*) in Malaysia in the mid-1980s and then led a group of several hundred self-proclaimed mujahideen to al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

A number of other groups have since emerged in Indonesia, including Jamaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT), established in 2008, and Jamaah Anshorut Daulah (JAD), formed in 2015, both of which have declared their support for the Islamic State (IS) movement in Syria and Iraq. The emergence of these groups indicates that violent extremism has established a strong presence in Indonesia. There have been many violent incidences or acts of terrorism that have occurred in the country since the turn of the century, conducted by both JI and JAD. While JI has since renounced its previous policy of violent and deadly attacks in Indonesia as a ‘mistake’, JAD and JAT continue to openly support violence. Support for JAT and JAD has continued to grow in Indonesia, especially among the youth population.

As the radical ideology of these groups continues to gain traction, Indonesians and especially Indonesian authorities, have a lot of work to do to combat this threat. Since the authorities, and in particular the specialist anti-terrorism squad, Densus 88 (Special Detachment 88), have weakened the structure of JI and arrested many of its key members, JAT and JAD have emerged as a new threat, particularly since the establishment

of the Islamic State in Syria. The narrative surrounding the Islamic State caliphate in Iraq and Syria has inspired many Indonesians to not only become a part of the jihad in Syria, but to also wage jihad at home. In addition to the Indonesians who made the journey to join IS in Syria, many others engaged in small-scale attacks at home in the name of JAD. These include the Sarinah bombings in (2016), Kampung Melayu bombings in 2017, Mako Brimob riots in 2018 and Surabaya bombings in 2018. Clearly violent extremism and groups such as JI, JAT and JAD constitute an enduring threat in Indonesia. The threat might be contained but there is no realistic hope of it being eliminated.

Many attempts have been made to counter terrorism by both governmental bodies and CSOs. At the governmental level, the Indonesian government has issued Anti-Terrorism Law (2003), established the anti-terrorism squad, Special Detachment 88 (2003) and in 2010 it established BNPT, the National Body for Combating Terrorism. In 2018, the Anti-Terrorism Law was revised to accommodate for input from multiple elements of society and to address recent developments in the terrorism space. In order to reach multiple regions, BNPT has created a support body, the Coordination Forum for Preventing Terrorism, or Forum Koordinasi Pencegahan Terorisme (FKPT), at every provincial level. Normatively, FKPT should work hand-in-hand with local CSOs to identify the vulnerabilities in their respective areas and prevent people from becoming involved in violent extremism.

As there is no single factor that accounts for radicalism and terrorism, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to dealing with these threats. Many efforts have been made to counter radicalism and terrorism, including both hard and soft approaches. While law enforcement authorities tend to employ hard approaches to apprehend individuals involved in radicalism and terrorism, many government bodies and CSOs work together to counter and prevent radicalism through soft approaches targeting issue areas such as ideology, economics, culture, etc. These approaches recognise that a comprehensive, diverse approach is required as radicalism is driven by a range of different pull and push factors.

In relation to counter-terrorism programs, the government tends to employ the concept of 'deradicalization' (*deradikalisasi*). Although the types of programs within this concept are relatively broad, the usage of this term is somewhat misleading. Deradicalisation refers to disengaging radicalised individuals from violent extremism; however, government bodies tend to use this term for a broad range of programs, including

those that focus on preventing people from becoming extremists or radicals. This loose usage of the term ‘derad’ is not widely accepted, however, outside of government bodies, and it has faced criticism from both the public as well as from CSOs that include non-radicals in their deradicalisation programs. For example, Muhammadiyah, Indonesia’s second biggest Muslim organisation, refuses to be involved in government projects on deradicalisation as it is felt that it poses a significant risk of causing tension between the organisation and the society with which it works (Haedar, 2016). This resistance from society towards deradicalisation is understood by many CSOs. As such, they tend to use different terms to name their programs, such as mainstreaming moderate Islam, countering violent extremism and religious moderation (*moderasi beragama*). In contrast, in line with the new terrorism laws, the government continues to use and define deradicalisation as “a planned, integrated, systematic and continuous process carried out to eliminate or reduce and reverse the radical understanding of Terrorism that has taken place”.

