

The History of Madrasah

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Abstract: Madrasah merupakan lembaga pendidikan yang lahir dari dan untuk masyarakat. Madrasah memiliki identitas tersendiri dibandingkan dengan sekolah. Pada masa kolonial, pendidikan madrasah dianaktirikan dan dianggap sebagai sekolah di luar sistem. Akibat perlakuan yang negatif dari pemerintah kolonial ini maka pendidikan Islam termasuk madrasah menghadapi kesulitan dan teriolasi dari arus modernisasi. Pada masa kemerdekaan, madrasah tidak dimasukkan dalam sistem pendidikan nasional. Pada era Orde Lama, madrasah dibiarkan hidup, meskipun dalam keadaan yang sederhana dan apa adanya. Pada era Orde Baru, pemerintah mulai memperhatikan madrasah, terutama setelah lahirnya UUSPN No.2 Tahun 1989, di mana madrasah dimasukkan dalam subsistem pendidikan nasional. Di sini madrasah dituntut untuk menggunakan Kurikulum Nasional dan ikut serta dalam Ebtanas. Kemudian dengan lahirnya UUSPN No.20 Tahun 2003, kedudukan madrasah lebih mantap dan harus berbenah diri dan berpacu untuk mengejar ketinggalannya dari sekolah-sekolah yang dibiarkan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional.

Kata Kunci: Madrasah, UUSPN, Ministry of National Education (MONE), Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA), dan Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA).

INDONESIA is the largest island nation in the world. Its 17.000 islands form an archipelago that bridges the continents of Australia

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and Asia. The total landmass, which includes five major islands, is two million square kilometers. Indonesia is the fourth most populous in the world after China, India, and the United States. In 1999, its estimated population was 210 million, up from 179 million in 1990. The average annual rate of population growth was 2.1% during the 1980s, but it declined to 1.5% by 1999. The rate is projected to decline slightly further to 1.4% by 2005. In absolute terms, this means that the Indonesian population grew by around 3.2 million persons per year between 1990 and 1998, and will increase by roughly 3 million annually until 2005.¹

Indonesia has the largest number of Muslims as of any country. Its population is made up of 300 ethnically distinct groups who speak a multitude of local languages and practice four major religions, they are: Islam; Christianity; Buddhism, and Hinduism. It is divided into 32 provinces and it derives its identity from both regionally and heterogeneity. As well as in economic, geographic, religious, cultural or ethnic terms, Indonesia has a pronounced diversity.

The country's heterogeneity was heavily influenced by centuries of trade with Indians, Chinese, Arabs and much later with Europeans, who introduced a variety of religions, languages, customs and other forms of material expression that are manifested in the country's diverse ethnic cultures. Although local languages are still used in many

areas, a National Language based on Malay has been the official language since the country's independence. According to 1990 census, 87% of the people are Muslims. While Islam and other formal religions are practiced, however, many groups still continue their adherence to customary beliefs, traditions, and laws which have known as *adat*. Practices relate to marriage and divorce, inheritance and land resource management are often still governed by *Adat Law*.

From roughly the seventh to fourteenth century, Indonesia had a number of powerful Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms like Sriwijaya and Majapahit that exerted influence throughout Southeast Asia. Beginning in the fifteenth century, Islam gained dominance. The sixteenth century, there could be seen the arrival of Europeans, mainly Portuguese and Dutch who competed to capture the lucrative spice trade routes. The Dutch emerged victorious and gained sovereignty over the islands known as the Dutch East Indies (VOC) for about 350 years, then for the brief interludes of control by the British during Napoleon Wars and by the Japanese during the World War II until Independent Day of the Republic of Indonesia was declared in 1945.

The first two decades of post independence under president Soekarno, known as "Old Order" were focused on unifying the country politically. However, economic and social conditions were difficult for most people, the life span was short, disease

was prevalent and food was in short supply. In 1965 a coup by alleged Communist forces was suppressed, a period of anarchy and conflict followed by in which thousands of people were killed. General Soeharto took command and enforced military rule, this era generally known as "New Order".

