

## Mapping Transformation: Lessons Learned from Poso District's Post-Conflict Deradicalization

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**Abstract** - The Post-Conflict Poso Deradicalization Program was launched after a series of conflicts between religious groups in Poso, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, have been ongoing since 1998. The main objective of this program is to alleviate tensions among these groups and promote peace and reconciliation in the region. In this context, the perspective of communication science plays a crucial role in bridging the perceptual gaps that exist between the community and the Poso government. Through this research, the researcher describes and analyzes the communication network structure and the roles of actors in seeking information about the deradicalization program. This communication network research adopts a descriptive approach. Primary data was collected through interviews with actors involved in the deradicalization program. The data was then coded based on the frequency of communication among the actors. The processing and visualization of the communication network were conducted using UCINET. The research finds that the formed communication networks indicate a relatively optimal level of communication, especially among the implementing groups and participants of the deradicalization program. In the post-conflict Poso deradicalization program, both Islamic and Christian sides have influential figures who can serve as role models for the community in eradicating the seeds of conflict that can always resurface.

**Keywords:** actors; communication network structure; deradicalization; post-conflict; Poso

### Introduction

Poso is a regency in the province of Central Sulawesi which often gets oblique scrutiny from journalists' cameras. Besides being known as an ebony wood producing area, Poso is also often known as a conflict area. The notion that Poso is a conflict area stems from the Poso riots that occurred in December 1998. The Poso conflict left wounds to the community. The conflicting parties agreed to end the conflict during a peace negotiation held in Malino, South Sulawesi, on December 20, 2001.

Despite the peace negotiation, known as the Malino agreement, the security situation in Poso has not fully recovered. Acts of violence still occurred in this former conflict area. The Tentena bombing, the bomb attack in front of the Poso Police Station, and the emergence of a resistance movement led by Santoso and friends have added to the gloomy situation in this district which has the motto *Sintuwu Maroso* (united we are strong).

The Poso conflict developed along with the rise of acts of terrorism in a number of places. The government then established the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) to specifically deal with terrorism.

The BNPT is a non-ministerial government agency (LPNK) that carries out government duties to counter terrorism. In carrying out its duties and functions, the BNPT is coordinated by the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs. The BNPT is led by a head who is

subordinated and responsible to the president. Initially, the Head of the BNPT was an echelon I.a official. However, since the issuance of Presidential Regulation Number 12 of 2012 concerning Amendments to Presidential Regulation Number 46 of 2010 concerning the Counter-Terrorism Agency, the post of Head of the BNPT is raised to ministerial level. The BNPT was formed based on Presidential Regulation Number 46 of 2010. Previously, the forerunner of this institution was the Terrorism Eradication Coordinating Desk (DKPT).

In its implementation, the deradicalization program is under the responsibility of Deputy I BNPT in charge of prevention, protection and deradicalization. The program is carried out through seven approaches that are interrelated with one another in order to obtain comprehensive results. They include religious, psychological, socio-cultural, economic, legal, political, and information technology approaches. As stipulated in Presidential Decree No. 46 of 2010, the BNPT has coordinated with government agencies and non-government institutions in implementing the deradicalization program, including the Ministry of Religion, the Ministry of Education, Da'wah Institutions, and Islamic Organizations

In implementing deradicalization programs in the regions, the BNPT has formed a Terrorism Prevention Coordination Forum (FKPT) in 32 provinces throughout Indonesia. The forum is a strategic partner of the BNPT in the regions to make synergistic efforts in "universal terrorism prevention" by prioritizing the local wisdom of each region.

Despite receiving support from most sections of society, the deradicalization program is not free from criticism from several community groups who view the deradicalization program designed by the government as an attempt to discredit Islamic religious ideology. They also think that the government's emphasis on a moderate understanding of Islam can dilute the essence of true Islamic values and teachings.

The presence of the deradicalization program in the community, especially in Poso Regency, seems to play in the rhythm of the different perceptions between the sender of the message and the recipient of the message. The government, through the BNPT, with a number of approaches, has carried out a deradicalization program that is trying to counter opinion on religious teachings, especially Islam, which are considered deviant, such as the notion of Jihad.

In response to the growing views of deradicalization programs in the public, Agus Surya Bakti in his book *Deradicalization of the Archipelago* emphasizes that deradicalization is not intended as an attempt to convey a "new understanding" of Islam, nor it is a siltation of faith. But it is an effort to restore and realign the understanding of what and how Islam is.

In another approach, the community's views and attitudes towards the deradicalization program carried out by the government in Poso Regency can be seen from KH Adnan Arsal's comments in an interview with one of the online media outlets. Chairperson of the Muslim Struggle Friendship Forum (FSPUI) Poso Regency Ust. Adnan Arsal said that if you (BNPT) educate Poso Muslim youths not to be radical, but then don't just deradicalize us, the police are also taught deradicalization, because in reality we only accept the consequences of the brutal actions of the police.

Adnan Arsal's remarks were a response to Nasir Abbas who represented the BNPT to carry out a deradicalization program in Poso Regency. This comment also alluded to the police's wrongful arrest of community members in an incident that had occurred in Poso.

In several cases, terrorist recidivists who had also participated in the BNPT deradicalization program eventually returned to committing acts of terror. Santoso is an example of a former terrorist recidivist who had participated in a deradicalization program and then returned to taking up arms.

