

# Yayasan Debintal: Community-Based Deradicalisation Program

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**Abstract:** Terrorism has been one of the most important national securities in Indonesia. However, most would argue that Indonesia relies more on a hard approach instead of a soft approach in solving this issue. Deradicalization as one of the methods have not reached all, or even most, terrorist convicts and ex-convicts. A well-guided and developed community of ex-convicts of terrorist activities as facilitator in deradicalization may be a strategic option. Data for this research was gathered through interviews and literature studies. Validation was done by data triangulation by comparing the data to other data gathered from various sources throughout the research. The research found that communities may potentially be more effective in combating radicalization as they move in the grass roots, and would be more effective in bridging newly released ex-convicts with the society.

**Keywords:** Community, deradicalization, strategy, violent conflict resolution.

## 1. Introduction

In the past decade, terrorism has been known as a real threat to the global security. After the 9/11 attack in the United States, the country started a campaign against terrorist groups called War on Terror. Being a hegemonic state, its War on Terror policy also influenced the policies against terrorism in other countries. This is especially clear in the Middle Eastern countries that became the target of most counter-terrorism efforts. The War on Terror policy implemented by the Bush administration was seen to be repressive and too heavy handed on the military use. Thus, it caused a lot of controversies. Indonesia and other countries in the Southeast Asian region are also the focus of US foreign policy in countering terrorism. It is also mentioned in the US defense white paper, that the Southeast Asia Region is "The Second Front" against terrorism. The United Nations pushed this notion further when the organization declared "Jamaah Islamiah (JI)" as an international terrorism organization. Within the framework of national security, terrorism can be a threat to state security, public security and human security.

The terrorist attack that that became the starting point for preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) in Indonesia was the Bali Bombing. The tragedy that is also

known as Bali Bombing I or 2002 Bali Bombings occurred on October 12, 2002. Three bomb attacks were launched on the same day, with two the first explosion occurred at Paddy's Club and Sari Club in the Jalan Legian area, Kuta, and the third explosion near the US Consulate. It is also the first suicide bombing attack in Indonesia. There were 202 fatalities and 209 injured in this incident. This attack was carried out by the terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), which has ties to Al Qaeda.

JI also carried out other terrorist attacks, such as the bombings at the JW Marriott and Ritz Carlton Hotels (2003), and the Australian Embassy (2004) in Jakarta. Bali was also attacked once again in 2005, making the attack known as Bali Bombings II. Bali Bombings II killed 23 people, and injured 196 others. Similar to the Bali Bombings I, the Bali Bombings II also involved three bombings, one in Kuta and two in Jimbaran. Further along the timeline, there were two bombing attacks carried out by Tauhid wal Jihad, a terrorist group part of Jamaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT) in 2011 (Tempo). The first bombing took place on April 15, 2011, in Cirebon. The target of the attack was the Adz-Zikro mosque in the Cirebon City Police Headquarters (Mapolresta) area. In this incident, 25 Friday prayer attendants were injured, along with the suicide bomber.

In the same year, the group bombed Bethel Full Gospel Church in Solo, with 24 injured. The GBIS suicide bomber was Pino Damayanto alias Ahmad Urip alias Ahmad Yosepa Hayat alias Hayat. Pino was also involved in the attack in Cirebon, as the man who escorted Muhammad Syarif Astanagarif to the Adz-Zikro mosque to launch a suicide bombing. Police said the suicide bombers in both attacks received training from the Australian Embassy bombers (VOA). Yadi, the leader of Tauhid wal Jihad, was arrested by Densus 88 on 19 October 2011. Various acts of terrorism continue to occur in Indonesia, eventually totaling at 523 attacks in 2011-2021.

Responding to the threat of terrorism in Indonesia, the Indonesian government issued Government Regulation in Lieu of Law (Perppu) Number 1 of 2002 concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism. This Perppu was later changed

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into Law Number 15 of 2003, the Terrorism Crime Act. The government also established two institutions whose main function was to deal with terrorism, the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) and the Special Detachment 88 Anti-Terror at the National Police Headquarters, also known as Densus 88. and the eradication of terrorism in Indonesia, as a response to the threats and acts of terrorism.