After being elected President by the country's provisional parliament in 1968, Soeharto embarked on efforts to strengthen and stabilize the economy. Social development programs aimed at improving food self-sufficiency and expanding education and health services, matched by long term schemes for exploitation of natural resources such as oil and minerals. This strategy led to more than two decades of much heralded social and economic achievement.

Today, however, with the erosion of government spending for social programs and poverty stemming from the current economic crisis has, at least temporarily, undermined the decades of progress. Furthermore, combined with growing disillusionment about exploitations of the New Order Regime, the crisis led to massive protest and rioting that forced out Soeharto from office on 21 May 1998. A reform movement and calls for a more open and democratic system by an increasingly better informed and self confident policy led to the country's first multi party freely contested election in nearly 40 years, on 7 th June 1999. A dramatic Presidential contest in the national legislature in

October and election of a credible reform administration and cabinet under President Abdurrahman Wahid and Vice President Megawati Soekarnoputeri followed this election.

Education Sector in Indonesia

The National Education System in Indonesia is generally aimed at elevating the intellectual life of the nation and developing the Indonesian people fully, such as people who are devoted to God, have knowledge and skills, are in good physical and spiritual health, are independent and fair, democratic and feel responsible for their countrymen and nation (UUSPN 1989 and then modified by UUSPN 2003).

A complex array of institutions provides and delivers education in Indonesia. It caters to approximately 45 million students at all levels. The largest player is the Ministry of National Education (MONE), which administers formal public and private schools and universities, as well as non-formal modes of education. The educational efforts of MONE are supplemented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) that is responsible for the development of **Madrasah Education** which also imparts general education besides the religious education. Accordingly the basic education is also delivered by MORA through Madrasah and Pesantren Salafiyah. Islamic Primary Schools called Madrasah Ibtidaiyahs (MI) are equivalent to General Primary

Schools (SD) and Islamic Junior Secondary Schools are called Madrasah Tsanawiyahs (MTs) are equivalent to General Junior Secondary Schools (SMP). Meanwhile, Islamic Senior Secondary Schools are called Madrasah Aliyahs (MA) are equivalent to General Senior Secondary Schools (SMA). The Madrasahs provide the National Curriculum for general course of the same standards as of SD, SMP and SMA. The certificates of madrasahs are equally honored as those *sekolahs*, for examples, MI's certificates are equally honored as those SD's; MTs' as SMP's and MA's as SMA's.

The History of Madrasah

When Indonesia entered the New Order Era (1966), Indonesia's educational system was developed under the two systems: General Education System and Religious/Islamic Education System. Initially, this dualism was born as a product of Dutch Colonialism, while later, it has become the product of two major political bases, Islam and Nationalism. Even though in the later development the Government of Indonesia tried to reconcile the two bases into one ideology through *Pancasila*, but the influence of Islam in education could not be easily set aside, for Islamic Education had a long history in Indonesia.

The Colonial Era (Pre-1946)

In the colonial era, the development of madrasah was started with the spirit of reformation within the Muslim society. There

were two important factors behind the rise of madrasah. Firstly, the reformists viewed that the traditional Islamic education did not provide adequate pragmatic ability to the society. Secondly, there was a fear that the rapid development of Dutch schools could bring a heavy secular thinking in the society. The reformists considered that they need to balance secularism with Islamic education, through the development of madrasah. With varieties of school thoughts, madrasahs spread out in many places in Indonesia.