Quoted from the nu.or.id page, the Santoso phenomenon was commented on by Solahuddin Wahid as part of an unsuccessful deradicalization program. Salahuddin Wahid said "Santoso who (perpetrated terror) in Poso was also the result of an unsuccessful deradicalization program," said KH Salahuddin Wahid at the National Defense Workshop which took place at the Tebuireng Islamic Boarding School, Jombang, East Java, Friday (7/4/2017).

In the Poso context, it was Santoso's death that was welcomed by the public. The banners "welcome to the Poso martyrs" were being praised and even unfurled. This is the antithesis of the government's deradicalization program. The public sympathized with the death of the government's most wanted terrorist kingpin.

At several locations in Poso Coast, banners welcoming the body of the East Indonesia Mujahidin leader were put up, which read: "Welcome to Martyrs of Poso, Santoso alias Abu Wardah". There was a photo of Santoso carrying a gun and a photo of him being evacuated attached to the banner.

On the day of his funeral, Santoso's body was greeted like a hero in his village. Unlike in other areas where the bodies of terrorists were often rejected by residents, Santoso's body actually received different treatment. As reported by a number of mass media outlets, Santoso's corpse was greeted enthusiastically by residents who had been waiting and thronged the road to his house.

Research related to the Poso conflict has been the concern of many researchers for a long time. Based on the research results, the number of research articles with the theme of the Poso conflict in Indonesian which are published in national journals each year has shown an upward trend from 2005 to 2019 (Hasrullah, 2021)

The perspective of communication science plays an important role in bridging the cross-perceptions that exist among the people and the Poso government today. In the perspective of communication science, it is said that communication can be well established (effective) if there is a similarity in the meaning of the message. This is something that hasn't been seen lately, the situation in Poso lately is in a never ending cross of perceptions as we have described above.

The objectives of this research are: To describe the structure of the communication network and the role of actors in seeking information on deradicalization programs; To analyze the relationship between communication networks and deradicalization programs.

The results of this research are expected to be valuable input for the government and the BNPT, specifically in making policies regarding post-conflict deradicalization programs.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Littlejohn (in Eriyanto, 2011) says the constructionist approach grew thanks to the encouragement of symbolic interaction and the works of Schutz, Berger, and Luckman. This approach mainly views that everyday life is primarily life through and with language. Language does not only construct symbols abstracted from everyday experience, but also "restores" these symbols and presents them as objective elements in everyday life. There are four assumptions attached to the constructionist approach. First, this world does not appear objectively real to the observer, but is known through experience, which is generally influenced by language. Second, the linguistic categories used to understand reality are situational in nature, because these categories arise from social interactions within groups of people at a certain time and place. Third, how a certain reality is understood at a certain time and is determined by the communication conventions that apply at that time. Therefore, the stability and instability of knowledge depends more on social change than on objective reality outside of experience. Fourth, socially constructed understandings of reality shape many other important aspects of life. How we think and behave in everyday life is generally determined by how we perceive reality.

Social construction is a process of meaning that is carried out by each individual towards the environment and aspects outside of himself, namely the subjective meaning of objective reality in the consciousness of people who carry out daily life activities. Berger understands a social reality as something whose presence does not depend on each individual. In his work with Luckmann, Berger explained that for the analysis of sociologists the most important thing is the reality of everyday life, namely the reality experienced or faced by individuals in their daily lives.

Berger (in Bungin, 2008) calls it the process of externalization, objectivation and internalization. Externalization is adjustment to the socio-cultural world as a human product. Biologically and socially, humans continue to grow and develop, therefore, humans continue to learn and work to build their survival. Externalization is a process of pouring out human self continuously into the world, both in physical and mental activity. It is an anthropological necessity, humans always devote themselves to the place where they are. Humans cannot be understood as a closure that is separated from the outside world.

Objectivation is the result that has been achieved, both mentally and physically from human externalization activities. The reality of everyday life is objectivated by humans or understood as objective reality. Objectivation is the achievement of the products of human activity which are externalized and then acquire an objective nature. Internalization is the process of re-absorption of the objective world into consciousness in such a way that the individual's subjectivity is influenced by the

structure of the social world. Society as a subjective reality implies that objective reality is subjectively interpreted by individuals.

Berger and Luckmann's social construction theory pays attention to the study of the relationship between human thought and the social context in which that thought arises and develops in such a way. Social construction theory according to Peter L. Berger has a goal to redefine the notion of reality and knowledge in a social context. The daily social phenomena of society are always in a process which is passed on in the experience of the people. The social reality is found in the social influences which are manifested in actions.

Poloma (2007) says, everyday life has stored and provided reality, as well as knowledge that guides daily behavior. The daily life presents an objective reality that is interpreted by individuals or has subjective meaning. Thus, the individual becomes a determinant in the social world that is constructed based on his will. Individuals act as media of production as well as creative reproduction in constructing their social world. The term social construction of reality is defined as a social process through actions and interactions in which individuals continually create a reality that is owned and subjectively experienced together.

### *Deradicalization*

Edwin (in Agus, 2016) says, deradicalization comes from the word "radical" with the suffix "de" which means reducing or reducing, and the word "ization", behind the word radical means process, method or deed. Be deradicalization is an effort to reduce radical activities and neutralize radical understanding for those who are involved in terrorists and their sympathizers as well as members of the public who have been exposed to radical terrorist ideas.