TERRORISM AND PRISONERS IN INDONESIA

The Soufan Center (2017) has recorded that, of the more than 600 (as of 2017) Indonesian jihadists that travelled to Syria, about 384 of them are still in Syria and only about 50 have returned to Indonesia. The data also records that approximately 435 people have been stopped in Turkey and deported back to Indonesia (Barret, 2017). Meanwhile, BNPT estimates from 2017 indicate that about 1,000 Indonesians travelled to Syria and of those, some 200 of them have returned (*Mengapa Suriah Menjadi Tujuan* 2017). More recent reports indicate that there are 689, or so, former Indonesian supporters and fighters of IS in Syria that may return to Indonesia (Adyatama, 2020). Although the number of Indonesians making the journey to Syria began to decrease in line with the significant losses suffered by IS, the number of foreign fighters returning to Indonesia will likely increase as a result, posing an additional threat to the country. In line with this issue, Sidney Jones warned some years ago, in the wake of the declaration of the ISIS caliphate, that “the overall capacity of Indonesian extremists remains low, but their commitment to ISIS could prove deadly” (Pitaloka, 2014). In terms of both home-grown and foreign terrorists, as of late 2018 there were approximately 302 inmates spread across 111 prisons throughout some 26 provinces across Indonesia. In addition, there were 152 detainees who have not yet

been charged (*inkracht*) (taken from H. Fikri, personal communication, September 5, 2018).

During a visit to terrorist inmates in Palu prison in February 2018, repentant former militant Nasir Abas observed that terrorists from Java and outer Java differ in many important aspects. While terrorists from Java are normally more ideologically driven, those from outer Java, such as from Sulawesi, tend to be less ideologically driven. My conversations and discussions with terrorists in Palu's first-class prison confirms the assertion that most inmates became involved in violent extremism, taking up the methods of terrorism out of desperation, due to their disappointment with the government, and in particular the government's policies that they believed to have mostly marginalised Muslims.

Many former terrorist prisoners have not been successfully disengaged from terrorist networks and the use of violence. The director of BNPT, Suhardi Alius, stated in early 2018 that among the 630 ex-prisoners of terrorism, only 325 of them have followed a deradicalisation program and about 128 of them have willingly helped the BNPT with the program (Dari 360 eksnapiter, 2018). Taufiq Andrie of the Institute for International Peace Building (*Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian*, YPP) has reported that YPP is aware of many ex-terrorists who have returned to violent extremism upon release (Andrie, 2012). Indeed, Alius also admits that many ex-terrorist prisoners have gone on to be involved again in violent activity (*600 Napi Kasus Terorisme* 2018). However, he has urged society as a whole to take part in the reintegration process of the ex-prisoners, especially in an economic sense, in order to help prevent these individuals from returning to violent extremist groups.

This is not to say that deradicalisation programs in prisons have completely failed to achieve their desired outcomes. Among the 302 terrorist inmates in 2018, Husnal Fikri reported that 46 inmates had been successfully disengaged from terrorism and accepted the political legitimacy of the Indonesian Republic, reversing their previous stance of radical opposition (taken from H. Fikri, personal communication, September 5, 2018). To be truly effective, however, P/CVE requires broad, ongoing, support from across the whole of society. This is critically important to both the successful disengagement of the prisoners and ex-prisoners from their groups and to limiting the creeping influence of ultra-conservative/reactionary ideology that incites hate and violence. Within this whole of society approach, there is an integral role for former terrorists to play in the disengagement process.

The table below summarises a range of efforts by CSOs to establish prison-based, youth-based and economic empowerment-based P/CVE programs using former terrorists. The discussion that follows in the remainder of this chapter examines each of these programs in detail, giving particular attention to how they have incorporated former terrorists into their P/CVE programs.

