Vol. 2, No. 03, June 2025, pp. 434 – 444 ISSN: 3026-5592, DOI: 10.58812/esssh.v2i03

Community Empowerment through Social Change Communication: Creating Environmental Transformation and Sustainability at Masjid Al-Ansor Bukit Kemiling Permai

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Jun, 2025 Revised Jun, 2025 Accepted Jun, 2025

Keywords:

Community Empowerment; Effective Communication; Environmental Maintenance; Social Transformation

ABSTRACT

Indonesia, home to one of the world's largest Muslim communities, relies on mosques as central hubs for worship and religious gatherings. This community service initiative focuses on the Al-Ansor Mosque in Bukit Kemiling Permai, Bandar Lampung, aiming to address key challenges through hands-on engagement. The approach includes coordinating efforts, executing practical activities, empowering locals, distributing essential cleaning supplies, assessing outcomes, and compiling detailed reports. Several issues were identified: a lack of community involvement in maintaining the worship space, insufficient facilities, and concerns over safety. The team behind this project envisions the Al-Ansor Mosque not just as a place of prayer, but as a clean, secure, and vibrant center for religious and social activities. A well-kept mosque environment plays a vital role in uniting people through shared faith and devotion. By fostering open dialogue and encouraging social change, the team aims to inspire lasting community commitment to the mosque's upkeep. The ultimate goal is to motivate residents to take greater responsibility for preserving this sacred space, ensuring it remains a cornerstone of spiritual and communal life.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia stands as the nation with the largest Muslim population in the world. According to data from the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Home Affairs, as of December 31, 2021, the number of Indonesian Muslims reached 238.09 million, accounting for approximately 86.93% of the country's total population [1]. Given this vast number, the construction of places of worship, particularly mosques, must accommodate the growing need for adequate space. The term

"mosque" itself originates from the Arabic word "masjid" [2], derived from the root "sajada" (to prostrate), signifying a place of submission to God. However, the role of mosques extends far beyond being mere venues for prayer. While Islam teaches that any clean place on earth can serve as a space for worship, mosques hold a unique position as centers of spiritual and communal life. Historically, they have functioned as hubs for nurturing faith, fostering unity, and cultivating a society grounded in piety and moral values [3], [4].

Beyond their primary function as houses of prayer, mosques serve as vital institutions for social cohesion. They act as places where individuals gathering strengthen bonds, exchange ideas, and collectively address community needs. In essence, mosques transform into spaces of compassion, promoting harmony, solidarity, and religious moderation. Unfortunately, despite their importance, many mosques face neglect after construction. Some remain with underutilized, few worshippers attending daily prayers, while others fall victim to vandalism or theft, such as stolen donation boxes. These issues highlight a critical disconnect while communities invest in building mosques, sustaining their upkeep and spiritual vitality often falls by the wayside. Without consistent care, these sacred risk deterioration, losing their intended purpose as beacons of faith and unity.

The challenges surrounding mosque maintenance underscore a broader societal responsibility. A mosque's sanctity depends not only on its physical structure but also on the active engagement of its congregation. When communities fail to uphold cleanliness, order, and regular worship, mosques lose their vibrancy. Theft and damage further erode trust and diminish the mosque's role as a safe haven [5]. To prevent this decline, collective awareness and action are essential. Communities must recognize that mosques are not just buildings but living institutions requiring dedication. By fostering a sense of ownership, Muslims can ensure that their mosques remain thriving centers of worship, education, and social welfare.

Ultimately, the preservation of mosques reflects the strength of the Muslim community itself [6]. A well-maintained mosque signifies a devout and united society, while neglect mirrors spiritual and communal apathy. In Indonesia, where Islam plays a central role in cultural identity, the revival of mosque stewardship is crucial. Through increased participation, ethical conduct, and shared responsibility, mosques can reclaim their status as pillars of faith and social progress. The task ahead is clear: to honor

these sacred spaces not only in their construction but in their enduring legacy as homes of devotion, compassion, and unity [7].

Maintaining the cleanliness and orderliness of a mosque is a collective responsibility that requires active participation from everyone. A clean and safe worship environment not only enhances the comfort of prayers but also ensures that all activities held in the mosque run smoothly. The saying "cleanliness is part of faith" serves as a powerful reminder, encouraging communities to prioritize hygiene in their daily lives. To achieve this, effective communication plays a crucial role in persuading people to take ownership of their surroundings. Communication backbone of human interaction, allowing individuals to express ideas, share goals, and foster mutual understanding. Without it, collective efforts to improve communal spaces would be nearly impossible [8].

