

# **Best Practice in Building Houses of Worship Based on Local Wisdom: A Study in the Indonesian Christian Church the Congregation of Bongo IV**

Sitti Arafah<sup>1\*</sup>, Basman Basman<sup>2</sup>, Khaerun Nisa<sup>3</sup>, Nensia<sup>4</sup>, Sitti Aflahah<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1, 3, 4, 5</sup> *Religious Research, Development and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia*

<sup>2</sup> *Islamic State Institute of Kendari*

\*Corresponding author. Email: [sittiarafah0702@gmail.com](mailto:sittiarafah0702@gmail.com)

## **ABSTRACT**

The religious harmony in Indonesia has been carried out well by the community. Yet, it can be interrupted by the emergence of cases in the construction of the house of worship at any time. Even currently, people still find this case in several regions in Indonesia concerning the rejection that leads to building destruction due to a non-building permit (IMB). Fortunately, the rejection did not happen to all other religions that were different from the religion of the majority community. The type of qualitative research was aims to explore best practice cases in building houses of worship based on local wisdom through observation, interview, and document study methods. The results showed that a house of worship amid Muslim and Hindu communities was well received. Therefore, its development ran peacefully, without any criticism from the community because it gets a positive response, especially by the Muslim community as the majority, even initiated by the local community. Hence, the starting process to complete the construction of the Indonesian Christian Church of Bongo IV congregation was conducted well. The church's construction ran without obstacles because the community implemented the values of local wisdom and the agreements that they built together as a bond in living a harmonious life. The principles of mutual cooperation, mutual respect, mutual support, good communication between the community become the social foundation that has been built collectively as support in actualizing best practices in religious relations, including in the construction of the GKI Bongo IV Congregation.

**Keywords:** *Best Practice, Local Wisdom, Indonesian Christian Church.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Gotong royong, as a characteristic of the Indonesian people, is one of the values of local wisdom that is still maintained and should be developed, especially in the current generation. Furthermore, gotong royong is a value that is useful in promoting brotherhood or community tolerance, especially social brotherhood, to strengthen the nation's integrity in dealing with various social problems in society, such as social conflicts.

Koentjaningrat said that gotong royong is a familiar term to the people of Indonesia. Gotong royong has been engraved strongly in society, especially in rural communities, mainly in Java [1]. In Javanese society, the spirit of gotong royong is implemented in various activities, including guyuban, which is a form of mutual cooperation even for small things in the neighborhood,

(2) Nyurung, help each other in any celebrations (life cycle) such as weddings, circumcisions, and births, 3) instant help when a villager dies [2].

The spirit of gotong royong is not only reflected in social relations, but it is important to feel flexibility in local culture which can result in inclusive behavior or spirit in religion and can make the atmosphere of religious life more solemn, friendly, dynamic and peaceful. [3]. Likewise, in Poso, local wisdom is neglected so that the values of humanity, unity and brotherhood are lost, then conflict is inevitable. After "Sintuvu Maroso" and Tonda Talusi", which are described in three aspects; mutual respect, mutual support and mutual help, disappeared from the region [4].

Likewise in Bongo IV Boalemo Village, local wisdom is used as a cultural force that encourages all religious communities to cooperate to build worship houses. Building houses of worship is going well, and mutual respect between people of different religions is upheld. The spirit of gotong royong is still used as a spirit by the community in building religious relations. The encounters between them gave birth to a common consensus to build a community to live in harmony.

The problem in this research was the best practice of building houses of worship based on local wisdom in Boalemo. Therefore, the research was focused on a community/village by describing two sub-problem points: (1) How is the description of the best practice in building houses of worship in Bongo IV Boalemo Village communities? (2) How does local wisdom function optimally in building the houses of worship in the community of Bongo IV Village? This study aimed to explore the best practice in building the houses of worship based on local wisdom in Bongo IV Village. The research was performed through 1) Describing the facts related to the best practice in building houses of worship, (2) Describing the local wisdom that still functioned in the community, and (3) Describing the participation of the community from various elements in building the houses of worship based on local wisdom.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Anik Farida [5], examined the establishment of houses of worship after the PBM No. 9 and 8 of 2006 and religious harmony: the case of church establishment in the city of Bandung, West Java, which the result shows that there is one church established in Bandung that residents accept, namely the HKBP Reformanda Church Bandung, even though it is amid a Muslim majority. The HKBP Reformanda Church in Bandung had finally accepted because it had gone through the procedures regulated in the 2006 PBM. Furthermore, due to establishing good relations between the congregation and the surrounding community [5].