One of the paths taken in the soft approach to counter terrorism is deradicalization. Deradicalization is recorded in Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia no. 77 of 2019. In PP no. 77 of 2019, Prevention of Terrorism is carried out through three activities, namely: (a) National Preparedness; (b) Counter Radicalization; (c) Deradicalization. By definition, deradicalization is "a planned, integrated, systematic and continuous process that is carried out to eliminate or reduce and reverse the radical understanding of terrorism that has occurred". At its core, deradicalization is an attempt to persuade terrorist convicts, ex-convicts of terrorism crimes, member of terrorist groups, and their supporters to abandon the use of violence.

Ideally, ex-convicts who have participated in the deradicalization program can return to society without still believing the terrorism ideology. However, in reality, it is not uncommon for former convicts to re-join the terrorist networks and groups; in some cases, they did not join any deradicalization program. Jo bin Muhammad Aceng Kurnia, the perpetrator of the Ouikumene Church bombing in Samarinda, is one of the examples (Nugroho, 2016). Jo is also a former convict in a bomb case at the Research Center for Science and Technology, Tangerang. However, Jo was not involved in the deradicalization program. Meanwhile, Rullie Rian Zeke and Ulfah Handayani Saleh carried out the bombings in the Philippines despite having finished a deradicalization program.

There are various factors that push former convicts to re-join radical terrorist organizations. For example, economic difficulties, and rejection from society. As ex-convicts, they have a lot of difficulty getting conventional jobs. Meanwhile, not all of them have the resources to independently start a business. Meanwhile, radical groups usually offer financial support among other things for their members. Thus, it is easier for ex-convicts who have difficulties in providing for their families, to re-join the terrorist groups.

Rejection from the community or the environment due to negative stigma against former convicts is also a driving factor for convict recidivism. Radical terrorism groups that hold routine group meetings for their members can form very tight-knit groups. The pattern of thinking which then becomes more and more similar to each other produces bonds of friendship to brotherhood, giving a sense of belonging to its members. This familiarity can also be exploited to attract members of radical groups who have just been released from prison. Rejection from society or the environment will only complicate the deradicalization process.

From this narrative, it was found that there were deficiencies that could have been corrected by the way the Indonesian government through the BNPT and its partners carried out deradicalization for ex-convicts. Focusing on meeting their

needs, as well as pushing for acceptance in society must be emphasized, so that ex-convicts can live back in the society. With a more effective de-radicalization process, the chain of spreading the ideology of terrorism will be helped because ex-convicts will not be interested in re-entering radical terrorism organizations.

## 2. Research Method

This research uses a descriptive analysis method. According to Sugiono (2009), a descriptive analytical method is a method that serves to provide a description of the object of research. Research subjects are people who specifically have qualifications and are close to the object under study. This aims to maintain the relevance of the information extracted in the research process. Meanwhile, according to Saifuddin (1998), the subject of research is something whether people, objects, institutions (organizations) that will be subject to the conclusions of the research results.

Data collection techniques used in this study were interviews and literature study. Interviews were chosen by the researcher because they allowed flexible and rich data to be obtained. Literature study is a data collection technique that uses the process of searching, understanding and analysing various literatures or studies related to the research conducted. The literature study was obtained from various references in the form of books, journals, articles, and documents related to the problems studied. Referring to the analytical model developed by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014), the analytical activity consists of three activity flows that occur simultaneously, namely data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. The three activities run as a cyclical process that runs before, during, and after data collection.

## 3. Results

Deradicalization is a part of counter terrorism, where individuals who have previously been radicalized are "returned" to their previous conditions. Deradicalization has four components: reeducation, rehabilitation, resocialization, and reintegration. Deradicalization process usually includes counseling as well as discussion on the interpretation of religious texts. This is crucial considering that in the process of radicalization, religious texts are often misinterpreted to justify acts of terror. Deradicalization programs can also help distance or disengage an individual from certain groups. This process can assist the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-terrorist convicts into society. Deradicalization substantively aims to change the actions and ideologies of individuals or groups. If targeted and effective, the deradicalization program will help ex-convicts to live a normal life in society. However, an individual's mindset and ideology are not easy to change, nor are they easy to measure. Various reasons ranging from economic, to social pressure when they are out of prison can encourage ex-convicts to return to terrorist groups.