According to experts like Everett M. and Lawrence Kincaid (1981), Rogers communication is defined as a process where more individuals exchange information to reach mutual understanding. This field of study branches into various specializations, including interpersonal communication, mass communication, political communication, and social change communication. The latter is particularly relevant when discussing community development, as social change inherently involves shifts in societal structures and relationships. These changes are driven by interactions and communication, proving that no transformation can occur in isolation [9]. Whether it's promoting cleanliness in a mosque or advocating for broader societal improvements, communication acts as the catalyst that unites people toward a common purpose.

Social change within a community thrives on collaboration and shared vision. When individuals come together, they can contribute ideas, engage in collective decision making, and work toward sustainable progress. Participation in these processes fosters a sense of belonging and mutual respect, making it easier to implement

initiatives that benefit everyone. This underscores the significance of community empowerment a concept rooted in the belief that people should take charge of their needs, manage resources effectively, and strive for collective well-being [10]. Empowerment isn't just about providing tools; it's about creating an environment where individuals feel capable of driving change.

Ultimately, community empowerment leads to the formation of supportive networks where resources are equitably, and cooperation is prioritized. Such communities thrive on social interaction, active participation, and a shared commitment to progress. Whether through maintaining a mosque's cleanliness addressing larger societal issues, principles remain the same: communication bridges gaps, empowerment builds resilience, and collective action ensures lasting impact [11]. By embracing these values, societies can cultivate environments where every member feels valued and motivated to contribute to the greater good [12].

The author aims to carry out a community service initiative titled Empowering the Community Around Al-Ansor Grand Mosque in Bukit Kemiling Permai, Bandar Lampung, using social change communication as the primary approach. This location was chosen after an on-site survey revealed several pressing issues that require immediate attention. Through direct observation, it became clear that the area struggles with low public awareness of environmental cleanliness, inadequate facilities, and security concerns. These challenges hinder the mosque's role as both a place of worship and a hub for Islamic activities. One major issue is the lack of community involvement in maintaining cleanliness. Despite the mosque's importance, many residents seem indifferent to waste management and environmental upkeep. Additionally, the available infrastructure such as sanitation and public spaces falls short of meeting basic needs. Without proper maintenance, these shortcomings could further degrade the area's livability.

Security is another concern. neighborhood's safety measures are insufficient, leaving residents and worshippers vulnerable. This not only affects daily life but also discourages community engagement in mosque-led programs. Addressing these problems requires more than temporary fixes; it demands a shift in mindset. Bv fostering dialogue encouraging collective action, this project seeks to inspire lasting social change. The goal is to transform Al-Ansor Grand Mosque in Bukit Kemiling Permai surroundings into a cleaner, safer, and better-equipped space, reinforcing its role as a spiritual and social cornerstone for the community.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1 The Significance of Mosques in Indonesian Society

Since September 2024, community service and development initiative at Al-Ansor Grand Mosque in **Bukit** Kemiling Bandar Permai, Lampung, has been actively addressing local challenges. The project focuses on revitalizing the mosque's surroundings, ensuring it remains a functional and welcoming space for worship community activities. Recognizing the neglect that had left the area in poor condition, the team stepped in with a clear mission: to transform the environment into a cleaner, well-maintained, and fully Muslim operational hub for the community.

The approach taken by the team was both practical and educational. Through persuasive communication, they engaged local residents, raising awareness about the importance of maintaining shared religious spaces. Workshops and discussions were held to inspire collective responsibility, emphasizing how a well-kept mosque benefits everyone. Beyond words, the team also rolled up their sleeves, participating directly in cleanup efforts, repairs, and minor renovations to restore the area's functionality.

Ultimately, this initiative goes beyond mere physical improvements it fosters a sense of ownership and pride among the community. By combining advocacy with hands-on work, the project has not only enhanced the mosque's environment but also strengthened communal bonds. The hope is that these efforts will inspire lasting change, encouraging residents to sustain the improvements and continue valuing their shared spaces.

