

## **Combating Terrorism in Indonesia through Collaborative Strategy**

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### **Abstract**

*Terrorism is a complex issue that requires a multi-faceted approach to be tackled effectively. The study conducted through qualitative research methods, including literature studies and focus group discussions, reveals that terrorism is a combination of perspectives, economics, socio-politics, and ideology. To combat terrorism, the Indonesian government has implemented a three-pronged approach that includes law enforcement, economic and socio-cultural empowerment, and deradicalization and counterterrorism. However, the implementation of this approach has its challenges. Weak program implementation, a lack of institutional capacity, and limited involvement of local governments make it difficult to prevent terrorism effectively. The study recommends that both government and non-governmental organizations increase their roles to combat terrorism effectively through the collaborative model.*

**Keywords:** terrorism, prevention, collaborative strategy, local government.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Terrorism in Indonesia is quite worrying. In the 2000-2020 period, there were 638 terrorist incidents. Terrorism cases that attracted international attention, such as bomb explosions in 13 cities on Christmas Eve 2000; Bombs in Kuta Bali (Bali Bomb 1) and at Mc Donald Makassar Bomb, 2002; The bomb explosions at the JW Marriot Hotel (2003) and the Australian Embassy (2005), the Bali 2 bombs at Café Jimbaran (2009), the JW Marriott Hotel and the Ritz-Carlton (2009), and terrorist acts in areas of religious conflict in Poso and Ambon (2016) (Windiani, 2018). Several cases of terrorism in the 2017-2021 period, such as the acts of terrorism in Sarinah, Jalan Thamrin, and the Cathedral Church, Makassar City, South Sulawesi, also terrorists who attacked the Jakarta police headquarters. Terrorist acts have also occurred in conflict areas by terrorist separatist groups (KST) in Papua and Poso.

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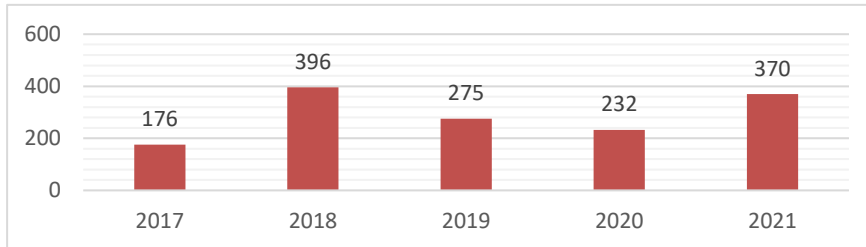
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The 2022 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) places Indonesia in 24th place as the country most affected by terrorism (Score 5.05), an increase from 37th in 2021. The top three ranked countries are Afghanistan, Burkina Faso and Somalia. Indonesia occupies 3rd position for the ASEAN region, after Myanmar and the Philippines (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2022). The trend of terrorism suspects has tended to fluctuate in the last five years (2017-2021) where the highest number of terrorism suspects was in 2018, reaching 396, and the least in 2017 was 176. In 2021, number of terrorist suspects was 232 cases, or an increase of 59.48% (Kata Data, 2023).



Graphic 1. Number of Terrorist Incidents in Indonesia 2017-2021 (source: Institute for Economics & Peace, 2022)

This data shows that terrorism has become the main threat to the security of citizens (Sudrajat, 2017) as an extraordinary crime (Ambarita, 2018). Meanwhile, preventing terrorism in Indonesia is still predominantly carried out by the central government. BNPT is one of the dominant actors in prevention efforts. This condition causes efforts to eradicate terrorism to be less than optimal (Ansori et al., 2018).