Yayasan DeBintal is a foundation for former convicts established by the Directorate of Identification and Socialization (Idensos) of the Detachment AT 88 Polri in

February 2021. During its journey, the Directorate of Idensos Densus AT 88 Polri also acts as a supervisor and supervisor for Yayasan DeBintal. Currently, the headquarter is located in Bekasi, with approximately 30 members in total. However, in daily activities, there are approximately 15 active administrators. Yayasan DeBintal's vision is to "realize deradicalization and sustainable, comprehensive inter-institutional development against perpetrators of criminal acts of terrorism on an ongoing basis". To achieve this vision, their missions are (1) To identify perpetrators of criminal acts of terrorism in a humanistic manner; (2) Carrying out socialization for perpetrators of criminal acts of terrorism and their families in order to suppress radicalism; and (3) Conducting fundraising for ex-convicts and their families in order to create a conducive environment in the community. These three missions are quite comprehensive, targeting not only convicts as individuals, but also the smallest scope in their social structure, the family.

Yayasan DeBintal currently operates the DeBintal Slaughterhouse (RPH) business unit in Babelan, Bekasi. What's interesting about this business unit is that the land used is not the personal land of a foundation member, but a donation from a local community member. Although Yayasan DeBintal is under the guidance of the Idensos Directorate of Densus 88, this land was obtained without assistance from the Densus, but purely the result of communication between the foundation members and the residents. Imam Sobari S.Si, member of Dit Idensos Densus 88, further elaborated on this matter, stating that people living in the area have accepted the foundation, fully aware that the members are ex-convicts of terrorism-related crimes. The foundation have now also worked with various small businesses in the area that buys the chicken from their RPH.

In addition to the RPH business, Yayasan DeBintal also has many other activities that its members can do. Through Dit. Idensos Densus 88, this foundation has an online website at [www.debintal.com](http://www.debintal.com). This site contains various articles regarding the activities of Yayasan DeBintal, partner foundations, and the activities of former convicts. The activities that are widely covered include the independent efforts of former convicts, both members of Yayasan DeBintal and not. For example, ex-convicts in Cirebon who have a fish farming business, as well as other ex-convicts who trade. The activities of members of Yayasan DeBintal and the community were also covered, such as participating in the Covid-19 vaccination program, and the celebration of Eid al-Qurban. Although Dit. Idensos Densus 88 still plays a role in writing and editing article manuscripts, many of the articles published are written by members of Yayasan DeBintal. Opinion articles on the importance of deradicalization, up to Pancasila were also published on the site. In addition to the site, there is also social media in the form of an Instagram account @debintal\_media which contains information and activities carried out by Yayasan DeBintal. These activities include picking up ex-convicts, discussions with universities such as the University of Indonesia, and interviews with journalists from BBC Indonesia.

#### 4. Discussions

Several studies have identified the conditions under which individuals and groups leave terrorist groups. A study by Chernov Hwang (2018) based on the profiles of 50 members of an extremist group previously involved in ethnic and religious conflicts in Poso suggests that withdrawal can occur under several key conditions: 1) Frustration with team leadership. 2) We find that the costs far outweigh the benefits. 3) Establish friendships with other groups outside the network of extremist groups. and 4) Changes in personal ambitions such as continuing education and having children and a family. Similar findings by Barrelle (2015) and Harris Hogan (2017), stating that physical or psychological instability and negative interpersonal relationship dynamics in terrorist groups, allow individuals to rethink their own desires and desires.

Borrowing the conflict transformation model by John Paul Laderach, by placing Yayasan DeBintal as an incubator for change, former convicts as actors have undergone a process of conflict transformation. The four dimensions of change are the personal dimension, the relational dimension, the structural dimension, and the cultural dimension. In the personal dimension, former convicts gain knowledge that can be used to improve themselves. This is not limited to but includes business and religious training. These changes are internal, and have the long-term effect of fulfilling Maslow's hierarchy of needs. As Maslow in his theory of the Hierarchy of Need (hierarchy of needs) which states that individuals behave in an effort to meet their life needs, there are levels, including, (1) physiological (basic) needs, (2) the need for security and peace, (3) the need for security and peace of mind. to be loved and cared for, (4) the need to be appreciated, and (5) the need for self-actualization.