First, Initial Coordination and Field Assessment

Before launching the community service initiative, the team conducted a thorough field survey to assess the conditions at Al-Ansor Grand Mosque. Several key issues were identified, prompting the need for immediate action. To ensure the project's success, the team reached out to the local RT chairman and mosque officials to discuss potential solutions. This preliminary step was crucial for aligning expectations and securing the necessary approvals.

Collaborative Planning with Local Stakeholders, On September 21, 2024, a coordination meeting was held with the RT chairman and mosque administrators to present the findings and proposed activities. The discussion was open and productive, with both parties strong support for the expressing initiative. The mosque administrators appreciated the team's proactive approach, while the RT chairman emphasized project's potential the benefits for the community. By the end of the meeting, the team had not only gained formal permission but also secured a commitment for full collaboration from all involved parties.

Securing Approval and Moving Forward; The outcome of the meeting was overwhelmingly positive, with the local leaders endorsing the project without hesitation. Their enthusiasm and willingness to assist demonstrated the community's shared interest in improving the mosque's conditions. With

this green light, the team could proceed confidently, knowing they had the backing of both the neighborhood association and the mosque's management. This strong foundation of support ensured the project's smooth implementation and long-term sustainability.

Second, Implementation of Activities and Community Empowerment

The second phase of the project focused on putting plans into action while actively involving and empowering the community. Together residents, the organizing team rolled up their sleeves and got to work, giving the mosque a thorough cleanup both inside and out. Overgrown grass, which had been spoiling the mosque's peaceful atmosphere, was trimmed back, and the drains, clogged with litter, were cleared to prevent flooding. It wasn't just about tidying up; the team also took the opportunity to share practical tips with the community on how to keep their surroundings clean and safe. After all, the mosque isn't just a building it's a sacred space for worship and religious gatherings, so maintaining its beauty and functionality is a shared responsibility.

Beyond the physical work, the initiative also aimed to foster a deeper sense of ownership among community members. As they swept floors, pulled weeds, and unclogged drains, the team encouraged open discussions about the importance of environmental care. Simple habits, like proper waste disposal and regular maintenance, were emphasized as preserving to the mosque's welcoming atmosphere. The hands-on approach made the lessons relatable, turning everyday chores into meaningful acts of collective care. By working side by side, both the team and community strengthened connection to the mosque, recognizing its role as the heart of their spiritual and social lives.

The project's success lay not only in the visible improvements but also in the lasting impact on the community's mindset. People left with a renewed commitment to protecting their shared spaces, understanding that cleanliness and safety go hand in hand with respect for their place of worship. The mosque, now fresher and more inviting, stands as a testament to what can be achieved when people come together for a common purpose. Moving forward, the hope is that these small, collective efforts will inspire ongoing care and pride in maintaining the mosque as a clean, safe, and uplifting environment for all.

Third, Distribution of Sanitation Facilities

Facilities and infrastructure, as highlighted by Arikunto & Yuliana (2012), play a crucial role in supporting and simplifying various operations, whether they involve physical objects or financial resources. These elements act as the backbone of efficiency, ensuring that tasks are carried out smoothly. In the context of sanitation, proper facilities are essential yet in many places, like the Al-Ansor Grand Mosque, there's a noticeable shortage. Without enough trash bins, waste ends up littering the area, creating eyesore that disrupts the an environment's beauty. The natural sanitation implementation team prioritized the distribution of trash bins, recognizing their importance maintaining cleanliness. However, the current number of bins in the mosque's vicinity falls short of what's needed. As a trash often accumulates unintended places, making the area look untidy and uninviting. This not only affects the visual appeal but also reflects poorly on the community's efforts to uphold hygiene and order.

A well-maintained environment, free from scattered waste, contributes significantly to the overall ambiance of a place. For a location as frequently visited as the Al-Ansor Grand Mosque, the lack of adequate trash bins undermines both

functionality and aesthetics. Addressing this issue would not only enhance cleanliness but also foster a sense of pride among visitors and worshippers, ensuring the mosque remains a welcoming and pleasant space for all.

Four, Activity Evaluations

The community service initiative carried out at Al-Ansor Grand Mosque in Kemiling Permai, Lampung, spanned from September to November, with scheduled activities every Tuesday and Friday. While the program faced challenges in maintaining consistency on Fridays due to unforeseen circumstances, the overall impact was highly successful. One of the most notable achievements was the heightened sense of responsibility among local residents toward preserving the cleanliness and safety of the mosque surroundings. Beyond raising awareness, the project also ensured the provision of essential tools and facilities to promote sustainable hygiene practices, marking a tangible step forward for the community.