## METHOD

The article aims to describe the root causes of terrorism, the government's steps to prevent terrorism, and the collaborative strategy. The study uses a descriptive qualitative method, namely a research method that aims to describe the situation and analyze it to find conclusions. An empirical approach is used to describe the phenomenon of terrorism in Indonesia. Data was collected through literature studies and Focus Group Discussions. Literature studies come from journals, books, official government reports, and other related sources. While the FGD discussed terrorism and prevention strategies. The FGD participants were the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Religion, National Counterterrorism Agency, and academics from the University of Indonesia. Furthermore, the data were analyzed to answer the research objectives.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

What Constitutes Terrorism? There is no single universally accepted definition of what terrorism means (There is no universally accepted definition of terrorist (Lentini, 2008; Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011; Institute for Economics & Peace, 2019). This study defines terrorism as the free use of violence and intimidation directed at large audiences to force the community (government) to admit political or ideologically motivated demands. The main tactical (short-term) goals of terrorism are (1) getting publicity and media attention, (2) destabilizing policies and (3) damaging the economy (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011).

### Root Causes of Terrorism

Terrorism does not occur in a vacuum. The factors that caused terrorism are economic, political, and socio-cultural. Terrorism is caused by external factors such as globalization and the spread of terrorism by other countries (Krieger & Meierrieks 2011). Intervention

in the "who" aspect without targeting other aspects (especially the "why" aspect) is like cutting a branch. It ignored the roots of the tree that keep growing (Rahardanto, 2012).

**Economic perspective.** Economic inequality encourages the growth of radicalization and terrorism. Economic disparities will create social grievances in a society that gains economic abundance through non-transparent methods, corruption, bribery or tax evasion. Inequality encourages individuals and groups to carry out social protests and organize themselves to fight system inequality (Finke and Stark, 2003) (Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011) (de Graaf & van den Bos, 2021).

A study by Fransiskus and Heliati (2019) examined the relationship between terrorism and economic growth in Indonesia from 1985 to 2017. They found a causal relationship between terrorism and economic growth, capital stock, and economic trade. (Michael & Ratni, 2019). The Islamic radical movement in the 1990 to 2000 era was due to the high unemployment rate, namely around 72.5% unemployment. Kompas newspaper (23 November 2015) reported that the factor that drives people interested in joining the radical movement in Syria is the fantastic salaries and incentives.

Even though the economy is a trigger of terrorism, this view creates a bias when it is associated with poverty. Poor people have no interest in becoming radicals or joining terrorist groups. Incomplete religious understanding encourages people to be terrorists or radicalists. Statistical data 2023 records more than 25 million Indonesians below the poverty line, while only 370 people are suspected of terrorism. The Government can eradicate terrorism through improving the welfare of the current or suspected terrorists.

**Political Perspective.** Distributive inequality experienced by individuals or groups will encourage them to fight against the state. The opposition emerged even sharper because they misinterpreted the verses of the holy book. Besides that, some communities foster perceptions of radicalism in the community (Moghaddam, 2005;(Rahardanto, 2012). Terrorism emerged due to dissatisfaction with the elite who were considered slow in responding to aspirations, complaints and differences of opinion at the grassroots. Government reactions have been inconsistent, wavering between tolerance and repressive. (Crenshaw, 1981; Sugiono et. al., 2011)(Sudrajat, 2017). There are political reasons raised, for example, 1. Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Free Papua Organization (OPM) against the government due to their opinion of unfairly managing natural resources. 2. The Jemaah Islamyah group labelled the government as "tough" (an Islamic regime that does not defend Islam). 3. Illegal occupants in the slum area confront security officers (Sarwono, 2012).

**Ideological perspective.** The root cause of terrorism in Indonesia is a misinterpretation of the holy book that fosters the perception of radicalism. Given the ideology of fundamentalism (of any religion), the holy book is considered to provide an absolute mandate, which cannot be challenged (Azca, 2011). The emergence of ingroup-outgroup polarization is the background to the emergence of terrorism. In an in-group context, someone tends to have a positive bias towards their group and conversely has a negative bias towards those outgroups. Terrorism is formed in a situation when the polarization (separation) of ingroup and outgroup factions. Each camp claims to be the "right" and dehumanizes the opposing camp as "toghut" or "satan" (Rahadiano, 2012). The emergence of solidarity among Muslims when observing a series of conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims is a reason to defend their Muslim brother (Naharong, 2014). America's attack on Afghanistan fostered solidarity among Muslims to carry out bomb terror in Bali and JW Marriot.