##### 1) *Yayasan DeBintal Reeducation Strategy*

Law Number 5 of 2018 concerning Eradication of Criminal Acts of Terrorism stipulates that deradicalization is a planned, comprehensive, systematic and continuous process that aims to eliminate or reduce and reverse radical notions of terrorism. By coordinating with various government agencies/institutions and the community, there will be a more comprehensive movement to deal with radicalism and terrorism. Unfortunately, several studies have concluded that changing or eliminating radical thinking is a vague goal of deradicalization in prisons. Realistic efforts include alienating or separating individuals and groups from terrorist organizations (disengagement).

Many studies on combating violent crime and extremism distinguish between disengagement and deradicalization. Where disengagement is the process of a person or group of terrorists no longer committing violence and/or leaving the terrorist network. These changes are caused by various reasons, generally related to changes in personal circumstances. And deradicalization is an effort to neutralize and eliminate radical thoughts and ideologies for those who are exposed to or exposed to violent radicalism. The result of the deradicalization process is cognitive change, namely the proponents of radicalism fundamentally change their understanding. Deradicalization requires qualitative changes in attitudes, values, physical, social and psychological processes.

Terrorism convicts have their own understanding of the jihad they carry out. They regard what they do as the right thing. Re-education in prisons for convicts who are serving time is usually carried out by academics and religious leaders. In its implementation, re-education is carried out in the form of fostering national, religious and entrepreneurial insights. Considering that members of Yayasan DeBintal are also former members of a radical terrorist group, the approach used is more focused on changing the religious and national mindset of convicts in prison. Assisted by Densus 88 and BNPT who carried out the identification stage, convicts were classified into several levels according to the level of radicalism and their position in the organization.

A well-targeted and effective re-education process is crucial for accelerating the deradicalization of convicts. Ali Fauzi emphasized that former convicts who have gone through the deradicalization process can more easily attract convicts who are still radical to return to the Republic of Indonesia. According to him, former convicts are specialist doctors who really understand the disease of radicalization because they have experienced it themselves, and have recovered. Therefore, the arguments and information provided are more suitable to break the radical mindset of convicts (Ridlwani, 2019).

In this process, the ex-convict community also plays an important role. A personal approach between individual ex-convicts and convicts can facilitate the re-education process, with minimum friction compared to academics or the government. Yayasan DeBintal in particular, has carried out da'wah activities in Cipinang prison. However, due to the ups and downs of the Covid-19 outbreak in Indonesia throughout 2020-2021, face-to-face activities are limited and only take place a few times.

In addition, this re-education process is not limited to convicts currently being held in prison, but also to the families of convicts and former convicts. The families of convicts and ex-convicts also receive attention from the foundation because of their close relationship with the individual. This is because families are often involved, or support the choice of convicts to join radical terrorist organizations (Zaki, in CNN Indonesia, 2020). In some cases, convict families are also members of the same radical terrorist group. From there, families must also undergo or be involved in re-education programs. Otherwise, convicts who have undergone a radicalization program will actually return to terror groups because of family support.

#### B. Disengagement Strategy of Yayasan DeBintal

It can also be said that the deradicalization process that went well did not stop when ex-convicts were released from prison. Because when ex-convicts are released and return to society, there are new challenges. Reintegration of ex-convicts is often faced with social problems, because in the process of radicalization, extremists previously experienced a phase where they were isolated within the group and had very limited social interaction outside the group. Therefore, reintegration of ex-convicts into society is absolutely necessary to prevent the possibility of returning to terrorist organizations. In addition, many ex-convicts do not have uncertain jobs. They lost their jobs and were unable to support themselves and their families

after going through legal procedures in prisons. The sense of security and trust of the surrounding community must be slowly reorganized so that they can lead a dignified and safer life. These factors, coupled with the invitation from radical terror groups, become a new challenge for former convicts who have just finished their sentences. If these challenges are not properly addressed and resolved, recidivism of ex-convicts is not impossible.