Youth-Based Programs

Institute for International Peace Building/Yayasan Prasasti Perdamain (YPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Films ‘Jihad Selfie’ (2015), ‘Pengantin’ (2017) and ‘Seeking the Imam (2020) as counter narrative. • Documentaries using formers/youth who have been drawn to VE groups • Screened in towns, senior high schools and universities • Q&A with formers
Aliansi Indonesia Damai/ Alliance of Peaceful Indonesia (AIDA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based programs • Programs incorporate formers and victims of terrorism • Aims to raise awareness and empathy
Ruangobrol.id	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website-base programs • Employs disengaged terrorists and returnees as ‘credible voices’
Center for the Study of Islam and Social Transformation (CISForm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University research centre • Employs cartoons in counter-narrative initiatives • Distributed across social media: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter. • Launched by former returned from Syria
Kalijaga Institute for Justice (KIJ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based program • Former returned from Syria involved to present counter narrative

Prison-Based Programs

The Research Centre for Police Studies/Pusat Riset Ilmu Kepolisian (PRIK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University-based organisation • Incorporates formers and religious scholars • Focuses on range of political, religious and social issues • Security approach
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Division for Applied Social Psychology Research (DASPR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University-based organisation • Incorporates formers, religious scholars, psychologists, spouses and entrepreneurs
Institute for International Peace Building/Yayasan Prasasti Perdamain (YPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied science approach • Program without formers

Economic Empowerment Programs

Institute for International Peace Building/Yayasan Prasasti Perdamain (YPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employs entrepreneur training • Option to start own small enterprise or become involved in existing YPP business • Provides skills, social environment, employment for formers
Yayasan Lingkar Perdamaian (YLP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic empowerment through employment and training opportunities • Provides safe space to discuss religious and ideological issues • Provides practical support to those disassociating from former VE networks • Founded and run by former previously involved in JI

PRISON-BASED INITIATIVES

There are several CSOs that run programs with inmates convicted of terrorism. These include the Institute for International Peace Building (*Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian*, YPP), established by Noor Huda Ismail, the Research Centre for Police Studies (*Pusat Riset Ilmu Kepolisian*, PRIK), and the Division for Applied Social Psychology Research (DASPR) Daya Makara of the University of Indonesia (UI). The first of these CSOs is a private organisation, while the other two are university-based organisations/research centers. Although each of these three CSOs have prison-based programmes for terrorist inmates, they each differ in their approaches. For example, the prison-based programs of YPP do not

incorporate former terrorists. PRIK and DASPR on the other hand both involve former terrorists in their prison-based programs, drawing on the expertise and experiences of these individuals.

Since 2009, PRIK has been working with prisoners and individuals on parole who have been charged with terrorism offences. PRIK is a university-based centre founded by well-known psychologist Sarlito Wirawan, and it aims to change individual mindsets through several programmes, some of which involve religious scholars. PRIK has also incorporated former JI member, Nasir Abas, into their program as an expert on radicalism. Recognising that shifting the ideology of the terrorist inmates requires a multi-faceted approach, PRIK's programs address not only political and religious issues, but also social issues such as family, social welfare, governance and daily life in prison. Up until 2016, PRIK worked with roughly 150 individuals, some of whom may still be serving their prison sentences (Sumpter, 2017). Following the death of Sarlito Wirawan, some PRIK members from the Faculty of Psychology, as well as Nasir Abas, detached themselves from PRIK and in 2017 establish a new centre; DASPR at the University of Indonesia. Some of their work on the spouses of terrorists is covered in Chapter Seven of this volume. Although PRIK and DASPR share a number of commonalities, particularly their 'In Prison Re-education Program' (IPRP) strategy, some members of DASPR view their research centre as having an applied science approach, whereas PRIK focuses more closely on a security approach.