Radicalism in government terminology was quoted as conveyed by the BNPT in a socialization strategy for countering ISIS propaganda, stating that radicalism includes, among others: Claims of religious truth according to their groups; Feel understanding most the doctrine of religion; Feel having the authority to force and judge people who have different understandings (in the name of God)

In a similar presentation, the BNPT borrowed Shaykh Dr Muhammad Tahir al Qadri's definition of a radical mindset, in that presentation it was stated that radical mindsets include: Believing their views as the true representation of Islam; Other Muslims who disagree, all Muslim rulers, are not in accordance with Islamic law; Government is a combination of evil and goodness, disbelief and polytheism or heresy; View democratic institutions and elections as the embodiment of disbelief. For that, Jihad must be inflamed to fight it; Killing government bureaucrats and the people who support them is allowed; In jihad, anything is permissible including suicide bombings, massacres and acts of violence.

They think that they are the only group that has been given guidance, while the salaf scholars from previous generations were people of Jahiliyah, Shirk, and Bid'ah. (simbi.kemenag.go.id). Basically, the deradicalization program includes the process of convincing extremists to abandon the use of force. This program can also relate to the process of creating an environment that prevents the growth of radical movements by responding to the "root causes" that encourage the growth of these movements (ICG, 2007).

Deradicalization is also known as a soft approach or a persuasive and humanist approach in dealing with terrorism. The deradicalization approach is carried out because the law enforcement approach alone is considered not so optimal in stemming radicalism in society.

ICG (in Saella, 2016) said that arrests, trials and imprisonment alone are not effective enough to rehabilitate convicts of terrorism cases. This is because there are some of terrorism convicts who have been released later rejoined radical terrorist groups, and resumed their terrorist activities after leaving prison. In fact, there are also terrorist inmates who then spread their radical ideology to other prisoners.

This shows that the handling of terrorism which only relies on a legal approach is not enough to overcome this problem completely. This approach, which is also known as the hard approach, is considered unable to fully rehabilitate the radical ideology believed by terrorism convicts because it does not touch the personal aspects of the individual (Saella Fitriana, 2016).

Therefore, a persuasive and humanist approach is also needed so that the handling of terrorism in Indonesia can run comprehensively and effectively. The approach known as the soft approach was finally realized in the form of a deradicalization strategy. This strategy is aimed at targeting groups of people who have been exposed to the radical ideology of terrorism, by stopping the process of

understanding and spreading radical ideology owned by terrorist groups. This aims to reduce the level of radicalism of terrorism convicts, ex-convicts of terrorism, and the closest families of terrorist members so that they can peacefully live side by side with members of society outside their group, prevent acts of terror in the future, and stop the spread of terrorist networks so as not to trigger national hostility and disintegration again (Agus, 2014).

#### *Deradicalization Program*

In its implementation, the deradicalization program is attached to the duties and functions of the BNPT as stipulated in Presidential Decree No. 46 of 2010, the BNPT has coordinated with both government agencies and non-government institutions in implementing the deradicalization program. For example, the BNPT has so far coordinated with the Ministry of Religion, the Ministry of Education, Da'wah Institutions, and Islamic Organizations (Saella Fitriana, 2016: 1992).

Muhammad Khairil (2012) suggests several alternative strategies that need to be implemented in an effort to minimize the number of conflicts in Poso, by providing guidance through education based on the environment; optimizing the role of the mass media in disseminating local wisdom values; increasing the role of the arts community to work on local cultural wealth; increasing the role of local cultural figures; and increasing the role of government agencies in implementing local cultural wisdom.

Some of the deradicalization programs that have been implemented in Poso Regency include the Workshop on Handling Radicalism and the Strategy to Strengthen the Role of Youth in Peace Building in Poso. This activity was carried out by the Civil Society Strengthening Institute in collaboration with the Center for Middle East and Global Peace Studies at UIN Jakarta.

Previously, the BNPT had also held a Poso Community Gathering event which featured former terrorism convict Abu Tholut as the speaker. Counter-radicalism socialization events of this kind are often carried out in Poso Regency, as part of deradicalization efforts for the Poso people who are considered to be easily exposed to radical understandings because it is a former conflict area.

#### *Definition of Communication Network*

Communication network is a description of "how say to whom" (who talks to whom) in a social system. Communication networks describe interpersonal communication, in which there are opinion leaders and followers who have communication relationships with each other on a particular topic, which occurs in a particular social system such as a village, an organization, or a company (Gonzales, 1993).

The definition of a communication network according to Rogers (1983) is a network consisting of individuals who are interconnected, connected by patterned communication flows. Knoke and Kuklinski (1982) see a communication network as a type of relationship that specifically ties together individuals, objects and events. Whereas Farace (Berberg and Chaffee, 1987) sees a communication network as an orderly pattern of contact between persons who can be identified as the exchange of information experienced by a person in his social system.

From the various definitions mentioned above, what is meant by a communication network in this paper is a series of relationships between individuals as a result of the exchange of information, thus forming certain patterns or models of communication networks. The Role of Communication Networks in the Behavior Change Process in a Communication Network, there are opinion leaders, namely people who influence other people regularly on certain issues. The characteristics of these opinion leaders vary according to the type of group they influence. If opinion leaders are in innovative groups, they are usually more innovative than group members, although opinion leaders are often not among the first innovators to implement innovations. On the other hand, opinion leaders from conservative groups are also somewhat conservative (Gonzales, 1993).

