

## **Post-Conflict Peace Education to Build Sustainable Positive Peace in Aceh**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the post-conflict peace education model developed by the Aceh Government to realize a peace culture as the efforts to establish sustainable positive peace in Aceh. Many experts believe that peace education is able to reduce or even eliminate the violence and foster a peace culture. For this instance, Aceh had implemented peace education which initiated by UNICEF during the conflict. Many senior high schools in Aceh region had been assisted by UNICEF to implement peace education by providing training to the teachers. After the conflict period the same thing also has been implemented by the Department of Culture and Tourism of Aceh Government. However, this study found that the implementation of peace education at schools has not implemented in accordance with the concepts of peace education developed by peace experts and international organizations such as UNESCO. Therefore, this study will analyze the peace education developed in Aceh to build sustainable positive peace.

**Key words:** Aceh Government, peace education, peace culture, sustainable positive peace.

### **Introduction**

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Indonesia (GoI) and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) signed on August 15, 2005 has taken place for ten years, but it does not mean that peace agreement implemented as a whole. Even some principles of MoU interpreted into Law of Governing Aceh have been opposed to MoU (CMI, 2012). In these conditions Aceh Government is obligated to manage Aceh as well as possible to avoid Aceh return to violence. It needs to transform all aspects of violence, direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. Therefore post-conflict peace building program should be able to transform culture of violence to culture of peace. Hence, the peace in Aceh is not only absence of war, but all forms of violence threatening people's lives can be deducted or eliminated. Thus, sustainable positive peace is realized, the people are free from all forms of wants and fears.

For those, one aspect that should be reformed is education system, because it has impacts on conflict and peace too. It may be a driver of conflict (fuelling grievances, stereotypes, xenophobia and other antagonisms), although the conflict also harm the education system, such as destruction of physical infrastructure of schools, and decreased capacity as a result of teachers fled or targeted by violence. Then, education also can be a way to prevent, mitigate, and transform conflict and build peace. These all need the capacity of education – the content, the structures, the processes of delivery, and the capacity of stakeholders are able to address the proximate and root causes of conflict within the society and realizing a peaceful future for the country, even global.

Based on this, the roles of education to be analyzed before, during and after conflict in order to understand the roles of education according to conflict transformation and peace building. Thus, for case Aceh, post-conflict peace education system should be examined to build a culture of peace in Aceh due to gain sustainable positive peace.

### **Research Method**

This paper used primary and secondary data sources. The primary was collected through interviews with relevant informants of Aceh Government. While the secondary sources were collected through academic books, research articles, mass media and other relevant texts. These all carried out by qualitative approach, with data analyzed in descriptive and analytical methods referring to interactive analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1984), that involved data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion/verifying.

## Results and Discussion

Many concepts of cultural peace suggested peace education as a way to build cultural peace. UNESCO (2000) states, countries and civil society need to promote a culture of peace; one way is through peace education. For this, Askandar (2006) suggested that peace education should be developed at all levels of education.

Related to peace education in Aceh, according to Head of Aceh Education Department (Anas Adam) that peace education had been discussed and debated among its stakeholders, mainly education officers of Aceh government, but until now there is no a decision and a clear implementation mechanism. Even some teachers believe that religious education and moral beliefs (*aqidah-akhlak*) covered peace education. So it's no need to add subject in the curriculum that burden students. In addition, peace education can be taught through a subject Local Content (*muatan lokal*), such as Aceh Cultural History. It depends on school headmasters' understanding and consideration how Local Content Subject should be elaborated and collaborated. They have the autonomy to determine local content subject (Interviews, March 29, 2014). In addition, Irwandi Yusuf (former Aceh Governor) said that the religious education and Pancasila if internalized and practiced by people, it were enough for education and culture of peace. For example, in practice to create a culture of peace, he embraced all groups in developing Aceh, such as "Militias against us (GAM) during the conflict also involved in the construction and they have been cared" (Interview, 5 April 2014). For this, BRA (Aceh Reintegration Agency) provided reintegration assistance to them although they were not mentioned in the Peace Agreement (MoU Helsinki). However, the things regard to a culture of peace (via change of mind) BRA formally did not conduct it through education (Interviews, Nur Juli, 5 April 2014).