Based on DASPR's 8-month research project across a number of prisons, it found that:

1. it was unclear with whom the responsibility for designing and implementing deradicalisation programs in prisons rested, whether it was with BNPT or with the Directorate General of Correction (DGC); and.
2. to date, there is little coordination among CSOs when dealing with terrorist inmates (Convey Indonesia 2018). Consequently, many programs dealing with terrorist inmates tend to overlap with one another and miss the opportunity to build synergies.

At one end of the spectrum, the program conducted by BNPT focuses primarily on ideological aspects and does not deal with economic or

psychological issues. DASPR, on the other hand, finds that disengagement programs in prisons should be more comprehensive and should involve the inmates' spouses as well as psychologists.

In light of these findings, in 2018, DASPR commenced its third IPRP which included psychologists, religious scholars and entrepreneurs, as well as the inmates' spouses (taken from F. Erikha, personal communication, September 25, 2018). While terrorist inmates work directly with the religious scholars and entrepreneurs, the terrorists' wives interact with the program's psychologists. In 2018, DASPR worked with roughly 22 inmates in 5 selected prisons: Cianjur, Cirebon, Karawang, Lamongan and Palu. DASPR teams visited the prisons each month with different team members.

Nasir Abas has served as the central figure involved in the P/CVE programs for inmates conducted by PRIK and DASPR. Abas, originally from Malaysia, became a naturalised Indonesian citizen in 2017. In 1986, Abas joined Darul Islam/NII when he was studying at Ma'had Ittiba As-Sunnah in Selangor, Malaysia, which later brought him to study at the Military Academy of Harbiy Pohantun at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border from 1987 to 1993. After the formation of JI and the split with Darul Islam/NII in 1993, Abas went on to serve as the head of Mantiqi III, a JI division covering the Eastern part of Indonesia and the Philippines, and also established *Hudaibiyah* Camp in Mindanao to assist the mujahidin in the southern part of the Philippines. Although he was never involved in any violent activity in Indonesia, Abas was arrested by the authorities in relation to document falsification and possession of a gun. At the time, he says, he was already beginning to have doubts about the extremist violence promoted by some activists in the network. For Abas, the violent extremism of some JI members in early 2000 was not in line with the *manhaj* (platform) of the organisation. Following his arrest, Abas has assisted Indonesian authorities, writing a book in the process (2005) and has been involved in many P/CVE programs. His experience during his time involved with JI has assisted DASPR to run programs specifically in the areas of Palu and Poso, which were previously part of Abas' Mantiqi III area of operation (taken from F. Erikha, personal communication, September 25, 2018).

The DASPR inmates programme has been deliberately designed to serve not only as a treatment per se, but also as a quantitative research project. This research project aims to examine the effectiveness of the program and seeks to determine the most effective type of program for

terrorist inmates. DASPR's research acknowledges that running effective deradicalisation programs in prisons is no easy task. As it deals with high-risk terrorists, the program needs to involve a range of stakeholders, such as BNPT, DGC and Densus 88. When visiting prisons, the IPRP program should involve not only the above representatives, but also psychologists, entrepreneurs and religious experts. The greatest challenge for this program, however, is the inmates themselves, as many of them may be reluctant to cooperate during the intervention (taken from F. Erikha, personal communication, September 25, 2018).

YOUTH-BASED INITIATIVES

Youth have been found to be among the most susceptible to the influence of extremism ideology. As such, many CSOs have designed programs specifically for a youth audience, and of those, a number have involved participation from former terrorists. Key CSOs engaging in youth-based programs incorporating formers include Aliansi Indonesia Damai (AIDA), Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian (YPP), Ruangobrol.id, the Centre for the Study of Islam and Social Transformation (CISForm), and Kalijaga Institute for Justice (KIJ).