#### *Communication Network Analysis*

Rogers and Kincaid (1981) explained that communication network analysis is a research method to identify the structure of communication within a system, where relationship data regarding the flow of communication is analyzed using several types of interpersonal relationships as a unit of analysis. The purpose of communication research using communication network analysis is to understand the general description of human interaction in a system.

Several things that can be done in a communication network analysis are: identifying clicks in a system, identifying a person's special role in a communication network, for example as liaisons, bridges and isolated, and measuring various structural indicators (indices) communication, such as click connectedness, click openness, click integration, and so on.

Clicks in a communication network are part of a system (sub-system) where members interact relatively more frequently with one another than other members in a communication system (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981).

In the process of diffusion, to obtain information for group members, in the communication network there are the following roles (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981):

Liaison Officer (LO), namely a person who connects two or more groups/sub-groups, but LO is not a member of one of the groups/sub-groups; Gate keepers, namely people filtering incoming information before communicating it to group/sub-group members; Bridge, namely members of a group/sub-group that are related to other groups/sub-groups; Isolate, namely those who are excluded in a group/sub-group; Cosmopolitan, namely someone in a group/sub-group who connects the group/sub-group with other groups/sub-groups or outsiders; Opinion Leader, namely a person who becomes an opinion leader in a group/sub-group

### *Related research*

BNPT's Efforts in Implementing Deradicalization Programs in Indonesia (Saella Fitriana, 2016). The Deradicalization Program emerged from the Indonesian government's concern about the high level of radicalism and terrorism among civil society. The soft approach that forms the basis of the deradicalization program will be able to effectively rehabilitate terrorists, their groups and their families from a radical mindset. They are expected not to repeat previous acts of terror, not to return to being agents of radicalism, and to be able to live in peace.

Problems then arose when the deradicalization program received criticism from several activists and groups of civil society religious practitioners and rejection from convicts who said that the program was created to discredit Islamic values. This study describes and explains the formulation of Indonesia's de-radicalization program in detail using constructivist perspective theory and dissemination in explaining the formulation and implementation of the BNPT de-radicalization program. In this study, the authors used a qualitative method with explanatory research, followed by collecting data through literature and interviews. Based on the existing findings, the deradicalization program, which is rooted in basic assumptions and constructivist renunciation theory, is made comprehensively without discrediting certain religious values. And because terrorism in Indonesia is dominated by radical Islamic thoughts, the implementation and approach of the deradicalization program are adjusted to run harmoniously, to ensure the effectiveness of the rehabilitation program.

The study about the strategy of preventing radicalism in the context of eradicating criminal acts of terrorism, identifies and analyzes strategies of preventing radicalism in the context of eradicating criminal acts of terrorism. Using a normative juridical approach that is descriptive in nature, analysis through a study of doctrinal law on laws and regulations relating to criminal acts of terrorism in Indonesia, the results obtained are that to prevent radicalism, you can use two strategies, namely the hard approach and the soft approach. The strategy is carried out by combining prosecution and prevention and is conducted simultaneously by taking a "proactive law enforcement" approach without neglecting the "rule of law" and "legality principle" principles. With this approach, efforts can be made to prevent acts of radicalism that lead to terrorism without having to (wait) for an act to occur and its consequences (Jazuli, 2016).

The other study is "the Meaning of Police Actions for Victims of Arrest in Poso (Phenomenological Study of the Meanings of Victims of Misarrest Against Police Actions that Consider Them ss Terrorists in Poso)". The focus of this study is to find out the meaning of police action for victims of wrongful arrests in Poso, regarding the violent behavior and shootings carried out by the police, namely Special Detachment 88 (Densus 88) who arbitrarily determined and even made arrests of certain individuals suspected of being a terrorist in Poso without seeing their background first (the victim was wrongly arrested). This study aims to find out the meaning of the victim of wrongful arrest and the communication experience of the victim of wrongful arrest during interrogation by the Poso police (Ifkan, 2022).

## Material and Methodology

This research is conducted in Poso District, Central Sulawesi. This study uses a descriptive approach. Primary data was collected through interviews with Poso conflict network actors as well as through literature, books, notes or reports in related agencies.

The research data was taken from interviews with actors involved in the post-conflict deradicalization program in Poso. The researcher then coded the results of the interviews which explained the relationships or links between actors. The pattern of network structure is found by analyzing the network and visualizing the network using UCINET VI software.

The coding is done by assigning a range of 0-5 to the frequency level of communication between actors in the post-conflict deradicalization program in Poso. 0 means there is no communication between actors, while scores 1-5 are given depending on how often two actors meet and communicate with each other.

## Result and Discussion

The Poso conflict broke out in 1998 when the country's situation was also in a state of flux towards the end of the New Order regime. Many people believe that the conflict broke out because of the weak management of the conflict by the state at that time, as well as the entry of political interests fighting over the leadership of the Poso Regent.

According to Gogali (2008) in the Poso conflict, interreligious conflict was the most dominant discourse. This discourse shapes and constructs the violent incidents in Poso and its surroundings into narratives about two religious communities, Islam and Christianity, facing each other. The form of production, re-production of discourse on the Poso conflict as an inter-religious conflict, among others, is by always linking it as an incident of violence with religious, Christian and Islamic communities. Indications of linking incidents of violence with the two religions can be seen from how often the government, mass media including local and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and various parties identify victims and or perpetrators of shootings, bombs, mutilations, even areas/residences that are burned, damaged, with the victim's religion. The habit of identifying violent incidents based on the victim's religion has become something that is usually followed by the people of Poso and outside Poso.