Plastic pollution remains pressing global crisis, and this initiative aimed to address its local manifestations while supporting broader environmental goals. The improper disposal of plastic waste particularly in waterways and public spaces has severely degraded ecosystems, leaving the planet more vulnerable than ever. By engaging the community in educational campaigns and hands-on activities, the program sought to instill lasting behavioral changes. The hope is that these efforts will complement government policies, creating a ripple effect that encourages wider adoption of eco-friendly habits. After all, small, collective actions can lead to significant environmental healing over time.

Looking ahead, the success of this project underscores the importance of sustained community engagement in tackling environmental issues. While the irregular Friday sessions posed a minor setback, the overwhelming participation on Tuesdays demonstrated the

community's willingness to embrace change. Moving forward, organizers plan to refine scheduling strategies to ensure broader involvement. The ultimate goal is to foster a culture where environmental stewardship becomes second nature, ensuring that future generations inherit a cleaner, safer world. This initiative is just one step in a much larger journey, but its impact serves as a powerful reminder of what communities can achieve when they come together for a common cause.

2.2 The Role of Social Change Communication in Mosque Empowerment

Social communication serves as the backbone of community empowerment efforts around Al-Ansor Mosque in Bukit Kemiling Permai, Bandar Lampung. It goes beyond mere information dissemination, fostering a shared awareness of the mosque's role as both a sacred space and a social [13]. By bridging the gap between social change theory and real-world action, approach encourages active community participation at every stage of the program. The outreach team employs dialogic methods that prioritize resident involvement, transforming them from passive recipients into decision-making partners. This aligns with Everett M. Rogers' (1981) theory, which highlights the importance two-way of communication and mutual understanding [14]. As a result, the community feels inspired not coerced to take ownership of maintaining mosque's cleanliness and safety. The strategy also respects local socio-cultural values, where religious principles and communal bonds form the foundation of collective consciousness [15], [16].

At its core, this initiative thrives meaningful dialogue, ensuring residents aren't just bystanders but cocreators of change. The participatory techniques resonate deeply in a community where faith and togetherness are woven into daily life [17]. By tapping into these cultural

touchstones, the program cultivates organic motivation rather than imposing top-down directives. Rogers' insights underscore this dynamic: when people feel heard and valued, they're more likely champion shared goals. communication isn't a one-way broadcast but a living conversation that adapts to the community's rhythms [18]. The outcome? A self-sustaining commitment to preserving the mosque's dual role as a spiritual sanctuary and a unifying social space, rooted in the very fabric of local identity [14].

One of the most effective strategies employed leveraging opinion leaders trusted figures like neighborhood heads, mosque imams, and religious study group members to amplify the message about mosque cleanliness and safety. These individuals, deeply respected in their communities, became powerful conduits for change, making the campaign more relatable and credible. Beyond formal gatherings, the team prioritized intimate, face-to-face interactions through focused group discussions (FGDs) and home visits. This approach helped uncover underlying psychological or social barriers, such as apathy or lack of awareness about the impact of poor hygiene. By listening actively and tailoring their communication, the team fostered a sense of ownership among residents, transforming passive observers active participants. The mosque wasn't just a shared space anymore; it became a of collective pride and symbol responsibility.

To broaden their reach, campaign blended traditional and digital media think eye-catching banners, mosque loudspeaker announcements, and WhatsApp groups to reinforce the importance of community involvement. Simple vet impactful educational materials, like posters and short videos, linked Islamic values to environmental care, resonating especially with techsavvy younger generations. Meanwhile, hands-on workshops went beyond theory, teaching practical skills like waste sorting and upcycling, which boosted both confidence and community bonds. These sessions doubled as safe spaces for problem-solving, strengthening group dynamics and solidarity. By merging grassroots engagement with modern tools, the initiative didn't just spread awareness; it sparked a lasting, inclusive movement where every voice mattered.