Previous facts showed peace education conducted was not comprehensive, because of the peace education curriculum consist of all phases of peace, peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace building and peace preventing, it is impossible to be taught via religious education, moral theology, and Pancasila. Particularly, to teach and train skills to students. Tinker (2016) stated that peace education had developed into many variant fields, including study on the causes of war and other forms of direct violence and strategies to reduce or eliminate them; structural and cultural violence. Hence peace education adapted programs to address violence. It involved many focus, including anti-nuclearism, international understanding, citizenship, global education, environmental responsibility, communication skills, conflict resolution, critical pedagogy, life skills, democracy, coexistence and gender equality, human rights awareness, peace building, and tolerance of diversity. By doing so, hoped succeeding generations will learn how to deal with conflicts non-violently and to eventually sustain a culture of peace (Tinker, 2016). For that, Smith (2010) stated that in societies that experienced violent conflict, education has important role in longer-term, post conflict development to help successive generations understand the violent conflict that took place within their own society and potentially contributes towards future peace building.

In addition, Anas Adami said, till now peace education has not been a primary program at Aceh Education Department. The main program is the implementation of the National Curriculum 2013 and increasing the quality of education. However, peace education is under consideration (discourse), because it is a priority of Aceh Government Program. It may be integrated into the subjects of Social Sciences later on, such as environmental education integrated in the Natural Sciences. By this way, it does not add the subject for students (Interviews, March 29, 2014).

To integrated peace education with others curriculum, it is also one strategy suggested to implement peace education, but it need good capacity of teachers for doing it. All teachers of subjects should be trained firstly about peace education. If not so, it is impossible to be realized. Harris and Morrison (2003) stated that school curriculum often includes a range of topics related to peace education, such as; Cultural diversity or multicultural education; Human rights education; Sustainability or environmental education; Development education; Global education; International education. According to Teachers without Borders (2010) these topics can be incorporated across the curriculum – for example, social sciences, mathematics and the sciences, literature and language. These are considered as peace education when they address issues of conflict and violence, social justice, inequity, human diversity and global problems (Reardon, 1999).

However, those realities indicated that peace education does not become an important affair in public policy makers of Aceh Government although International NGO, such UNICEF had undertaken it before peacemaking by training teachers. Hence, the campaign, promotion and training on peace education conducted by the Civil Society Organizations or social workers could not be implemented maximally (Somperes, 2011). Except from that, Aceh Culture and Tourism Department had built the capacity of

teachers, community leaders, and youth about education and culture of peace. It was conducted through a training of them in all districts / cities in Aceh (Interviews, Fauziah, 28 March 2014). Particularly for school teachers, it was organized a training to cultivate the culture, character and manners of the nation. The goal is to improve the skills of teachers installing the values into students; religious, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, viable, democratic, curiosity, nationalism, patriotism, honoring achievement, friendly, love peace, like to read, environment care, social care and responsibility. These values expected to be integrated with each subject by every teacher, from primary school to secondary school (Dokumen Dinas Kebudayaan dan Parawisata Aceh, 2012). These things are not enough for peace education, it does not just learning values, but many other aspects should be taught to students, such as skills of conflict management, transformation and peace building, and understanding of sustainable development to meet human needs.

In addition, at universities level, the implementation of peace education is separated from the educational curriculum, except in certain disciplines, such as sociology and political science that teach conflict theory and conflict resolution. In addition, they established peace and conflict research unit or department<sup>1</sup> to organize seminars and training for academics, NGOs, and social workers who invited to attend program or to run a discussion with the stakeholders about the phenomenon of violence as an early warning<sup>2</sup>. While for all their students, peace education is not a main target of the program although since January 2010 they had launched Curriculum of Conflict Resolution Education to be developed at nine universities in Aceh. It was initiated by the Center for Conflict Resolution and Peace Study of UIN Ar-Raniry (AntaraNews, January 29, 2010). Whereas peace education curriculum had been prepared in 2001 by academicians of UIN Ar-Raniry and Unsyiah collaborated with UNICEF - Peace Education Program. As a pilot project of peace education was conducted at 96 Senior High Schools in 6 districts / cities (Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar, Bireuen, Aceh Pidie, Aceh Utara, Aceh Timur) (Ashton, 2002).