Discourse on the Poso conflict as an inter-religious conflict emerged from the start and became one of the main causes of the widening Poso conflict. Discourses on social jealousy and economic disparity reinforce the discourse on the Poso conflict as a religious conflict by using the categories of religion and ethnicity which are the majority in Poso district. Meanwhile, the discourse on terrorism has not only succeeded in shifting or even drowning other discourses, but has also maintained the dominant discourse, namely the Poso conflict as an inter-religious conflict, even though the mention of terrorism only refers to certain religious groups. This shows that the ongoing violent conflict in Poso is related to religious sentiments. In other words, the discourse on terrorism is a new face that is more global than the discourse on the Poso conflict as an inter-religious conflict.

McRae (2016) said that in general the Poso conflict was divided into four overlapping phases and had different forms of violence. The first phase consisted of two City riots in December 1998 and April 2000, both of which had clear links to competition among local political patronage networks. There were no fatalities in the first riot, while seven people died, half of whom were shot by the police in the second riot in April 2000. A month after the second riot, the violence escalated so quickly that the conflict entered a new (third) phase of widespread killings. At least 246 people, mostly Muslims, were killed when a sub-group of the Christian Community launched a series of attacks on Muslims. The next (fourth) phase followed after the killings in May-June 2000, namely the prolonged conflict phase of the two camps that lasted 18 months.

### *History of the Poso Conflict*

The violent communal conflict in Poso began on 24 December 1998: Christmas Eve and the month of Ramadan. Although the sequence of events is disputed, most claim that it started with 3 Christian youths who came to the Darussalam mosque in Sayo village and beat a young man inside the mosque in the middle of the night on 24 December before the early morning of 25 December. This incident made Muslims feel threatened and they attacked Christian homes. This news spread quickly and many people tried to enter Poso City from the surrounding area. The Muslims came from

Tokorondo, Parigi and Ampana, while the Christians armed with machetes came from Sepe, Silanca and Tentena. The rioting continued until 29 December, extending past the city limits and into towns along the 3 main roads.

After a week of violence, there were only a few attacks by both Christians and Muslims until April 2000, which marked the start of the second phase of the conflict. On 16 April 2000, a fight broke out between Muslim and Christian youths at the Poso bus terminal in Lombogia village, an area dominated by Christians. Muslims started attacking houses in Lombogia and burning down the main church.

The third phase of the conflict began in May 2000 when a Christian group known as the Bat Troops or ninjas led by Fabianus Tibo killed 3 people in Moengko village. Violence escalated significantly when an attack was carried out on the village of Sintuwu Lemba, otherwise known as Kilo Sembilan. This village is a transmigration area for Javanese Muslim ethnic groups and has a boarding school called Wali Songo. About 70 people were killed or disappeared in the attack. The attack targeted the city of Poso, forcing many Muslims to flee the city. The Kilo Sembilan attack prompted the surrounding Muslims to take up arms. This also made the Indonesian army deploy more of its members.

In April 2001, mounting anger from the Muslim community was seen by their demand for the death penalty for three Christians – Fabianus Tibo, Marinus Riwu and Doweeks Dasilva – who were accused of being involved in the Kilo Sembilan attack. Extremist groups from outside Poso also expressed their anger and in July 2001, thousands of members of Laskar Jihad (Java-based Muslim militants) arrived in Poso, marking the start of the fourth phase of the conflict. Their involvement in this conflict changed the dynamics, providing a significant addition to the Muslim community, who attacked and burned Christian villages around the city of Poso. This conflict has become very one-sided now.

In December 2001, attacks coordinated by Muslim groups occurred in several villages, from Betalembah to Sanginora, marking the start of the fifth phase of the conflict. The central government sent 2,000 officers to try to contain the violence in Poso, bringing the total number of security personnel to about 3,500 in the area. At the same time, the Government initiated political talks which culminated in the Malino Peace Declaration (Malino I) which was signed on 21 December 2001 by Muslim and Christian leaders.

### *Religious Motives in the Poso Conflict*

It is not difficult to identify the Poso conflict as a religious conflict. It is very easy and clear to see in the field. Religious communities (Christian-Islamic) are clearly seen vis-à-vis their respective religious symbols. Muslims call it Jihad Fi Sabilillah while Christians call this event in accordance with what is guided by the Bible.

The Poso conflict involving Muslim and Christian youths began at the Darussalam Mosque in Sayo village. The incident that occurred right on Christmas Eve, which also coincided with the month of Ramadan, has gained a stronger basis for framing this event as a religious conflict.

The Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (2011) revealed that the news of the clash between youths at the Darussalam Mosque spread quickly. The Muslim community who came from Tokorondo, Parigi and Ampana tried to enter Poso. Meanwhile, Christians were armed with war from Sepe, Silanca, and Tentena. The rioting continued until 29 December, extending past the city limits and into towns along the three main roads.

After that incident, the friction for the sake of friction continues to grow and expand. The escalation of the conflict that continues cannot be avoided anymore. The death toll from both Christianity and Islam continues to increase in numbers that are not small. Houses of worship, churches and mosques have been the targets of mob rampage during the Poso riots since late 1998.

In its development, the Poso conflict also involved troops from two religions, Muslims and Christians. From the Islamic side, the troops are often known as white troops, or Jihad troops. While from the Christian side, the troops are dubbed as the red army, or the bat army.