Yayasan DeBintal raises funds for Baitul Mal Ibrahim, whose funds are channeled to the families of convicts who are held in prison. This is an effort to break the chain of need for material assistance from terror groups. YLP also has a similar activity, in which part of the proceeds from the foundation's operations is channeled to the families of convicts to help build relationships. It is this sense of brotherhood that can encourage convicts in detention to participate in deradicalization programs and stay away from radical terrorist groups. Apart from disengagement efforts or severing ties with terror groups, Yayasan DeBintal and YLP also have other ways to support the process of resocialization and reintegration into society.

Members of Yayasan DeBintal were directly involved in picking up ex-convicts who had just been released from high-risk prisons such as Gunung Sindur and Cipinang. This appointment was made to emphasize to the former convicts that outside the prison there will still be support from the community, and not only from radical terror groups. The ex-convicts were also taken to their homes, where their families and communities were previously informed about the ex-convicts' return to the area. In this stage, Densus 88 also plays a role as a representative of the institution to provide understanding to religious figures, as well as regional heads such as RT/RW and lurah. If there are ex-convicts who are rejected, or their return is hindered due to other reasons, Yayasan DeBintal can also provide temporary shelters (Hendro, 2021).

Not only the relationship with convicts, the relationship between the foundation and the surrounding community continues to be built. Yayasan DeBintal can be called the poster child, because of its success in getting closer to the community in a short time since its establishment, which was less than a year at the time of the research. The land used as Yayasan DeBintal's RPH business area was the result of seeking assistance from DeBintal members, without the assistance of Densus 88. Coincidentally, one of the former convicts was able to get a land loan from a teacher in the area. After the program had been running for some time, this positive activity got the attention of other residents. From there, there were other residents who also donated their land to be used in Yayasan DeBintal program (Briptu Adam, 2021).

## 5. Conclusion

Violent conflict based on radical ideology is a latent challenge to national security, with movements supported by strong grassroots networks. In the last two decades, 553 attacks that occurred throughout Indonesia were carried out by five radical terrorist groups. The strength of this network can be seen

from the large number of members, material support, and closeness that has caused many former convicts to re-enter the network after being rehabilitated in prison. Deradicalization is part of a long process of resolving violent conflicts, which uses various approaches including social, economic, and psychology to carry out de-ideologicalization and disengagement. Deradicalization helps all actors involved, especially convicts, former convicts, and the community in their environment, to come to terms with the existing conditions. Of course, the main focus of this process is the convicts themselves, who undergo national, religious and entrepreneurial development programs to prepare them to return to society at the resocialization and reintegration stages. The smooth process of resocialization and reintegration can only be achieved when the re-education and rehabilitation of convicts goes well in prisons. If the nationalist and religious views held by former convicts have returned to being nationalist and moderate, then the public's views will gradually improve. Fulfilling the human needs of ex-convicts, encouraged by government support through BNPT, Densus 88, and their partners can help the process of conflict transformation occur. Personal change in ex-convicts, coupled with active efforts to bring ex-convicts closer to the community at the reintegration stage, is a way to resolve the complexities of violent conflict through a deradicalization process. Because the continuity of these two things can reduce the recidivism rate, which according to sources, increases when ex-convicts are left or isolated in their area.

In carrying out deradicalization, Yayasan DeBintal and YLP have two strategies, namely re-education and disengagement. The two strategies run concurrently, both inside and outside prison for convicts who are still in detention, and outside prison

for ex-convicts. Disengagement or termination of relations is carried out by eliminating reasons to approach radical groups through moral or material support. In re-education, these foundations work together with the BNPT and prison managers to hold dialogues with convicts. The foundation also has the added advantage of building a rapport because with similar backgrounds, its members have the convenience of building a rapport and gaining the trust of convicts and ex-convicts who are still radical. However, support from government institutions, especially BNPT, is arguably still minimal, because BNPT tends to allow these foundations to run independently. This is unfortunate because a community that can provide an umbrella for former convicts outside the prison can play an important role in efforts to reduce the number of recidivist acts of terrorism for the sake of national security stability.

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