Abd. Halim [6], in the article "Conflicts on the Establishment of Houses of Worship and Local Cultural Wisdom in Jambi", describes that Jambi is also one of the cities that has the potential conflict with regional conditions that are sociologically plural in terms of religion, ethnicity, and culture. Regarding the construction of houses of worship, there have been three conflicts in the church. However, Seloko Malay custom, a pearl of local wisdom, becomes a savior in warding off anarchist conflicts. Seloko Malay custom is run by an institution that is legalized and fully supported by the government [6].

## 3. METHODS

This research used qualitative-descriptive research to explain social phenomena or facts [7] on *best practice* in building the houses of worship in the Bongo Village community based on local wisdom. The approach was a case study approach, concentrating on the focus and depth. The chosen type of case study approach was a *bounded system*, which is looking at a case concerning other units that work in an integrative and patterned system [8]. As a qualitative research, data collection went through three steps, in-depth interviews, observations or observations and the study of written documents [9]. Interviews were conducted on a number of previously determined informants *purposively* [10]. The analysis used qualitative analysis with explanatory techniques, to explain the how-and-why by analyzing data related to *best practice* in the construction of the Bongo IV GKI Congregation, completely and detailly [11].

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1. Indonesian Christian Church: Its Existence and Development Mechanism

Bongo IV Village was one of the targeted villages for the first transmigration in 1983. A village where a heterogeneous group of people lives in terms of religion, ethnicity, customs, and tradition lives in peace and harmony. The area was approximately 1200 ha. Based on data from the Village Potential Board in 2020, 2,124 people inhabit it, consisting of 1,124 men and 996 women, with 616 family heads. The composition of religious adherents made Islam the majority adhered by the community, especially ethnic groups. Gorontalo and Java with 1393 adherents. Hindus from Bali followed Hindus, 714 people, while Christians were embraced by the Minahasa, Sangir, and Javanese tribes, which currently limited around 15 people.

The construction of houses of worship today is a crucial issue in religious relations, related to the community's approval, 60 people and 90 users. If these requirements have not been met, it will result in difficulty obtaining recommendations and IMB, which results in resistance, and sometimes even leads to conflict. However, in the Indonesian Christian Church in Bongo IV Village, its construction received support from the surrounding community, although it was far from the mechanism regulated in PBM No. 9 and 8 of 2006.

Karim Latif as the Imam of Bongo IV Village, stated that at that time there were not more than 60 users or Christians, but only 5 heads of families (KK) but the community was sincere and ready to support church construction, even without an IMB, but it did not cause turmoil from the community.

This attitude reflects that the people of Bongo IV village understand that the existence of a house of worship is not just a religious symbol, but a place of worship is a place where its adherents will communicate to God, so there is no need to hinder each other and even prohibit it.

Referring to Walzar Michael [12], the tolerance practiced by the Bongo IV community has reached the fifth dimension. The community did reveal mutual respect as different communities. They provided full support and active involvement, even though it was not in financial or material form, but donations or moral support. Therefore, the construction of houses of worship (churches) did not resist by elements of society. On the contrary, even such strict rules potentially became flexible and soft because of the insertion of wisdom values built together in the community. Thus, automatically it became a best practice model in the construction of houses of worship.

#### **4.2. Local Wisdom and Common Consensus as Religious Bond**

Rahyono [13] states that the intelligence owned by every ethnic or tribal community created by the experience of interactions with others makes people thoughtful, wise, as long as their existence along with its local wisdom. Local wisdom becomes a view or philosophy of life and knowledge that is realized in a variety of activities as an effort to answer the needs of a community [14].

Likewise, the people of Bongo IV, always build a spirit of unity and even consider themselves as one family. The spirit of gotong royong in various activities is still very strongly performed, relying on common interests. In addition, the most important factor that has been developed so far is the spirit of togetherness through local wisdom or consensus that they carry out together in various aspects of life, including in matters of religion, without criticizing each other.

