

## A MODEL OF COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION BOOK ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

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### ABSTRACT

The religious education book assessment (REBA) program is one of the national books governances in Indonesia implemented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs collaboratively. However, this program is considered to have not divided the functions of stakeholders appropriately by the concept of collaborative governance and national book regulations, which are the responsibility of the government, private sector and community. The results show: (1) stakeholder functions are based on variable collaboration indicators by dividing responsibility among six program implementation teams (verifiers, IT teams, book assessors, supervisors, supervisors, and instrument developers). (2) The collaboration model of this program refers to the principles of collaboration dynamics: face-to-face, motivational sharing, attractive communication, knowledge, and high adaptability. (3) Macro collaboration between the government, private sector, and community needs to be optimized to support REBA programs that are oriented towards producing religious education books that are suitable for use by the community.

### Keywords:

collaborative governance; the assessment of religious education books; the Ministry of Religious Affairs

### INTRODUCTION

Religious education books are substantial reading materials that can provide positive meaning for students (Unstad & Fjørtoft, 2021), develop democratic values (Bråten & Skeie, 2020), and provide understanding to the community in minimise conflict (Nthontho & Addai-Mununkum, 2021). In addition, spiritual meaning in language and literacy studies (including religious education books) is also important for teachers, students, and the community in developing patterns of teaching, learning, and curriculum preparation that are packaged into policies in a country. However, in Indonesia, religious education books also have the potential to be a forum for developing religious understanding materials that have the potential to cause unrest in the community (Nugraha & Fauzan, 2020). Therefore, the religious education book assessment program (REBA) is important to the Indonesian government's monitoring of religious education books circulating in the community.

General provisions regarding the assessment of educational books in Indonesia are conveyed in Government Regulation No. 75, issued in 2019, concerning the Implementation Regulations of Law Number 3 of 2017 concerning Book Systems. There is a separation between general education and religious education books related to assessment. The assessment of general education books is regulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 8 of 2016, while the REBA program is regulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 2018 concerning Religious Education Books.

The REBA program refers to the policy of the Minister of Religious Affairs, which involves the government (organizers), the private sector (publishers), and the community (users). On the government side, there is the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which organises the program. In addition, there are private parties, such as publishers,

whose book manuscripts are assessed by the government. Meanwhile, the community, as users of religious education books, has benefited from the results of assessments conducted by the government. Data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs noted that from 2019 to 2022, submissions for religious education books from publishers to be assessed continued to increase. This has an impact on the need for additional REBA organizing teams, both in terms of quantity and quality. Therefore, open recruitment is carried out to recruit individuals to become candidates for REBA program managers, both internally and externally. Recruitment by prioritizing book appraisers from various institutions that have competence in the fields of education and religion.

Based on the concept of collaboration, the REBA program is considered to have not been implemented optimally based on the concept of collaborative governance appropriately. The government (organizer), private sector (publisher), and community (user) have not played their roles proportionally, so the functions do not run optimally (Noor et al., 2022). The three are important to have consensus because they have a balanced responsibility in improving the quality of the booking system and ensuring the quality and feasibility of religious education books in Indonesia. Although the involvement of external stakeholders has been carried out, the program collaboration is carried out individually without any collective deliberation and multilateral process between institutions and stakeholders (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p. 546).

*Collaborative governance* is oriented towards consensus through deliberation and collective decision-making to create or implement public policies and programs (2007). The involvement of organizations outside the government (NGOs), business people (private sector) and society is seen as important in formulating policies for the public interest based on collective and collaborative action (Smith & Osborn, 2007). The government cannot only overcome public problems that are increasingly dynamic in time and space and the concept of *collaborative governance* is the answer for the government to involve outside actors who can participate in the public policy process (Charalabidis & Loukis, 2012). The involvement of outside actors is a method of policy formulation and public management in formulating and implementing public interests together (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015). Multi-stakeholder partnerships in public policy generate innovations and ideas due to the diversity of knowledge among different stakeholders (Momen, 2020).

Previous research conducted by the author (Perwira, 2021) focused on policy implementation and referenced the concept of Hudson et al. (2019) related to collaborative governance in assessing religious education books at the Ministry of Religious Affairs. There are four important things in implementing policies regarding the REBA program at the Ministry of Religious Affairs: policy preparation, policy tracking, policy implementation support, and policy implementation review. Based on the four concept notes, there needs to be more in-depth research, especially related to the analysis of the role of stakeholder involvement in the REBA program based on collaborative governance.

Therefore, the study in this article focuses on the extent of collaboration patterns and stakeholder engagement roles (government, private, and community), which refer to the variable indicators of collaboration of Ansell and Gash (2007) concepts, that is, (1) initial conditions or circumstances; (2) facilitative leadership; (3) institutional design; and (4) collaborative processes (face-to-face dialogue, building trust, commitment to the process, mutual understanding, intermediate or intermediate

outcomes). In addition, in-depth excavations were also carried out to reveal a proportional collaborative governance model by referring to the three principles of collaboration dynamics used by Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh (2012): principled engagement, shared motivation, and capacity for joint action.