Since 2013, AIDA has run a broad program focusing on spreading its peaceful campaign in dozens of schools in many vulnerable areas throughout Jawa, Sumatera, Nusa Tenggara Barat, Maluku, & Sulawesi Tengah (A. Subkhi, personal communication, September 24, 2018). From 2018, AIDA's targeted schools have become narrower in scope, focusing particularly on schools in Serang, Solo and Bima, where some students have already become involved in violent extremism (taken from A. Kustiadi, personal communication, September 18, 2018). To deepen the emotional impact of its program, AIDA involves both victims of terrorism and former terrorists, allowing each to speak about their experiences. In these sessions, victims speak about their journey and how they have come to forgive those responsible for the attacks, while former terrorists discuss their experiences and how they have transitioned away from violent extremism. The aim of the program is not only to raise students' awareness of the dangers of violent extremism, but also to promote empathy towards the victims of terrorism, and to remind students that, at its heart Islam's central message is to be 'show mercy to all creation' (*rahmatanliPalamin*).

Two of the key former terrorists involved in the AIDA team are Kurnia Widodo and Ali Fauzi Manji. Widodo had previously been involved in NII since 1991, when he was still a student at senior high school. His involvement in radical groups intensified during his time as a student at Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). Following Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, Widodo was involved in Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) and JAT. In 2010, he was captured by the authorities for his involvement in the Cibiru group plot to bomb several places and for his involvement in military training in Aceh. Released in 2014, Widodo acknowledged that he had learned a great deal about culture, humanity and peaceful Islam from several *ustadz*sin prisons (Widodo, 2017). Having made this transformation, Widodo says that he is now very glad to be involved in many AIDA peaceful campaigns and to be a part of the AIDA peace team. Widodo's contribution to the youth programs run by AIDA offers a very good opportunity for raising awareness and empathy among the youth (Widodo, 2017).

YPP also focuses on the youth and their vulnerability to the influence of radical ideology. Among YPP's efforts targeting the youth population are Noor Huda Ismail's documentary films 'Jihad Selfie' (2015), 'Pengantin' (2017), and 'Seeking the Imam' (2020). These documentaries are based on the experiences of youths who had been drawn in by ultra-conservative ideology. These films were screened in many towns, universities and senior high schools across Indonesia and even gained attention in other countries. Following the screenings, Ismail (2015) would offer a discussion session featuring a former member of an extremist group. Often, Machmudi Hariono, a former JI member, would be present at these screenings and would be asked to share his experiences during his involvement in JI.

Although never directly involved in violent activity in Indonesia, Machmudi Hariono (aka. Yusuf) held fast to violent extremist views. Yusuf studied Islam with Bali bombers Muchlas and Amrozi at the Pesantren of Al-Islam in Lamongan in 1995, where he was recruited as a JI member. In 2000, Yusuf was sent to join a Muslim militia in Mindanao and, during this time, gained significant experience in war strategies and weaponry techniques. Upon his return to Indonesia in 2002, Yusuf continued his involvement with JI under the leadership of Abu Tholut. In 2004, Yusuf, along with Abu Tholut, was arrested by the Indonesian authorities for hiding explosives and thousands of ammunitions. During his five-year prison term, Yusuf reflected at length upon his life and previously unquestioned convictions and came to regret his extremist activities and