Participatory evaluation plays a crucial role in ensuring that social change communication truly makes a difference. community engagement regularly organizes reflection forums where residents actively assess program's impact. During these sessions, people share how their behaviors have shifted, discuss ongoing challenges, and brainstorm solutions together. approach doesn't just capture qualitative outcomes it also strengthens community's commitment to staying involved. The results speak themselves: there's been a noticeable rise in public awareness about cleanliness, with less litter and more neighbors joining communal clean-up efforts. Even more residents have inspiring, started replicating these initiatives in nearby areas, proving that the values promoted through social change communication have taken root and spread naturally.

The program's success hinges on the team's ability to adapt to local dynamics. When faced with skepticism, they avoided a one-size-fits-all approach and instead dug deeper to understand the root causes often tied to economic pressures or a lack of awareness about long-term benefits. By tailoring their messaging and methods to specific groups, they turned reluctance into active participation. This flexibility highlights a key lesson: effective social change communication isn't rigid. It evolves through empathy, patience, willingness to listen. The team's handson, adaptive approach underscores how sustainable change grows from genuine connections and a deep understanding of community needs.

The entire process highlights how social change communication goes far beyond just delivering messages it's the very foundation for empowering selfsufficient, lasting community movements [8]. Take the experience at Al-Ansor Mosque: when communication participatory, flexible, and rooted in local needs, it doesn't just inform it transforms mindsets and actions in profound ways. What started as a cleanup initiative didn't just tidy the mosque's surroundings; it sparked a cultural shift where residents now actively take ownership of their shared spaces [19]. This success story isn't confined to one location; the model can be adapted elsewhere by carefully tailoring approaches to different social and cultural contexts. The key insight? Lasting change when happens communities themselves drive the process they're not passive recipients but the heartbeat of transformation. This people-centered philosophy turns mosques into more than places of worship; they become vibrant hubs where faith and social progress intersect organically. Future efforts should mirror this principle: ditch topdown messaging in favor of dialogue that listens, adapts, and grows from the ground up [20]. After all, sustainable change isn't about imposing solutions it's about nurturing environments where communities naturally cultivate responsibility and innovation. When communication respects this dynamic, public spaces evolve from neglected areas to living proof of collective pride and action [8]. The Al-Ansor demonstrates that the real measure of success isn't just cleaner streets it's the invisible shift in attitudes that keeps those streets clean long after the campaign ends [21][22].

2.3 The Concept of Community Ownership as the Key to Sustainability

The success of the empowerment program at Al-Ansor Mosque isn't just about visible transformations in the physical space but, more importantly, lies in the community's growing sense of ownership over the mosque as a shared communal hub. This idea of ownership acts as the bedrock for sustaining the program's impact when people feel a genuine connection to the space, they naturally take initiative to maintain and improve it without relying on outside help [23]. At Al-Ansor, this sense of belonging didn't happen overnight; it was cultivated through continuous collaboration, inclusive decision-making, and fair distribution of responsibilities. For instance, locals were engaged from the very beginning, working together to pinpoint issues like sanitation and security before co-creating practical solutions. Over time, these collective efforts fostered an emotional bond between the community and the mosque, transforming it from a mere structure into a symbol of shared identity and mutual accountability. These findings align with Afriyanti's research, which highlights that true community empowerment only takes root when people are given real control over resources and decisionmaking processes. By shifting power to the community, the program ensured that involvement wasn't performative but deeply rooted in a commitment to long-term stewardship [24].

One clear sign of true ownership within the Al-Ansor community is the spontaneous of independent initiatives long after the formal program concludes. For instance, local mothers took it upon themselves to establish a "Friday Cleanliness Team", dedicating time each week to maintain the mosque, while young men organized neighborhood patrols to deter vandalism actions born entirely from their own sense of responsibility, not external prompting [25]. What's even more remarkable is how residents began pooling their own resources for minor upgrades, like adding extra trash bins or repainting faded mosque walls, reflecting a deep,

internalized commitment to shared spaces rather than temporary compliance. To nurture this mindset, the facilitators deliberately avoided handouts, opting instead to cultivate a culture of mutual cooperation where every contribution whether labor, ideas, or funds had to emerge organically from the community. This approach mirrors the success of Jogokariyan Mosque in Yogyakarta [26], [27], where financial and operational selfsufficiency became possible precisely because locals took full ownership. By prioritizing collective effort over charity, Al-Ansor has fostered not participation, but enduring stewardship proof that sustainability thrives when people feel genuine pride in what they've built together [28].