### **METHOD**

Based on qualitative methods, data mining is focused on the REBA program process, the extent of collaboration patterns, and the role of stakeholder involvement (government, private sector, and community). Certainly, the data gathered from resource persons related to the process of implementing the REBA program will be described, with a focus on two main objectives of this study: (1) the role and function of government, private, and community stakeholders in the REBA program at the Ministry of Religious Affairs; and (2) collaborative governance models in the REBA program at the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Data collection techniques in research based on qualitative methods are based on triangulation data, namely: interviews, observations involved, and review of documents. Interviews were conducted with the REBA program implementation team, namely, policy stakeholders as leadership elements and six program implementation teams (verifiers, IT teams, book appraisers, supervisors, lead supervisors, and developers of assessment instruments) who were randomly selected. Participation in and observation of stakeholders is carried out during discussions or meetings that discuss the process of implementing the REBA program. The method of data analysis using collaborative governance theory while processing and analyzing data using Miles and Huberman analysis methods in the form of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2015).

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

REBA program implementers are classified based on the concept of public organization which shows the roles of involvement in the collaborative governance process by dividing into three main groups (Rifati, 2016), Namely: *first*, primary stakeholders. Stakeholders who have influence or can be influenced by the program, namely publishers from both government agencies and private institutions. Publishers cannot publish their books until they get a publication eligibility mark through the REBA program conducted by the government. Publishers can also influence the REBA program given that there are still many publishers who have not registered their books to be assessed through the REBA program implemented by the government. The REBA program is still seen as not providing prestigious value and increasing book sales, making private publishers hesitant to make an assessment of the books they publish. In addition to publishers, there are people who use religious education books as a result of the REBA program. People who consume religious education books from the results of assessments conducted by the government and published by the private sector can influence the way of view, attitude, and behaviour of the community in religion.

*Second*, secondary stakeholders are parties who are not directly influenced or affected but have involvement in the program being run, namely the implementation team. The six implementation teams have a very strong influence because the implementation of the program will not run if one of the teams does not carry out its duties properly according to the specified provisions and schedules. The six implementation teams consisting of individuals from internal and external to the

Ministry of Religious Affairs showed the need for external stakeholders due to the lack of human resources in the REBA program. *Third*, the lead stakeholders are stakeholders whose existence is an important part of the organization, of course, has influence or can be influenced by the program/project of a team, namely the leadership element. The leadership element has an important role not only responsible for the sustainability of the program, but has the authority to choose stakeholders to join, motivate in planning, implementation, and evaluation and become mentors for other stakeholders.

**Table 1.** Classification of Stakeholder Roles in REBA Program Based on Public Organization Concept

Types of Stakeholders	Stakeholders Engaged	Role-Function of Stakeholders
Primary	Publisher (government/private)	Submit a manuscript of a religious education book before publication to be assessed for proper marks
Secondary	Public (Teachers and student)	Beneficiaries of REBA program results and supervision of religious education book content
Lead	Six REBA program implementation teams (Internal/External Government)	Carry out functions in accordance with competencies and joint provisions in the program implementation guidelines

The roles of stakeholders in the REBA program which refer to the variable indicators of collaboration of the Ansell and Gash (2007) concepts which is described as follows: *first*, the initial conditions/circumstances. There are three things that happened in the initial conditions of this program: (1) the imbalance of resources in terms of quantity and quality of human resources in the REBA program encouraged the Ministry of Religious Affairs policy makers to conduct open recruitment to recruit individuals as an implementation team. (2) The organizer of the REBA program as the initial sponsor provides compensation for the stakeholders involved, especially the six implementing teams in the assessment process. (3) The initial condition of stakeholders in the REBA program has a high dependence. The government as the program organizer involves individual stakeholders through open recruitment from the private sector and the community. Dependence on macro aspects is illustrated by the role of the government in preparing facilities in the implementation of programs by assessing the manuscripts of religious education books before they are published by the private sector. The public are users of religious education books published by the private sector from the results of assessments conducted by the government.

*Second*, facilitative leadership. The REBA program is implemented using a pattern of delegation of leadership roles by appointing coordinators and activity leaders. The coordinator acts as a manager and liaison between implementers and program leaders who are responsible for planning activities, overseeing implementation, and evaluating programs. While the head of the activity acts as a leader who is responsible for the technical process of activities by ensuring the process carried out by the implementation team. The leadership element in this program always takes time and is involved in the program implementation process which is run by six implementation teams that are interrelated with each other. Resolving