involvement with radical movements (taken from M. Hariono, personal communication, September 29, 2018). His interactions with Noor Huda of YPP led Yusuf to become an entrepreneur. Yusuf now works as a private taxi driver and is actively involved with many CSO-run P/CVE programs as a speaker. His testimonies during the screening of YPP movies have contributed significantly to the aims of the movies as counter narratives for youth. Ruangobrol.id greatly contributes to counter the spread of extremism ideology among the youths. As understood that extremists make use of technology especially internet and social media to spread their ideologies; many youths are also attracted and involved in some violent extremism due to the propaganda of extremists through social media. To reduce the backlash from the target audience, Noor Huda Ismail and the late of his brother Rosyid Nurul Hakim established Ruangobrol.id. To strengthen its voices, Ruangobrol.id employs some disengaged terrorists and returnees to participate in the web-based platform. The experiences of the reformed terrorists and returnees made them as the ‘credible voices’ to counter the propaganda of the extremists. Mahmudi Hariono (aka. Yusuf), the former JI member, and Joko Trihermanto (aka. Jack Harun), the former right-hand man of the late Noordin M Top, a Malaysian JI member, are among the first ‘credible voices’ of Ruangobrol. Currently, many other disengaged terrorists or returnees have joined the forum, whereas Arif Budi Setyawan (aka. Arif Tuban) as the most prolific writer in Ruangobrol.id. Since 2018, Arif has wrote about 394 short essays in Ruangobrol as his reflections on his previous experiences or some current phenomena on the issue of (violent) extremism either in Indonesia or abroad (taken from Arif B. Setiawan, personal communication, August 28, 2021). Based on an analysis by the end of 2020, about 30% of the readers of Ruangobrol are youths (18-34 old range). To broaden its scope of readers, Ruangobrol is promoted in many platforms of social media such as facebook, twitter, and instagram.

I am personally involved with another university-based program involving former terrorists is CISForm, a research centre at the State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Kalijaga, in Yogyakarta, with a focus on research and publishing. In the last several years however, CISForm has shifted its program to focus on youth as the most vulnerable population at risk of becoming influenced by radical ideology. In promoting counter narratives to the hateful narratives associated with the ultra-conservative ideology of groups like ISIS, CISForm developed a series of 40 cartoons on several contemporary subjects within Islam, including *jihād*, *hijrah*,

khilāfab and tolerant Islam. The cartoons have been disseminated widely via key social media platforms, such as Youtube, Facebook and Twitter. To strengthen its influence among the youth, CISForm invited Nurshadrina Khaira Dhania, a returnee from Syria, to launch the cartoon in Jakarta. Dhania has played a significant role in the CIS Form program by offering the audience her experiences as contextualisation for the subject matter of the cartoons.

Another CSO engaged in P/CVE, KIJ, also works on youth, with a particular focus on school students in the Klaten region (a sprawling low-rise city 30 kms east of Yogyakarta). As KIJ is a relatively new research centre at UIN Sunan Kalijaga, this is the first P/CVE initiative it has conducted. This initiative is not just a youth outreach program, it is also a research initiative which aims to produce P/CVE policy papers in order to contribute to the broader policy discussion surrounding P/CVE initiatives. Similar to CISForm, KIJ's P/CVE initiative is conducted in four schools in Klaten, two of them private schools and two public schools, and it also involves Nurshadrina Khaira Dhania as a significant voice contributing to their program.

The experience of Dhania living in Syria offers a very significant counter narrative to the ultra-conservative and utopian ideology of IS, which threatens to spread unchallenged among the local youth. Dhania recounts being deceived by IS propaganda and the caliphate of Islam. When she was in her second year of senior high school in Jakarta, she went to Syria along with 17 members of her family, lured by the utopian promise of the Caliphate, including the provision of welfare promised under the banner of IS. After having lived in several locations in IS-occupied northern Syria, Dhania's family found the promises of the Islamic State's online propaganda campaign of an Islamic utopia to be completely at odds with the lived reality of the Caliphate. During her first year, living in a female dormitory, Dhania saw that women were treated as sexual slaves for the male jihadists. Disappointed with the reality of life under IS, Dhania and her family tried to escape from the captivity of IS and, after almost another year, were eventually able to return to Indonesia. Upon their return in August 2017, Dhania and her family came to view Indonesia as much more Islamic in many aspects when compared to the Islamic State caliphate from which they had returned. The narrative presented through Dhania's personal experiences living under IS offers a very important lesson for pupils to be more critical of the deceptive, romanticised narratives and distorted understandings of

Islam pushed by extremist groups (taken from N. K. Dhania, personal communication, April 18, 2018).