Intense encounters are also a factor of their strong bond, including adopting and learning customs and traditions that were considered good from each tribe or ethnicity; for example, the Gorontalo community adopted the work spirit of the Balinese people. On the other hand, the Balinese people adopted good habits from the Gorontalo people. This has become a close bond in the community so that disunity between the people can be unravelled, including in constructing houses of worship.

The Bongo IV community, living in a small area, made their community as one family and built their village together, then disunity or clashes between communities could be avoided. The community was more active in carrying out useful things, including religious matters and other social activities. Cooperation

was very visible and prioritized common interests. Thus, this was the node of the relationship built between religious communities, including in building houses of worship and building churches based on local wisdom and the consensus that they build together.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

Local wisdom is not only interpreted as a legacy of the past, but it is possible that an agreement or consensus that is built together by prioritizing thoughtful and wise attitudes and its practices can also be interpreted as a form of local wisdom. This happened to the Bongo IV community as a transmigrant area. They have lived together for a long time in an atmosphere of harmony in differences and unity without being bound by religious values, mutual respect and appreciation become a common strength.

The agreement or consensus of life that they build together makes the community far from intolerance or exclusion. The spirit of mutual cooperation becomes a spirit that is implemented in various social and religious activities. Local wisdom from each ethnic and religious group is used as a bond and even adopts local pearls of wisdom that are considered suitable. This can be seen in the case of the construction of the Bongo IV GKI Congregation, referring to the Joint Ministerial Regulations (PBM) Numbers 9 and 8 of 2006 regarding user rules, then the GKI will not be built because it did not fulfil the requirements. However, intense communication, mutual openness, and local wisdom values are always put forward so that its development without reaping criticism, even gets support from various groups.

## **REFERENCES**

- [1] Koentjaraningrat, *Kebudayaan Mentalitas dan Pembangunan*. Jakarta: Gramedia, 1974.
- [2] Subagyo, "Pengembangan Nilai dan Tradisi Gotong Royong dalam Bingkai Konservasi Nilai Budaya," *Indones. J. Conserv.*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2012, doi: <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15294/ijc.v.1i1.2065>.
- [3] Sabara, *Best Practice Kerukunan Umat Beragama di Kepulauan Kei*. Makassar, 2021.
- [4] N. Wijaya, "Resolusi Konflik Berbasis Budaya oleh Masyarakat Kabupaten Poso," *Kolaborasi Resolusi Konflik*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 59–63, 2020.
- [5] A. Farida, "Pendirian Rumah Ibadat Pasca PBM Nmor 9 dan 8 Tahun 2006 dan Kerukunan Umat Beragama: Kasus Pendirian Gereja di Kota

- Bandung, Jawa Barat,” *Harmoni*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 292–374, 2017.
- [6] A. Halim, *Konflik Pendirian Rumah Ibadah dan Kearifan Budaya Lokal Jambi (Pertama)*. Bandung: Manggu Makmur Tanjung Lestari, 2020.
- [7] L. J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2007.
- [8] R. E. Stake, *Case Studies The Art of Case Study Research*. California: Sage Publication itd, 1995.
- [9] M. Q. Patton, *Metode Evaluasi Kualitatif*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2006.
- [10] Kasniyah. Naniek. (2012). T. M. I. dalam P. Kualitatif. Y. Ombak. Kasniyah, *Tahapan Menentukan Informan dalam Penelitian Kualitatif*. Yogyakarta: Ombak, 2020.
- [11] H. S. Yunus, *Metodologi Penelitian Wilayah Kontemporer*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2010.
- [12] M. Walzar, *On Toleration*. London: Yale University Press, 1997.
- [13] F. X. Rahyono, *Kearifan Budaya dalam Kata (I)*. Jakarta: Wedatama Widyasastra, 2009.
- [14] U. Fajarani, “Peranan Kearifan Lokal Dalam Pendidikan Karakter,” *J. Sosio Dadaktika*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 123–130, 2014, doi: <https://doi.org/10.15408/sd.v1i2.1225>.