Another crucial factor strengthens ownership is transparent and accountable mosque management. The community service team, alongside the mosque's governing body, actively creates opportunities for public involvement in monitoring finances and programs, including through monthly meetings. Every financial transaction whether from local donations or external aid is disclosed in detail via the mosque's announcement board and the residents' WhatsApp group. This approach not only minimizes potential conflicts but also reinforces public trust, ensuring the community sees the mosque as a shared resource managed for collective benefit. Beyond financial transparency, regular evaluation forums allow residents to voice critiques and suggestions, turning them from passive recipients into active decision-makers. Such participatory mechanisms ensure the community doesn't just witness development but drives it. The experience at Al-Ansor Mosque demonstrates that transparency isn't just an ethical ideal but a practical strategy for sustaining longterm community engagement. This aligns with Alwiyah's research on effective mosque governance, which highlights accountability as the cornerstone of successful community-based management. By integrating openness with inclusive decision-making, the mosque fosters a sense of shared responsibility, where every member feels invested in its progress. The result is a self-sustaining cycle of trust and collaboration, proving that when people have a real stake in oversight, their commitment deepens, and the institution thrives [29].

Building a sense of ownership within the community doesn't always go smoothly. One of the biggest hurdles comes from the people themselves some remain indifferent, using personal busyness as an excuse or assuming the mosque is solely the responsibility of its committee. To tackle this, the outreach team employed a role modeling approach, shining a spotlight on active contributors like Mr. Ahmad, a small-scale vendor who consistently made time to clean the mosque's courtyard. His story was shared during religious sermons and community media, creating positive social pressure that inspired others to step up. This sparked a ripple effect, encouraging more residents to participate willingly [30]. Additionally, non-material rewards, such as certificates appreciation or public recognition during gatherings, proved surprisingly effective in boosting involvement. The lesson here is clear: fostering ownership isn't just about logic it's about touching hearts and spirits, especially in religious spaces emotional and spiritual where connections run deep [31].

The impact at Al-Ansor went far beyond basic upkeep. What began as a movement to maintain the mosque's physical space grew into a powerful social force. The community didn't just keep the mosque clean; they transformed it into a hub for creative economic activities (like Ramadan bazaars), education (free Arabic classes), and social services (health clinics) [32]. This shift highlights how strong ownership can turn a mosque into a catalyst for broader change. The key? An

approach rooted in respect for local capacity, genuine participation, and transparent systems. While Al-Ansor's success offers a blueprint for other mosques in Indonesia, it's crucial to remember that every community is unique what works in one place may need tweaking elsewhere [33]. Above all, ownership isn't instant; it's a journey requiring patience, consistency, and trust in people as the driving force behind their shared spaces [34].

3. CONCLUSION

A community service initiative at Al-Ansor Mosque, Bukit Kemiling Permai, Bandar Lampung, which aims to empower the community through a social change communication approach. The emphasized the importance of the mosque not only as a place of worship, but also as a center for social and spiritual activities. The main challenges identified include low community awareness of environmental hygiene, inadequate facilities, and security issues. The proposed solutions involve coordination with stakeholders, implementation practical activities such as mosque cleaning, as well as distribution of sanitation facilities. The article also highlights the role of participatory communication in building collective awareness, where communities are actively involved in the decision-making process. Methods such as focus group discussions (FGDs) and engagement through opinion leaders (such as mosque imams and heads) were used to strengthen community involvement. As a result, there been an increase in residents' responsibility in maintaining the cleanliness and security of the mosque, and the emergence of independent initiatives such as the "Friday Cleaning Team". The author emphasizes that this approach not only changes the physical environment, but also the mindset of the community, creating a sustainable sense of ownership. The concept of community ownership is key to the sustainability of empowerment programs. That the need for transparency in mosque

management, such as open financial reporting and participatory evaluation forums, plays an important role in building trust among residents to serve as a reference shows how financial and operational independence can be achieved when the community feels ownership. Challenges such as the apathy of some residents were overcome with a sustainable role modeling approach. The long-term impact of the program is that the mosque is not only a place of worship, but also a center for economic activities (such as the

Ramadan bazaar), education (Arabic language classes), and social services (health clinic). The author emphasizes that this success cannot be applied uniformly in all communities, but rather must be adapted to the local social and cultural context. In conclusion, this article offers a holistic mosque-based empowerment model. combining effective communication, active participation, and transparency to create sustainable change.

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