The declaration of peace to end Poso riot also involved religious figures from the Muslim and Christian sides to find a middle ground for the protracted communal conflict.

### *Political Motives in the Poso Conflict*

It is difficult to separate the communal violence that has occurred in Poso since 1998 from the political connections that also contributed to this conflict. The simplest reason is that the Poso conflict occurred in the days ahead of the regional political moment. McRae (2016) said that the December 1998 riots had changed Poso's local politics. The obvious change was the exclusion of the Protestant candidate for regent, Yahya Patiro.

In the period before the implementation of democracy and decentralization in Poso Regency, the division of powers for the Regent, Regional Secretary and Chairperson of the Poso Legislative Council (DPRD) was regulated by the central government, including the distribution of power based on religion and always balanced (Hasrullah, 2007). In this rotation, it is known as power sharing which is carried out to respect the diversity of religions in Poso Regency.

The post of Poso regent is always rotated based on the two dominant religions in Poso, namely Islam and Christianity. This power sharing rotation began with the post of regent for the 1967-1973 period which was held by Galib Lahasido from an Islamic group, then during the reign of President Soeharto the post of regent was held by Koeswandi (1973-1984) from a Christian group, after the term of office of Regent Koewandi ended he was then replaced by an Islamic group figure, namely Regent Soegiono (1984-1988). The appointment of Poso regent based on religious rotation continued until the term of office of Regent Arief Patanga ended in 1999, when the democracy and decentralization system was implemented in Indonesia. This democratic system has brought changes to the governance structure of Poso Regency because during this democratization period the composition of the population based on tribal, religious, racial and societal (SARA) issues is no longer a political formula in regulating power sharing. Therefore, it is the group which has the majority of supporters that will rule the regency.

After Regent Arief Patanga completed his term of office in 1998, the competition for the post of district head has been very fierce. In June 1999, the Governor of Central Sulawesi H.B. Paliudju issued a letter dismissing Arief Patanga as Poso regent and appointed Deputy Governor of Central Sulawesi Haryono as an interim official tasked mainly with preparing the process for selecting the Poso regent (Surahman, 2007). After that, the names of the candidates for Poso regent appeared to circulate in the Poso community, with each of them representing a local political group in Poso, including Abdul Malik Syahadap, Abdul Muin Pusadan, Akram Kamarudin, Mas'ud Kasim (representing an Islamic group), and Damsyik Ladjalani, Eddy F. Bungkundapu and Yahya Patiro (Christian group). Three of the several names submitted to run for Poso regent passed the selection process. They were Abdul Muin Pusadan, Mas'ud Kasim, and Eddy Bungkundapu. The election for Poso regent was held on 30 October 1999, resulting in the election of Abdul Muin Pusadan as Poso regent by obtaining 16 votes, followed by Mas'ud Kasim with 13 votes and Eddy Bungkundapu with 10 votes (Amidhan, 2007).

One of Muin Pusadan's tasks after being elected was to appoint a new regional secretary. According to the law at that time, the regent endorsed a list of candidates for the regional secretary to be chosen by the governor. Muin Pusadan's preferred candidate is Awad Al-Amri, who is of Arab descent. After Damsyik failed to become regent, a group of supporters centered in PPP circles to support Damsyik to become regional secretary. The mass media also regularly published support from Haelan Umar, the head of the PPP faction, to Damsyik Ladjalani (McRae, 2011: 55).

Before the decision on the regional secretary was taken, Ladjalani was promoted to the head of the Provincial Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) in Palu. As Ladjalani's chances faded, his support turned into a threat. The direct quotation of Haelani Umar's words by *Mercusuar* Newspaper later became famous: "I predict there will be riots again in Poso. And maybe it will be bigger than it has ever been. On the night after Umar's comments were published, riots broke out again in Poso.

### *The Impact of the Poso Conflict*

The Poso conflict left a lot of homeworks to the government as well as the entire Poso community. The human tragedy that claimed thousands of lives requires a long time to return the security situation in Poso to its original state. This can be marked by the situation after the Malino peace talks. After the signing of the peace agreement, the security situation in Poso was not really conducive. Although the Malino peace agreement successfully reduced the escalation of the conflict, it has not brought Poso to a real peaceful situation.

After the Malino agreement was signed at the end of 2001, the Poso conflict continued to erupt. Throughout 2002 bomb explosions and shooting attacks were scattered in several places in Poso

District. During the 2003 – 2004 period mysterious shootings and bombings continued in several villages in Poso. In 2005, there were a bomb explosion in Pasar Tentena, a mysterious attack in the village of Sepe-Silanca, and the mutilation of three Christian high school girls (see the chronology table of the Poso conflict).

To this day the security situation in Poso is still a big homework for the government. The slightest friction between the two religious communities that were once in conflict could trigger the birth of a new conflict. Later, a resistance emerged, spearheaded by Santoso and friends who were said to be related to past grudges.

The ongoing conflict in Poso, which is often associated with acts of terrorism, actually has a close connection with revenge resulting from the SARA nuanced conflict a few years ago, which caused many fatalities. The Walisongo tragedy on May 28, 2000, which resulted in 200 deaths, is still scarred today because of feelings of injustice, especially among Muslims, who subsequently experienced the stigma of being terrorists. Santoso and Basri were eyewitnesses to the incident and not a few of their relatives fell victim to it. ([www.komnasham.go.id](http://www.komnasham.go.id))

The uncertain security situation in Poso also affected the local people who had difficulties gardening. During the Tinombala operation to hunt down Santoso, the people were afraid of going to the mountains as they were worried that they might be suspected of being part of Santoso's herd.