The Dutch policies towards Islamic education were to put some restrictions on the madrasahs, for they feared the rise of young-Muslim-educated militias that could threaten the Dutch. One of the Dutch policies was to monitor madrasahs with the issuance of Teacher Ordinance to religious teachers. The policy required religious teachers to have license from the government. Only few religious teachers could receive the license from the government. The history had pressurized the Dutch to issue this policy due to the experience of 1888 Cilegon War towards the Dutch that made them to learn lessons to restrict Islamic activities. Other policy attempted to restrict Islamic schools was the issuance of Informal School Ordinance. This ordinance regulated that every school should report its establishment to the Dutch government and seek approval. The report should include school's curricula and other information.²

The reactions of Muslims towards the Dutch policies were: **defensive; progressive; and rejection.** The defensive reaction was by establishing madrasahs in the remote areas without permit from the Dutch. Progressive reaction was by trying to soften the Dutch discrimination towards madrasahs. While from rejection side showed that the establishment of madrasahs in Java, Sumatera and Kalimantan, especially in the remote areas could not be hampered. They tried to ignore such pressures and tied monitoring from the Dutch.

With several modifications to soften the regulations, the discrimination policies towards madrasahs still continues through the Japanese colonial time. The community responded by establishing Majlis Islam Tinggi/MTI (The Supreme Islamic Board). Later the MTI became the motor behind the flourishing growth of madrasahs during the Japanese occupation.

The Old Order Era (1946-1966)

The development of madrasahs in the era of "Old Order" was closely related with the role of MORA that was established on 3rd January 1946. This institution intensively struggled for including Islamic education into Indonesian education system by including religious subjects into schools curricula and through the development of madrasahs. The efforts of MORA were: *introducing religious subjects in public and private schools; including*

general science in madrasahs curriculum and developing schools of Religious Teachers (PGA) to produce religious teachers for public and private schools, as well as for madrasahs.

The establishment of MORA had strengthened the position of madrasahs in Indonesia education. Furthermore, the efforts of the National Islamic figures such as Ahmad Dahlan, Hasyim Asy'ari and Mahmud Yunus together with MORA, enhanced the quality of madrasahs' education and expanded their number. The development of PGA gave an opportunity to produce qualified religious teachers that would teach in general schools and madrasahs.

By the middle of the 80's, the development of madrasahs had spread at almost all over Indonesia. The Directorate of Islamic Education (Ditpenda) reported that the number of MI had reached to 13.057 madrasahs with 1.927.778 students enrolled in those madrasahs. At MTs level, the number had reached to 776 madrasahs with 87.932 students, while at MA level the number had reached 16 madrasahs with 1.881 students.³ These numbers show that the role of madrasah in Indonesian Education has been significant.

In 1966, the People Representative issued an Act No. XXVII of 1966 which allowed private madrasahs converted into public madrasahs. As a results, there were 123 MIs; 182 MTs and 42 MAs had been converted into public madrasahs. With this conversion, the management of

madrasahs was totally turned into public systems, but the remaining madrasahs (about 90 %) continued to be run by local community or by the *yayasan*. Public partnership with private madrasahs consisted of public grants in aid; secondment of the teachers; supply of textbooks, etc to limited numbers.

The New Order Era (1966-1998)

In the beginning of the New Order Era, the new government continued using the previous policies on madrasahs. However, in general, the legal framework of government to support towards madrasahs was not adequate and very weak. In 1972, the former president of Indonesia, Soeharto, issued a Presidential Act No. 34 of 1972 and Presidential Instruction No. 15 of 1974, the acts regulated that the madrasahs will be managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) instead of under MORA. The Muslims society viewed the issuance of these regulations as a maneuver to nullify the role and the existence of madrasah as a religious institution. The hand over of madrasahs's management to MOEC was seen as an effort from the government to "*secularizing*" madrasah and to abolish madrasah from national education system. To calm down the reactions from the Muslims, the government issued the Joint Ministerial Act of the three Ministries, they were the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA); the Ministry of Education and Cul-

ture (MOEC); and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) in 1975, the Joint Ministerial Act was known as SKB TIGA MENTERI, under which madrasahs were still remained under MORA, but they had to teach some general subjects which were prescribed by the government.