#### Prevention of Terrorism

Prevention of terrorism does not only use legal approaches but also economic, political and socio-cultural (Ansori et al., 2018).

Law enforcement. Since the Bali Bombing I, the Indonesian Government has implemented a counter-terrorism program in two ways, namely fighting domestic terrorism and supporting the global war on terrorism (Senia Febrica, 2014). The escalation of conflicts in the regions has prompted the government to issue regulations on eradicating terrorism, namely, 1. Presidential Emergency Decree on the Prevention of Terrorism No. 1 of 2002. 2. Government Regulation instead of Law Number 2 of 2002, to eradicate Bali Bomb terrorism crimes, October 12, 2002. In 2003 Presidential Emergency Decree on the Prevention of Terrorism No. 1 of 2002 became Law No. 15 of 2003. The government revised Law No. 15 of 2003 to become Law No. 5 of 2018. This law is the foundation for eradicating terrorism which is supported by 1. Law no. 8 of 2010 concerning the Prevention and Eradication of Money Laundering Crimes; 2. Law No. 11 of 2008 concerning electronic information and transactions (UU ITE) 3. Criminal law 4. Civil law and state administrative law. The government's challenge in the legal aspect of terrorism is the need for the government to synchronize and harmonize various existing rules, regulations and conventions.

In 2002, the government established the Terrorism Eradication Coordination Desk (DKPT) through Presidential Instruction Number 4 of 2002. At the same time, the approach to eradicating terrorism shifted from repressive to preventive through a humanity approach. 2010, President Susilo Bambang Yudoyono formed the National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) to replace DKPT. BNPT implements duties as follows, 1. to establish national policies, strategies and counterterrorism programs; 2. to coordinate related government agencies in the field of counterterrorism; and 3. to implement the policy by forming taskforces consisting of elements of relevant government agencies.

The government established a special anti-terrorism agency (task force) known as Special Detachment (Densus) 88 Police Densus 88 formed on August 26, 2004, at the centre (Mabes Polri) and various regions (Nurkhalis, 2022). The task of Densus 88 is to arrest a person or group of people who are confirmed to be members of a terrorist network and could endanger the integrity and security of the country.

Implementation of the Economic and Socio-Cultural Empowerment Program. The government has prevented people from terrorism by tackling the root cause of social, economic, and political issues, including 1. Empowerment programs for the poor through Joint Business Groups (KUBE) and support for mentoring, business management training, and marketing; 2. Economic empowerment for children, wives and families of terrorists, relatives of terrorists, former terrorist students or communities that are vulnerable to the spread of ideology that leads to acts of terrorism. 3. Empowering women in the economic field to prevent threats of extremism in areas of religious conflict. 4. Providing employment opportunities for young people to minimize the emergence of the "precarariat", namely young people who have mobility and social networks but have low incomes (Azca, 2013). Empowerment through education to increase religious understanding and eliminate political goals and religious doctrines, including strengthening traditions and cultural communication to increase the capacity of citizens to oppose and reject extremism, such as through "wayang performances".(Wulandari et al., 2016). Establish an institution to study religion and peace and actively organize inter-religious dialogue, seminars and public discussions (Rohan Gunaratna, Jolene Anne R Jerard, 2013a).

Deradicalization and Counter Radicalization. The process of adopting or promoting an extremist belief system to facilitate ideologically based violence to advance political, religious, or social change is called radicalization. However, de-radicalization" is the opposite term of radicalization. It is the process of abandoning an extremist worldview and concluding that it is not acceptable to use violence to effect social changed-radicalization is not a new term (Rafique, Z. H. & Ahmed, 2013).

The deradicalization program aims to neutralize the thoughts of those who have been exposed to radicalism. The program's targets are terrorists inside and outside prison. The government implements four deradicalization approaches including, Reeducation, Rehabilitation, Resocialization and Reintegration. Re-education is a learning method for enlightenment so that radical understanding does not spread in society. Rehabilitation is an effort to build independence by providing skills and expertise. Develop a dialogue method to change the mindset to accept differences and pluralism. The BNPT carries out deradicalization tasks supported by the police, Correctional Institutions, the Ministry of Religion, the Ministry of Welfare, and NGOs.