Mrs. Adi (not her real name), a resident of Tangkura Village, said that her villagers have switched jobs to become palm oil laborers in other districts. There are also some of them who force themselves to keep gardening at high risk. This is because there is a ban on gardening, because of the implementation of security operations. "Usually those who do the gardening are suspected of providing logistics to the fugitives, or are thought to be part of their group," said Adi's mother. ([www.tempo.co](http://www.tempo.co))

In the early days of the riots, the people of Poso also found it difficult to work. Feelings of worry, uncertain security guarantees disrupt people's work mobility because threats of violence can come at any time without being able to be predicted in advance.

The Poso conflict also left a new political order in Poso District, where regional heads always represented the Muslim and Christian communities. If the candidate for regent is Christian, then the deputy regent must be Muslim, and vice versa. This situation lasted for at least three regional head elections. There were no political events that disturbed Poso's post-communal conflict security stability. It could also mean that the people of Poso have really learned from the past conflicts.

After the Poso conflict, the government also allocated large funds as investment in education in Poso Regency. The Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare built the Ittihadul Ummah (Gontor Poso) Islamic Boarding School in Tokorondo village for the Muslim community, and Tentena Christian University (Unkrit) in Tentena for the Christian community in 2007 (Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2011:62).

### *Post-Conflict Poso Conditions*

Almost 20 years have passed since the Poso conflict broke out at the end of 1998. After the conflict, the Poso people tried to get back and recover the many things they had lost. On many occasions, they admit that they are tired of fighting, they need a decent living, and they need to eat and work, for a better life.

People have started to realize, we have to work, if it's not safe how we are going to work. If we don't work we will not eat. And this does not only arise from the Christian side, but also from the Muslim side (Interview with Chancellor of Tentena University).

During the period of twenty years, the people of Poso went through the most heartbreaking stages in their togetherness. There is no security guarantee for those who choose to return to live in Poso. Social interactions between people, especially those from different religions, are not as warm as they used to be. There is a partition that becomes a wall that separates us from them.

In this 20-year deadline, people are starting to build their hopes again. Starting their business, pursuing a career and working in Poso. Slowly, the barriers of interaction between people of different religions have begun to be removed. And in that span of time, a new generation grew that did not inherit past grudges. This new generation will later fill important spaces in Poso Regency.

Sintuwu Maroso University (Unsimar) is back in operation again. Poso youths flocked to come and study at the university, the pride of the Poso people. Educational institutions in Poso Regency are

developing rapidly, currently the College for Islamic Studies (STAI) is also present there. In the Tentena section, the community can also study and access tertiary institutions at Tentena Christian University.

The Ittihadul Ummah (Gontor Poso) Islamic boarding school which was founded during the term of office of vice president Jusuf Kalla has also been running well. Poso children in droves and even from a number of areas throughout Indonesia come and study there. This is the new Poso situation. A situation where people are trying to get out of the shadow of conflict.

Ahead of Ramadan last May, the Poso police initiated the Tabligh Akbar event with religious leaders in Poso Regency. The event was also attended by religious leaders from all religions in Poso.

Indeed, in the past, the pattern was very different. In the past, our presence everywhere could not be accepted. They also had a silent movement, when the police came they did not want to talk, anyway. Here's the difference. If not now, we will even be called sir. This Tabligh Akbar included all those mass organizations. In the past, Pak Haji Adnan Arsal, the one who hated us the most, was Tanah Runt, he was the one who led the leadership here. (Interview with Head of Public Guidance Unit of Poso Police)

In the past, when he was the one leading the demonstration, Allahu Akbar was all, takbir was all. But now it's so familiar, it's so fluid. He can come here, we can also visit his house. And he now embraces all mass organizations. He embraces FPI, he embraces Alkhairaat, he embraces Muhammadiyah, he embraces all mass organizations. So we have no more doubts about him. Because he is already open. (Interview with Head of Public Guidance Unit of Poso Police)

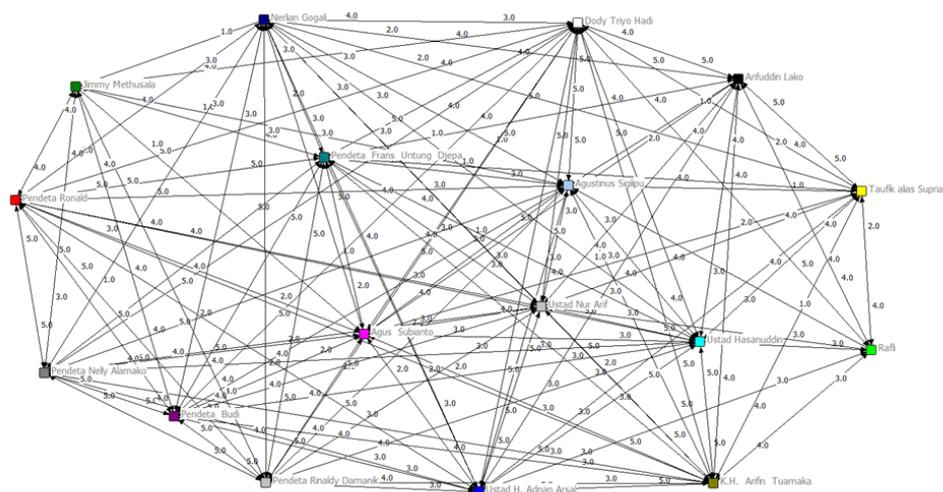
The people of Poso who are trying to escape from the shadow of past conflicts hope that the current situation in Poso can be maintained. Two religious communities, both Muslim and Christian, are now jointly declaring war on a common problem, namely drugs.