In order to improve the educational quality of madrasah, in August 1970, the government developed a national curriculum at all levels. Through the Ministerial Act No.52 of 1971, the new curriculum was introduced as a national curriculum and madrasah should utilize this new curriculum. Later after some revisions and improvements, the curriculum was announced as "1975 Curriculum". In the next development, under Education Act No. 2 of 1989, madrasahs were integrated with mainstream of the National Education System and with effect from 1994, madrasahs were required to teach the national curriculum of 1994 with the additional of Islamic studies as the characteristics of madrasahs' education.

The Present Status of Madrasah (1998- ...)

As stated in the Indonesian Constitution, every citizen has the right to education. The Education Act No.2 of 1989 articulates the government's policy, objectives and guiding principles for Indonesia's education development for the future. This act also provides the basis of the government's education development strategies and plans under its Second Twenty Five Year De-

velopment Plan (1994/ 1995 to 2019/2020).

The priority of the Second Twenty Five Year Plan is “*economic and human resource development*” as a driving force for development of the country. The primary target of the development in education sector is the implementation of the nine year basic education within next 15 years and improving the quality, access and relevance of education which will lead to and increase in the quality of the Indonesian human resources. This is a prerequisite for enabling the country to increase its productivity and competitiveness during the approaching the twenty first century, which is expected to be a free trade within ASEAN region by the year of 2003, and Asia Pasific open trade and investment by the year of 2020. In this context, education has been viewed as an important investment in human capital and contributory to socio-economic development by endowing individuals with the means to improve their health, knowledge, skills, and capability for socio-economic advancement.

As mentioned above, under Education Act No. 2 of 1989, the madrasahs have become integral part of National Education System. Even in the latest development, under Education Act No. 20 of 2003, the madrasahs have been fully recognized by the Government in providing education in Indonesia. For example, it was mentioned that Basic Education consisted of Sekolah Dasar (SD) and Madrasah

Ibtidaiyah (MI) or the other equal level, as well as Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP) and Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) or the other equal level.¹

According to EMIS data, at the primary level, MIs enrolled 11% of the total national enrollment in 2003, there were 22.799 MIs with 3.1 million students, 91% of them were privates, indicating the dominant role of private madrasahs at this level. At the Junior Secondary (MTs) level enrolled about 18.35% of the total enrollment, there were 10.792 MTs with 1.9 million students and 91% of them were Private MTs. Meanwhile, at the Senior Secondary (MA) level, their students were accounted for 662.000 persons with 3.825 MAs and 85% of them were private madrasahs. Thus, the madrasahs are dominantly private at all levels, while private schools under MONE, the number was only 6% at the primary level and 46% at the secondary level.

At the present time, the madrasahs are required to teach the national curricula prepared by MONE, in addition to their religious subjects. Furthermore, madrasahs' students are required to take the same National Examination (UNAS) as required of students for MONE schools. Thus, madrasahs face a challenging task to provide quality of education in order to compete with the MONE schools.

The Rationale for Madrasah Education

The following discussions are about the basic rationale for

the government intervention in developing madrasah's education through:

Rationale for Public Community Partnership in Education

The basic rationale for the government intervention in education through public community partnership is to assist in removing barriers of cost and isolation that keep many of the rural poor out of school. In rural Java for example, total expenditure per junior secondary student is equivalent to approximately 86 percent of per capita household expenditure for households of the lowest clientele. Junior Secondary Education is therefore beyond the reach of many of the poor and near poor. The opportunity costs of keeping children in school will worsen the problem. Expansion of SMP and MTs in the remote rural areas, should be the main area of focus because of its direct benefit to the poor, especially girls who are often disadvantaged in these areas.

The another justification for significant attention by the government to Junior Secondary Education is that the number of school places is still limited relative to demand, despite substantial outlay by parents and a significant response of the private sector. This inadequacy is evident from continued strong demand for generally more costly private education, even of its lower quality. Large numbers of unsuccessful applicants to schools, the prevalence of double shifts and large classes in

schools, are all indicative of increasing demands for secondary education. These trends make it necessary for the policy makers to encourage and strengthen the public-private partnership in provision of post primary education, for which madrasahs have the greatest potential because these are community base institutions needing public support.