Implementing a radicalization program is not easy. Previous research found that the deradicalization program is not a single way because it is a long process. (Suratman Yosua Praditya, 2017). Research findings by the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, January 2015 stated that with the implementation of Government Regulation Number 99 of 2012, the government will grant remission to terrorist convicts if they can work together with the government to uncover previous terrorist cases, take part in the de-radicalization program and take a written oath of allegiance to the state. The response of former terrorist convicts was to reject this PP. This is a lesson for the government to avoid repressive and coercive methods in handling cases of ex-terror convicts.

Counter radicalization. While the de-radicalization program focuses on rehabilitating radicalized people to re-integrate them into society, counter-radicalization has an anticipatory action (Schmid, 2013a) The counter-radicalization program is aimed at people or groups of people who are vulnerable to being exposed to radical terrorism. This counter-radicalization is carried out directly or indirectly through (1) counter-grievance, most terrorist often legitimate their grievances, due to economic, social, and political issues, thus the effort of counter-radicalization has the purpose of tackling these grievances which quite often become the reasons why some people become terrorists due to the economic, social, and political issues, thus the effort of counter-radicalization has the purpose to tackle these grievances which quite often become the reasons why some people become terrorist (2) counter-ideology, before terrorist group promoting their extremist ideology, the security apparatus must counter it to prevent its spreading. and (3) counter-mobilization, helps the people to disconnect extremist networks and knowledge (Schmid, 2013b).

Counterradicalism through the use of big data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) is effective in monitoring communication between terrorists, supporters and sympathizers through social media, as is done by Nigerian officials. As a country highly affected by terrorism and home to the Boko Haram terrorist group, the police have an intelligent data collection unit. They used the SMACT model to analyze streaming data from social media sources and the location of terrorists. (Kolajo & Daramola, 2017).

### Challenges of Preventing Terrorism in Indonesia

#### The Weaknesses of the Terrorist Empowerment Program

Unsustainability Program. Economic and socio-cultural empowerment programs are less integrated and have poor synergy. Program interventions between the government and NGOs contradict each other, and even programs between government agencies. (Rohan Gunaratna, Jolene Anne R Jerard, 2013). In addition, terrorism prevention programs in conflict areas are not sustainable. The project is oriented on "outside" funding, such as the government budget and donor agencies. When funding and program duration are completed, all activities will stop. (Ansori et al., 2018). The weakness of prevention programs, 1. The program implementation does not match the needs of ex-terrorists. 2. Empowering program planning based on the short term without considering the medium and long-term plan. 3. Existing programs tend to be project-oriented. (Ansori et al., 2018).

Centralized Program. Habibi Center (2018) stated that preventing terrorism is in the domain of the central government. For example, in the empowerment program in Poso, starting from planning, substance and content, as well as program evaluation is carried out by the central government. The community follows directions and implements programs and activities outlined by the central government. This condition creates an understanding at the community level that their position is only implementing and complementing activities.

The repressive methods. The handling of terrorists since 2000 has proven to be quite effective in identifying, arresting and prosecuting terror perpetrators, especially after the establishment of the Special Detachment 88 (Densus 88) of the National Police. However, the performance of Detachment 88 has drawn a lot of criticism such as cases of wrongful arrests, actions that are not by procedures and violations of human rights, and subjective selection of targets for arrest. Terrorist suspects are subjected to physical and mental violence as well as injustice. (Agustina, 2014). According to Mark Costanzo, aggressive interventions such as arresting, imprisoning, or shooting dead perpetrators of terrorism are more inclined towards the functions of deterrence (causing deterrence), retribution (retaliation), and incapacitation (destroying the perpetrators of the act) (Costanzo, 2008). The use of inhumane methods in dealing with terrorist suspects by Densus 88 has raised sentiments against the government (Nurkhalis, 2022).