What's more, we are hit with drugs, I sometimes feel that my annoyance is extraordinary, that we have been damaged again by that. So indeed the current generation faces quite complex problems. Don't have young people fighting over drugs, it just happens that different religions will be called inter-religious fights. (interview with Unkrit Chancellor).

I hope that in Poso taklim assemblies will be formed in the villages. Why? This is because the police themselves are overwhelmed with drugs, overwhelmed with drinking, overwhelmed with gambling. It doesn't matter, sir, we were in Poso, how many children drank at that time, but because they joined taklim their mentality changed because they joined taklim. Drinking people turn into people who are diligent in worship. Why do they change, because every day they get a shower of religious and spiritual spirituality (interview with H Adnan Arsal),

Poso Regency also now has an airport that supports the wheels of community life. The airport, which is located in the Kasiguncu Village, has so far accommodated two airlines with the Poso - Makassar and Makassar – Poso flight routes. Kasiguncu Airport was inaugurated by President Joko Widodo in June 2016.

*Visualization of Communication Network*



**Figure 1.** Visualization of Relations Between All Actors

The results of the sociogram of relations between actors in the deradicalization program show that communication has been sufficiently established to the maximum, especially among the implementing and participant groups. The supporting actors for the deradicalization program have also shown a positive relationship with the implementers and participants of the deradicalization program.

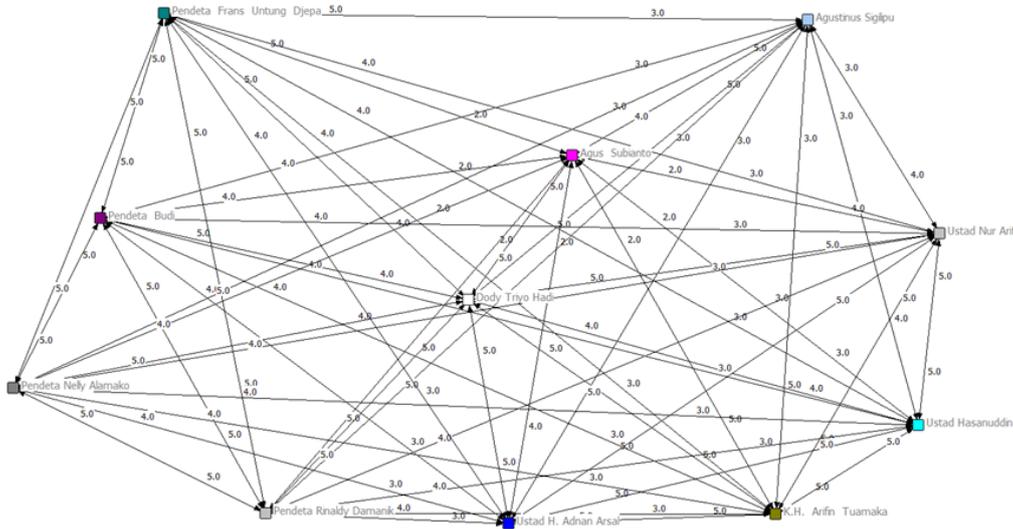


Figure 2. Relations Between Actors (implementers and program supporters)

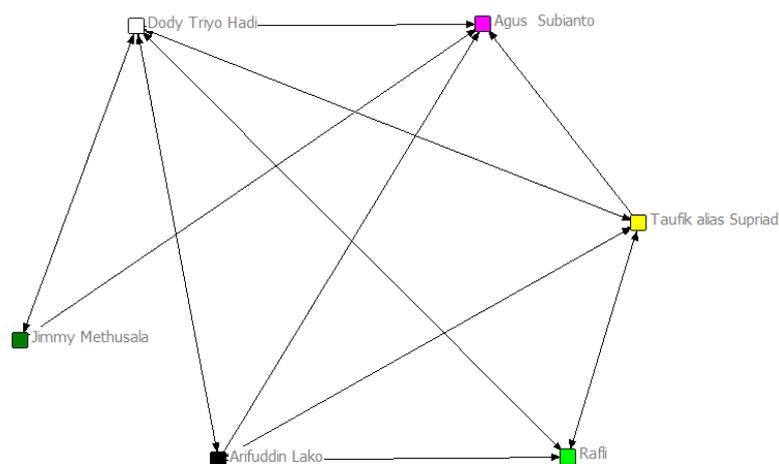


Figure 3. Relations Between Actors (Executors and Participants)

**Conclusion**

Based on the research results it can be concluded that the Poso conflict is a historical event that is still frequently brought up by certain elements to be used as a political tool in seizing power. Both parties, Muslim and Christian, have figures who can become role models and figures for society in eradicating the seeds of conflict that can always grow again. Analysis of the communication network shows that the groups implementing and participating in the deradicalization program have established maximum communication.

Suggestions for this research in the future are: The government should pay more attention to Poso residents, especially in Pancasila education. The central government should carry out a deradicalization program in an applicative manner by taking a direct approach to the people of Poso.

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