Another rationale for public investment in secondary education relates to likely external benefits associated with investments in secondary education. Research from other countries has pointed out to externalities such as reduced fertility and child mortality and improved nutritional status that correlate with female secondary education.³ For Indonesia, survey results indicate that a mother's education is an important determinant of prenatal care utilization such as more than 90% of women with junior secondary education use pre-natal care, in contrast to only 75% of women with some primary education. Furthermore, analysis of nutritional status in Indonesia finds a strong effect of maternal education on children's nutritional status, for example, for women with between zero and five years of education, an additional year of education has no impact on the child's nutritional status. While among women with six to twelve years education or more, an additional year of education improves nutritional status significantly.

The role of the government would therefore be to a) help

expand the number of school places through a combination of direct investment and measure to stimulate further private sector or community's participation in the provision of school places; and b) ensure that the poor are given increased opportunity to participate in the expansion process of schooling.

Rationale for the Government Partnership in Madrasahs' Quality Improvement

Even though at present financial support from the government to the private madrasahs is very small, the schools still need partnership with the government. This is especially needed for getting madrasahs' recognition and status, and getting financial and teaching materials assistance including maintaining minimum educational standards. Through Educational Act No. 2 of 1989, then rectified by Educational Act No. 20 of 2003, the existence of madrasahs is acknowledged as part of national education system. Therefore, legally the government programs that support madrasahs include secondment of teachers and principals; provision of textbooks; training for the teachers; and some grants assistance. However, the government's assistance to private madrasahs still remains insignificantly small as compared to their genuine requirements and needs to be enhanced manifold to achieve equity and to universalize basic education through madrasahs.

The Process and Mechanism of Public Community Partnership in Development of Madrasah Education

There are at least two major reasons behind the establishment of madrasah. Firstly, there is a demand from many communities and parents to educate their children in religious institutions. Secondly, there is no education institution provided by the government that is accessible to the community at a reachable distance. When the community feels that they need a madrasah, the community will initiate the development of madrasah by raising funding from the community. The community will establish a "yayasan or foundation" to manage the development of madrasah. There will always be someone that will donate land for the madrasah and other people will raise donations that come from *zakah*, *infaq* and *shadaqah* to construct the madrasah's building. Later on, when the construction is completed and voluntary teachers are recruited, the yayasan will report to the office of Religious Affairs at the District Level (Kandepag) to register the madrasah's status. When madrasah starts functioning with a good standard, then the yayasan applies for accreditation. There are four types of accreditation given by the government, they are: *Listed (the lowest)*; *Registered*; *Recognized*; and *Equivalent (the highest)*. After its recognition and getting a certificate from Kandepag, the yayasan can apply for Presidential Instruction Fund (Inpres

Fund) grants available for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) to assist the construction of the madrasah. The government also can give assistance in forms of secondment of teachers and principals; grants as well as text-books. The process of getting assistance is similar for establishing madrasah. In the past, some madrasahs that showed good performance were converted into "public madrasahs".

Cost Sharing between Government, Parents, and the Community in Development and Operation of Private Madrasahs

Private madrasahs are financed through a variety of sources such as from the government; parents, and community. The most common categories of the sources of their funds are the following:

1. Subsidy from Central and Local Government. The government's subsidy comes in the form of grants to purchase schools' equipment and new classroom constructions. Subsidies from the development budget (DIP) for private madrasahs are rare, so most of them do not count on this budget. Routine budget (DIK) grants are given to some madrasahs for teaching activities, according to the number of students registered at the madrasahs. Some subsidies are given by the local government for classroom rehabilitations; new classrooms; laboratory constructions; libraries; teaching materials for the subject

of Science, English, Math and Skills development. However, the government subsidies to private madrasahs are irregular and meager.