#### Lack of Institutional Capacity

BNPT's performance faces adequate resources. The challenge in carrying out terrorism is limited resources, namely human resources, budget and facilities. To counter terrorism, BNPT faces a shortage of personnel and, limited budget and facilities. In the 2016-2018 period, the BNPT budget was around IDR 500 billion annually. The budget increase of IDR 699 billion in 2019 is not enough to finance prevention programs (Habibi Center, 2018); (House of Representatives Working Visit Report, 2019).

Lack of prison human resources. The quality of human resources does not yet support the implementation of deradicalization programs in prisons. Performing the program in prison needs adequate funds and reliable practitioners, especially the person who is capable of teaching the Koran meanings against any law in Indonesia. Moreover, the practitioners must have the ability to approach inmates and their families and networks. Family connection is a vital part of the success of the program, so family support from outside prison is needed, and it is the responsibility of the practitioner to make it happen continually (Suratman Yosua Praditya, 2017).

#### Minimal Role of Regional Government

Regional governments have not played a significant role in preventing terrorism in Indonesia. Indonesian Detection Data reveals the lack of local government initiatives in prevention, only 1% of the total prevention activities in 2017-2018. Local government's role in preventing terrorism are regulators, dynamics and facilitators. As a regulator, regional governments can form regional regulations that specifically regulate terrorism, radicalism and deradicalization. As a facilitator, the local government facilitates economic and socio-cultural empowerment programs, public services, and business capital for former terrorist convicts.

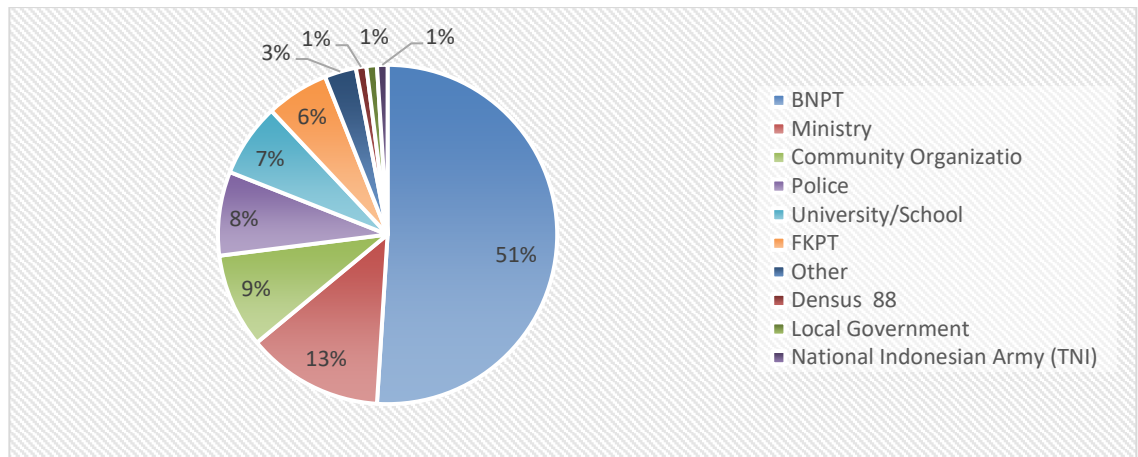


Figure 1 Actors For Prevention Of Terrorism In Indonesia Actors For Prevention Of Terrorism In Indonesia (Source: Ansori, MH. Rasyid I, Peranto, MAS, Efendi J. Hutagalung, 2019)

### Collaborative Model for Prevention of Terrorism in Indonesia

Terrorists threaten the safety of citizens, and their actions have an impact on the economy, politics and psychology of society. To combat terrorists, the Government involves stakeholders. The idea offered is to develop a collaboration model involving the role of government actors and stakeholders consisting of, 1. The National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) as the coordinator; b. Polri and TNI; 2. Central and Regional Government 3. Civil Society, 4. Educational institutions, 5. Mass Media and 6. Opinion Leaders.

The community is the subject of efforts to prevent terrorism. Their participation is needed in implementing empowerment programs. It is important to build awareness and vigilance against radicalism and terrorism. Citizens directly bear the impact of acts of terrorism. Reality shows that terror perpetrators often take advantage of the community environment to plan and prepare their tions and hide in residential areas.