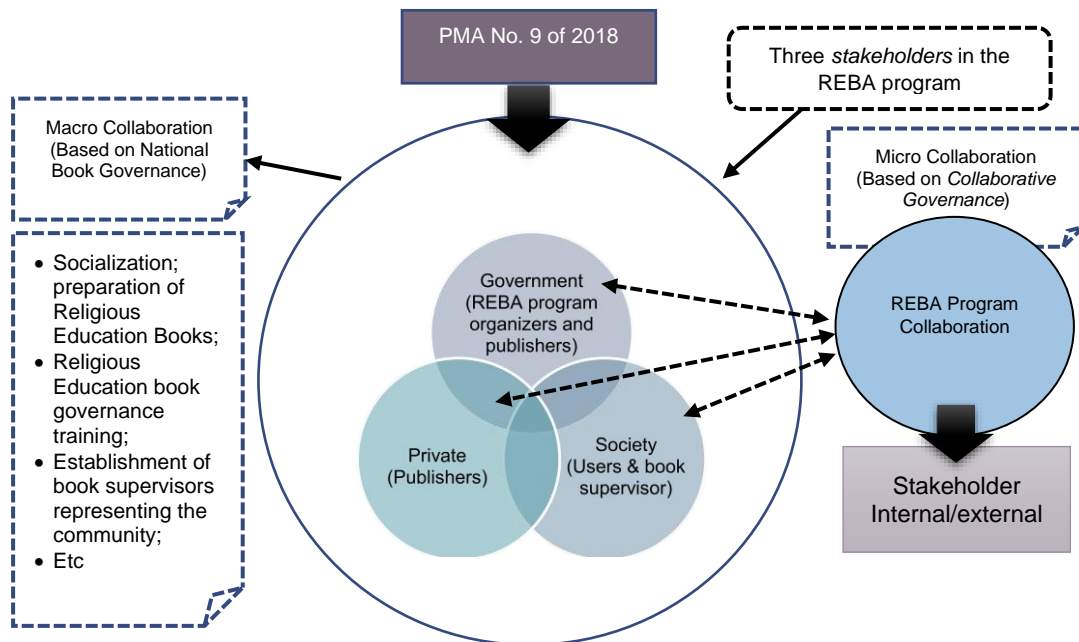
disagreements is resolved fairly by understanding each other's opinions and developing solutions to meet the needs of all parties.

*Third*, institutional design in the implementation of the REBA program is carried out in an inclusive manner. The six implementation teams are interconnected; if one does not perform its functions properly, then this program cannot run optimally. Program implementers have access to information through a transparent process, are responsible for actions and decisions taken in accordance with their respective capacities, tasks, and functions, and carry out processes flexibly according to the conditions and needs of the mutually agreed program substance and technical. *Fourth*, the collaborative process the REBA program is always carried out face-to-face by involving all implementation teams, especially in discussing obstacles and various disputes among the implementation teams. Space and time conditioning for face-to-face dialogue conducted by program implementers is relatively frequent so as to build trust between teams and individuals. Each is committed to running the program on schedule and accepts all decisions that have been mutually agreed upon in accordance with the objectives of collaboration.

The collaborative governance model in the REBA program refers to three principles of collaboration dynamics (2012) which shows that: (1) the principle of involvement is carried out through discussions involving all stakeholders, providing opportunities to express opinions with each other, being transparent in discussing problems, and respecting opinions communicatively. (2) Sharing motivation for togetherness is carried out by involving the same individuals (repeating cycle), assuming that stakeholders who already know each other will more easily express opinions, give/receive/understand input, and resolve disputes. (3) The ability to carry out tasks together is based on attractive, knowledgeable, and highly adaptable communication.

Based on the findings in the principle of collaboration dynamics, needs to offer an ideal collaborative governance model in the REBA program, which refers to Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation Number 9 of 2018. There are at least two main collaborations that are an important part of book governance in Indonesia related to the REBA program; *first*, macro collaboration at the central level involving government, private sector, and community who have equal and equal interests according to their respective capacities. *Second*, micro-collaboration, which is a technical cooperation in implementing the REBA program by involving individuals both from internal and external ministries of religious affairs. Macro-collaboration can have an impact by giving birth to vertical, policy-based micro-collaboration. The collaboration formed from above will have a positive impact on micro-programs in a sustainable manner so that the achievement of decent and quality religious education books for the community.





**Figure**

Alternative Model of Collaborative Governance in REBA Program

The results and discussion of this study confirm that stakeholder functions are an important part of collaborative governance that can change along with the development of collaborative processes (2007). Stakeholder functions in collaboration that are carried out transparently and openly are essential to achieving common goals and effective solutions (Bryson et al., 2009). Therefore, formal and informal aspects need to be pursued in understanding the essence of collaborative governance practices on an ongoing basis to change the concept level into practices that are beneficial for stakeholders in collaborating (Bianchi et al., 2021).

## CONCLUSION

Despite the collaborative process, the government is still the dominant stakeholder in the REBA program. The private sector and the public have not been much involved in playing the role of macro stakeholders referring to national book governance policies in Indonesia. However, in micro terms, the collaborative governance model in this program effectively maximizes the advantages of stakeholder synergy through the existence of groups that strengthen each other based on the diversity of competencies and knowledge possessed by individual stakeholders. Collaboration in the REBA program is certainly not the most ideal model in collaborative governance, but the author seeks to adapt the model to the model used by Ansell & Gash and Emerson et al. It is hoped that future researchers can deepen their studies with other theories regarding collaborative governance models in the REBA program.

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