2. Grants for Special Purposes. This type of grant is small in amount and is rarely available to majority of madrasah. Only selected that are madrasahs eligible to receive the grants yearly some of which are covered in foreign aided projects such as Basic Education which is funded by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
3. Government Assistance in Forms of Land, Teaching Materials and Trainings. On selective basis the government provides limited assistance for teaching materials and conducting training for school principals, yayasan's coordinators, teachers and finance officers. Local government assists selected madrasahs through the land grant for the development of school facilities. However, the total subsidies received by private madrasahs are very low as compared to the total requirements of the madrasahs.
4. Secondment of Government Teachers to Madrasahs. One important form of the government's assistance to the private madrasah is secondment of government teachers and principals. All the costs of seconded teachers and principals' salaries and incentives are handled by the government. However, the number of secondment teachers and principals to pri-

vate madrasah is still low, where the government only assists less than 10 percent of total teachers required. More than 85% teachers of private madrasah are non-permanent (honoraria) teachers, while their salaries are paid from monthly school fee and Parents Teachers Association (BP3).

5. Teachers' Salary Assistance from MORA and MONE. Some of the qualified madrasahs have been taken over by MORA and further developed into a better quality or called "*Model Madrasah*". The teachers' salaries for non-religious subjects such as Math; English; Science etc. (named who have NIP-13) are financed by MONE, and they are as seconded teachers for madrasah. Now, with the requirements to include the 1994 National Curricula into madrasah, MORA has started to finance their own teachers who have NIP- 15 through MORA's budget.
6. Yayasan's Income Generating Activities. Some Yayasans are generating income to finance the madrasahs through some form of businesses and investment as investment in income generating property. Some are also having a "Trust Fund" in the form of investment and bank deposits.
7. Foreign Donor Assistance. International donor agencies such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB); the Islamic Development Bank (IDB); UNDP-UNESCO; and other donors have started to provide assistance to madrasahs. The assis-

tance includes constructing additional physical facilities, staff development, laboratory's equipment, library development, and block grants for private madrasahs. The assistance is given to selected madrasahs that fulfil the criteria which are identified by the donor agencies.

8. Who Bears the Cost and Who Benefits from the Partnership. As indicated earlier, about 90 percent of madrasahs are private and the government's assistance to them is very small. For example, in case of private MTs, average per pupil expenditure is Rp. 104.000,- out of which government input is only Rp. 6000,- per pupil, while the remaining cost is borne by the parents or by the community. Since constitutionally basic education is a public responsibility, the madrasahs are providing public good at almost no cost to the government. If madrasahs were not established by the community, the government would have to establish more expensive general schools or invest manifold more inputs. Thus, most cost of madrasah education is borne by the community but the government benefits by saving most of their cost. The community benefits by the collective venture of madrasah development and also by having direct and easy access for their children. Furthermore, the local communities have greater say into madrasah's environment in accordance with their

moral values and educational aspirations.

Contribution of Madrasahs in Providing Basic Education

Since the Government of Indonesia issued the Nine Year Universal Basic Education (NYUBE) in 1994, Indonesia has rapidly expanded enrollments and school infrastructure. The Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) of primary schools (SD and MI) was achieved to 94% by 1998/1999; with Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of 115%.⁶ In line with that achievement, the government was also successful in family planning programs, which result in the decreasing number of children at the cohort of 7 to 15 years old. Therefore, the need of providing primary education facilities is no longer perceived as the main issue, for the provision of service is already adequate at primary level.

However, at the Junior Secondary Level (SMP and MTs), Indonesia is still struggling in universalizing enrollments and providing schools' infrastructure. The gap between the number of children at the age group of 13 to 15 with the number of enrollment at the Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) level is still big. The NER of JSS in 1998/1999 was only 48,6% with GER of 66,2%.⁷ At this rate, Indonesia is behind some of its neighbors which have a long way to go to achieve universal basic education.

The World Bank under his study on education under crisis (1988) found out that the role of

private JSS including madrasahs is very significant in helping government universalize nine year basic education. Therefore, the facts that enrollment rate at the JSS level is low and the role of private sector in developing NYUBE is significant, also have brought a need to strengthen the role of MTs in achieving the government's targets to universalize basic education.