The BNPT has the authority to counter terrorism in aspects of prevention, protection, deradicalization, and preparation of national preparedness by prioritizing a soft approach. The strategy for preventing terrorism aims to support groups, sympathizers and the general public in the form of counterpropaganda, vigilance and involvement. At the counter-propaganda level, it is carried out continuously through the mass media, religious leaders, academics/intellectuals and the general public. Carrying out vigilance begins with mapping or observing (researching) the potential for terrorism in the region. The mapping aims to formulate an appropriate early detection system throughout Indonesia. Mapping and making early detection continue creating a network. Strong Network on the common interest of preventing terrorism. The BNPT also has the authority to coordinate terrorism prevention programs with other ministries and agencies, to act as a crisis control centre and to serve as a facility for the president in determining policies and measures to handle crises in countering acts of terrorism.

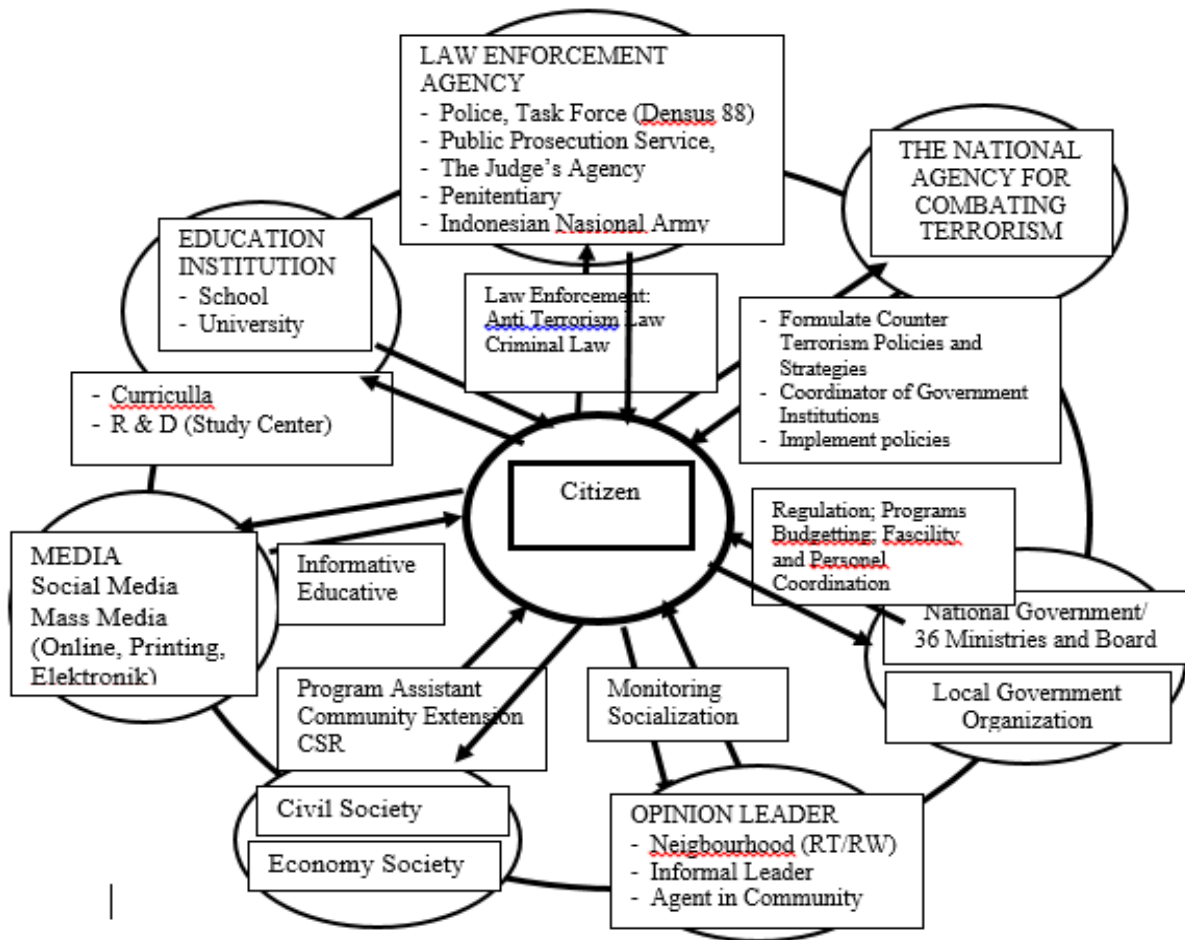


Figure 2. Collaborative Strategy for Preventing Terrorism in Indonesia

Indonesian National Police (Polri) and Armed Forces (TNI). The police are developing a community-based approach to build POLRI partnerships with the community. The partnership aims to prevent and counter terrorism crimes and eliminate disturbances to security and order in society. This program is known as Community Police (Polmas). Community Policing is the spearhead for the Police to involve the community in protecting the environment from the possibility of the development of terrorist movements in Indonesia. At the district level, the police sector is a supporter of detection, then at the village level, Bhabinkamtibmas, who are in the community, have the task of being the "eyes and ears" or informants in early detection. The police together with sector service officers carry out outreach to prevent terrorism.

The TNI is involved in terrorist operations through 4 scenarios. Scenario 1. Terror threats can still be managed by the Police as criminal law enforcement officers. Law enforcement is carried out entirely by civil authorities. The National Armed Forces is not involved in dealing with terror threats. Scenario 2. When the intensity of the terror threat increases, civilian authorities may request assistance from the military (national army). Scenario 3. The intensity of the terror increases sharply so that it requires handling led by the national army. In other words, the military takes over operations from law enforcement authorities (police). Scenario 4. The intensity and characteristics of the threat are considered from the outset to require active military involvement. In this scenario, the military becomes the main instrument of countermeasures (full militarization).

Central and Regional Government. The central and regional governments have regulators, dynamics and facilitators roles. The government's role as a regulator is to make policies to run terrorism prevention programs. The role of a dynamist is to mobilize stakeholder