Dhania and her family are but one example of Indonesian youths and families drawn to the illusive hope of an Islamic caliphate. This is unsurprising in light of IS's extensive use of the internet and social media to spread its propaganda. Testimonies such as Dhania's are needed to show young people that the reality behind IS's promises is quite different, and that they need to be more critical of the media they are exposed to. Providing a platform for former terrorists and returnees to share their experiences has the potential to have a significant impact on youth decision-making in response to extremist ideologies and the messaging of terrorist groups.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR FORMER TERRORIST PRISONERS

Yayasan Prasasti Perdamaian (YPP) and Yayasan Lingkar Perdamaian (YLP), are pioneering CSOs leading the way among the very few CSOs that offer economic empowerment programs working with former terrorist prisoners. As one of the leading CSOs on P/CVE, YPP's economic empowerment program targets the hearts and minds of the ex-terrorists by supporting their need for economic independence. YPP organises entrepreneur training and then allows prisoners to choose to start either their own small enterprise or become involved in a business set by YPP. One of the most successful economic empowerment avenues for former terrorists to emerge out of the YPP program is *Dapoer Bistik Solo* (DBS). Widodo Kainan (32) the main chef, is proud of the fact that there have been many former terrorist prisoners involved in running DBS, working in a range of roles such as cashiers, purchasers and in marketing. In addition to this, Kainan notes that DBS management is also involved in organising religious meetings and discussions to support prisoners in their disengagement from their previous radical networks. Furthermore, Kainan argues that YPP's economic empowerment program would not only lead to economic independence, but also to ideological independence (Kainan, personal communication, August 28, 2018). The founder of YPP, Noor Huda Ismail, has stated that DBS now plays more of a role as a meeting point and a public space for many former terrorists in Solo and its surrounding areas (Ismail, personal communication, September 30, 2018).

Yayasan Lingkar Perdamaian (YLP) has also opted for an economic empowerment approach in its programs aimed at former terrorists. In contrast to the vast majority of CSOs, which are primarily based in Jakarta, YLP was founded in 2017 by Ali Fauzi Manji in Lamongan, East Java. Lamongan and its surrounding areas are home to many ex-terrorist convicts from the JI and JAD networks. As a former terrorist himself, Fauzi has the support of a number of his friends, many of whom are also ex-terrorist convicts. The prime objective of YLP's work in Lamongan is to improve the circumstances of former terrorists by empowering them economically and assisting their disassociation from their former networks. In this endeavour, YLP has the support of many of its stakeholders, including the police force in the Lamongan region and the Director of BNPT, Suhardi Alius. Although Fauzi's program has been ridiculed by current JI and JAD members, he has continued to progress forward and is currently trying to gain as many board members as possible to support the existence and the sustainability of the foundation.

As the brother of Bali bombers Muchlas and Amrozi, Ali Fauzi Manji (47) was also involved in JI activity. After training at JI's Hudaibiyah Camp at Mindanao in 1994, Fauzi developed skills in military strategy and weaponry techniques. During the Ambon and Poso social conflicts, he was appointed as the head instructor of military training of Nusantara militia. After the conflicts, Fauzi travelled back to a Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) military camp in Mindanao where he was eventually caught by the Philippines authorities in 2004. Deported to Indonesia in very poor health in 2006, Fauzi received extensive medical treatment and remained in the custody of Indonesian authorities until, after a complete change of heart, he turned his back on his previous life and disengaged from his violent extremist connections. Since then, Fauzi has been involved in many government and CSO-based P/CVE programs and initiatives. His involvement in the P/CVE initiatives also brought him to meet many victims of terrorism among whom were the families of the victim of the 2002 Bali bombings. The meetings with the victims or and their families reinforced his decision to establish Yayasan LingkarPerdamaian (YLP).