As a follow up, a new University of Tengku Umar established a Peace Research Unit and Peace Club in December 2013, and has held seminars for peace community leaders, members, and students. Then on 29 to 30 April 2014 was organized peace education for UTU Peace Club members and Kelap Peace Members of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). The subjects and courses of training delivered directly by a specialist of Asean Peace (Askandar, 2006) (Observation, 29-30 April 2014).

However, Aceh Government supported peace education conducted by NGOs for societies or the younger generations and students in Aceh. For an example; Aceh Peace Generation<sup>3</sup> Program implemented by USAID-SERASI since 2008 for the young generations in Aceh, taught 12 basic values of peace, namely; self-acceptance, prejudice, tribalism, religious distinction, gender distinction, economic status distinction, distinction collection, understanding diversity, understanding conflict, reject violence, recognize mistake, and forgiveness. For this, Irwandi Yusuf as Aceh Governor stated a foreword in publishing a book of 12 values of peace, and said that these values should be taught to students and it may reach out to all groups. Thus, expected all parties should support the implementation of the peace education program (Lincoln & Amalee, 2010). In addition, the Government of Japan in collaboration with UNICEF had promoted peace education through Acehese tradition and ethics education for intermediate learners at 90 schools in 23 districts / cities by providing a grant to the NGO Peace Education Program, approximately US \$ 86.198 in September 10, 2007 at the BRA Office, Banda Aceh (Kedutaan Besar Jepang, 2007).

Even though, peace education in the formal school (from the elementary school to high school) is still limited in Aceh Government wishes and discourse until now. Even the scope of the planned study is very narrow, "The history of the Acehese struggle to fight colonialism and the struggle to reach Memorandum of Understanding as Peace Agreement". It expected no later than next year, peace education including MoU Helsinki might be taught in schools (Abdullah, 2014). It strongly relevant to Wenger (2014) explained that peace education including the history of Aceh and the new conflict resolution are very welcomed by teachers and students, because the educational history has been taught was dominated by the history of Java. Besides that, the educational curriculum in Aceh must be in

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<sup>1</sup> UIN Ar-Araniry (Center for Conflict Resolution and Peace Studies), Syiah Kuala University (Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies), Malikussaleh University (Aceh Peace Consultative Management), and the University of Teuku Umar (Conflict and Peace Studies Unit).

<sup>2</sup> Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution (CPCRS), Unsyiah held a Roundtable Discussion on Early Prevention of Aceh Conflict (29/11/2012). Attended by 12 participants, involving Kesbangpol Linmas, Bappeda, Peace Consultant, Centre for Peace Studies Unsyiah, IAIN, JKMA, and Forum LSM (The Globe Journal, 29 November 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Aceh Peace Program in Aceh has actually been commenced in 2007 in Sabang. It was supported by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Indonesia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The result, a local network, Meutuah Children Centre (MCC) was established (AFSC, 2008).

accordance with the national education system and curriculum of Indonesia. Therefore Aceh has less autonomy to manage education in accordance with the current social and political contexts.

## Conclusions

Aceh Peace Agreement has been a decade, but Aceh Government has not made the regulations governing the implementation mechanisms of peace education in formal schools, whether separately from other subjects or integrated. Religious education, moral theology and Pancasila are considered representing the peace education. Besides that, the universities in Aceh who understand peace education, they do not act a movement to implement peace education through all sciences disciplines formally, but they do it informally for some students who are interested in it. The Center for peace studies in universities prefer to conduct studies or seminars for outsiders of various elements or components of society.

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