participation in the prevention process. The role of a facilitator means that the government provides facilities and infrastructure to support activities. For example, the government facilitates technical and non-technical guidance. The government also provides extension programs and funding for former terrorists to continue their lives without discrimination.

The central government acts as a dynamist to combat terrorism and as a strategic policy maker. At the ministerial level, the Minister of Politics, Law and Security builds an integrated terrorism prevention program. The Regional Government as the policy implementor is responsible for prevention, namely the Governor at the provincial level and the Regent or Mayor at the Regency/City level. Vertical links from the provincial, district/city to the neighbourhood (RT/RW) level are used to reach the grassroots community through early detection methods to monitor the activities of radical movements and terrorism. The local government involved religious figures and community organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah, including former jihadi commandos who had abandoned their radical ideology.

Educational Institutions. Improvement of the education system starting from Kindergarten to University. The phenomenon of radicalism with acts of terror and violence, especially among young people, indicates the failure of educational institutions to create education that respects diversity and tolerance. Therefore, the Ministry of Education needs to improve character education by (1) An educational curriculum that contains diversity and tolerance from kindergarten to tertiary level. (2) Application of active learning methods practised in life.

Civil Society, community organizations like Muhammadiyah and Nadhatul Ulama and religious figures can optimize the use of media countering discourse, ideas and narratives against radicalism and terrorism. The internet and social media are used to spread multicultural ideas, moderate Islamic discourse and actively carry out counterattacks against the spread of violent radicalism. Efforts to counter-discourse and narrative in presenting opinions, reviews of domestic and foreign Islamic books, sermons and "battles" on Islamic discourse accompanied by arguments and propositions through various writings are distributed using social media, both Twitter and Facebook accounts. All action is a means of spreading moderate and tolerant Islam. Meanwhile, the private sector be involved considering their role as the backbone of budget provision within the framework of community empowerment.

Mass Media, the media plays an important role as a means of conveying information and educating the public. To eradicate terrorism, the government can collaborate with the mass media. The ability of the mass media to shape public opinion can help the government socialize policies, build awareness and educate the public. Through the mass media, the government can counter information and form public opinion regarding the dangers of terrorism and radicalism.

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