Based in Yogyakarta, Muhammad In'am (42), serves as one of the board members of YLP. A native of Lamongan, In'am is the head of accompaniment and empowerment of ex-terrorist convicts for YLP. In'am himself was never a terrorist, but his younger brother died carrying out a suicide bombing in Aleppo, Syria in 2014 and many of his counterparts

from Lamongan were also involved in violent attacks. These close personal connections with violent extremism motivated In'am to become involved in combatting violent extremism. In Yogyakarta, In'am established Café Gandroeng. Although not initially established with this purpose clearly in mind, In'am has since dedicated his café to creating opportunities for ex-terrorist convicts as part of a broader disengagement program.

Surrounded by many universities, Café Gandroeng is well known among students in the eastern part of the city. Ahmad Azhar (26) and Salman Alfaluty (33) are among some ex-terrorist convicts working at the café. After spending some years in prisons due to their involvement in violent extremism, Azhar and Alfaluty came to regret their actions and detached themselves from their respective radical groups, NII and JAD. Azhar and Alfaluty have said that they feel lucky to be accepted at In'am's café. At the time of our interview, Alfaluty has been at the Gandroeng café for approximately 5 months, while Azhar had been there for only 2 months. In addition to teaching them how to brew coffee and run a café, they said that In'am would often discuss with them religious matters, especially with regard to ideological aspects. Alfaluty confessed, however, that he continues to view the caliphate in a favourable light (taken from A. Azhar and S. Alfaluty, personal communication, August 24, 2018).

In addition to providing personal and intensive 'training' to ex-terrorist convicts like Alfaluty and Azhar, Muhammad In'am has organised several entrepreneurship workshops for ex-terrorist convicts in his café as part of his involvement with YLP Lamongan. His expertise and dedication to countering terrorism is well known by BNPT, and has resulted in In'am being invited by BNPT to present on entrepreneurship for pre-released inmates. For In'am, Gandroeng offers a very good opportunity for ex-terrorist prisoners to start their new lives through training them to interact with a wide range of people and offering them practical skills.

CONCLUSION

As recruitment by extremist groups and the creeping spread of extremist ideology continue to present insidious challenges in Indonesia, countering violent extremism (CVE) cannot be seen as just a task for government bodies; rather, civil society must also be involved. Generally speaking, government bodies alone cannot address the broad scope and diversity of challenges presented by radicalism and terrorism. Indeed, even BNPT and DGC, the most authoritative bodies involved in conducting P/CVE programs within prisons, still struggle to coordinate these programs alone due to the overcrowding of prisons and the mobility of

the prisoners. Among the few CSOs dealing with terrorist convicts in prison, PRIK and DASPR at the University of Indonesia research centre play an important role in addressing the challenge of violent extremism.

While it is difficult to determine to what extent the initiatives in prisons have been successful, there is a good reason for believing that the involvement of former terrorists in the programs could increase the potential for successful outcomes. Although both PRIK and DASPR have included religious scholars, psychologists and entrepreneurs, the limited frequency of their visits still hinders the effectiveness of the program. This suggests that the in-prison programs could benefit significantly from an additional support from prison wardens (*pamong*), given the consistently close proximity or wardens to the prisoners on a day-to-day basis.

So far, P/CVE initiatives involving former terrorists out of the prison system appear to have been reasonably successful. But as government bodies do not work directly with ex-terrorist prisoners in these types of programs, this field of work has been the domain of CSOs. The key among these CSOs are YPP and YLP. To disengage ex-terrorist prisoners from their previous networks, both YPP and YLP are trying to appeal to these prisoners by organising entrepreneurship workshops and providing venture capital to set up their own small-scale enterprise. Although these initiatives are not able to be large-scale operations, their approach appears to be more feasible and has demonstrated clearer signs of success.

The last, and perhaps the most successful element of these initiatives, has been the involvement of former terrorists in youth programs. Young people have been found to be the most vulnerable section of society in relation to their susceptibility to radical ideology. AIDA's program of peaceful campaign is already being conducted with teenagers in a number of schools across many areas in Indonesia that have been identified as particularly at risk. Such programs can be relatively easily adopted by many other CSOs, as has already been demonstrated by the effective work of Ruangobrol.id, KIJ and CISForm.

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