At present, MTs enroll about 18,35% of the total national enrollment at the JSS level, of whom about 54% are female students as compared to 46% females enrollment in SMPs. About 88% of MTs are private madrasahs. Most of them are located in rural and under served urban areas. The government inputs to private MTs are insignificant. Most of their finances come from students fee and community donations.

A large number of private MTs are also located in the Islamic Boarding Schools (Pesantren) and enroll students mostly from rural farmer and other lower middle income families. Some of the middle income families also prefer to send their daughters to MTs instead of SMPs for religious reasons and ensuring better moral development. In localities where there is a fear of drug trafficking, free sex and other immoral activities, many parents prefer to send their children to a good quality of madrasah rather than other school. Furthermore, MTs are also playing valuable role in providing junior secondary education to children from low socio-

economic strata, especially the females, mainly in the under-served rural and urban areas.

Madrasahs have great potential in sharing the efforts of MONE for achieving the targets of basic education. From MI and MTs there are about five millions students who participate in making UNYBE successful.

The above analysis is indicative of the fact that madrasahs are the educational institutions which are pre-dominantly source of support for the poor, the females, and people living in under-served and remote areas. They community based institutions run by yayasans or local religious leaders. The actual data on demand for madrasah education, their community based location, their moral standards show that madrasahs have great potential for achieving UNYBE as well as for creating a justice and civic society at modest cost.

However, to be fair to madrasahs' children, the policy makers should also see beyond the numbers and recognize the moral development aspects. They should provide resources for quality input such that the madrasahs' children can become competitive in the rapidly changing socio-economic and technological world. This will require allocation of equitable assistance to madrasahs at par with MONE's schools from the government as well as from the international agencies without any bias. The principle of equity in access to basic education for all children, whether in schools or in madrasahs, should be imple-

mented in the true spirit of fairness, justice and actuality.

Conclusions

Madrasah had become the bridge of the strife between the old and the new schools of thought since it was established. It was a blend of the old *pesantren* system which emphasized piety and devotion to religious duties and codes of conducts but also imitated and followed the classical modern Western school system.

The historical development of madrasah is quite unique as during pre-independence period as well as during the post independence period madrasah has provided basic as well as moral and religious education to the communities whenever the government was unable and sometimes unwilling to provide assistance to madrasah. Presently, madrasah's enrollment predominantly comprises of children from lower income families and also they come from under served and rural areas, especially the females. Thus, madrasah can be said to be pro poor and community based.

Madrasah conforms to the educational needs, affordability, and access requirements of the people at grass-root level in under-served areas which often have poor communities. So, madrasah has participated in the alleviation of poverty in the medium and long run through providing foundation of the development basic human resources and moral values.

Today, madrasah is challenged by the community's needs in improving its educational quality and by broadening the perspective of madrasah development. In other words, madrasah should be transformed and modernized its visions; goals; development strategies, and its focus. Further investment in madrasah is expected to transform the school into competitive institution which provides general subjects as well. Through this way, investment in quality improvement of madrasah is expected to yield high social and economic returns.

Endnotes:

1. Bappenas, 2000.
2. MORA, 2003.
3. MORA, 1980.
4. Section 2. UUSPN, 2003.
5. Bappenas, 1995.
6. MONE, 2000.
7. MONE, 2000.

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Dari Ibnu Abbas RA bahwa Rasulullah SAW bersabda,

﴿ إِنَّ أَحَبَّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى بَعْدَ الْفَرَائِضِ إِدْخَالُ السُّرُورِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ ﴾

“*Sesungguhnya amal yang disukai oleh Allah setelah perbuatan-perbuatan yang wajib adalah memberikan kegembiraan kepada seorang Muslim.*” (HR. Thabrani, *Majma'uz-Zawa'id*, juz. VIII, hlm. 193)