

Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Exegesis as Post-Conflict Inter-Religious Resolution in Poso, Indonesia (1998-2001)

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Abstract. The inter-religious conflict in Poso, Indonesia, has had a substantial impact on the harmony of the region's multicultural society. This research aims to examine the potential of the Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Verse Resolution in resolving the conflict by raising two main questions: (1) how Indonesian society responds to the inter-religious conflict in Poso, and (2) how the Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Verse Resolution can be applied to resolve the inter-religious conflict in Poso. This research collected data through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies using a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design. Research participants included religious leaders, local communities, local government, and relevant academics. Data were analysed thematically to identify emerging patterns and themes. The result of the research is that applying the Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin principle, which boils down to compassion, justice and tolerance, can be a strategic basis for building peace in Poso. The interpretation of various scholars shows that this mercy is inclusive and universal, covering all levels of society. Implementing this concept through multicultural education, interfaith dialogue, and traditional mechanisms such as *Dalihan na Tolu* has proven effective in easing tensions and preventing conflict escalation.

Keywords: Rahmatan Lil'Alamin Exegesis, Post Conflict, Inter-Religious Resolution, Poso Indonesia.

Introduction

The inter-religious conflict in Poso, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, has been a major focus in the study of sectarian violence in the post-New Order era. The conflict, which lasted from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, involved clashes between Muslim and Christian communities, resulting in thousands of casualties as well as significant infrastructure damage.¹ Factors such as the government's transmigration programme, economic competition and the dominance of religious narratives exacerbated tensions between ethnic and religious groups. In the midst of these dynamics, the concept of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin - meaning "mercy for all nature" - becomes relevant as a potential solution to building peace and harmony. Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, described in various interpretations of the Qur'an by scholars such as Al-Thabari and Ibn Kathir, explains the importance of compassion, tolerance and social justice in relationships between creatures. This research is important to understand how this principle of *rahmah* can be effectively applied in the context of the Poso conflict, as well as how inclusive interpretations can help ease tensions and promote reconciliation. The research questions to be answered include how the application of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin can address

¹ S Maubu and A Faisal Alwi, "Inanco a Local Wisdom in Endemic Fish Species Conservation in Lake Poso," in *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, vol. 473, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/473/1/012004>; K E Schulze, "The 'Ethnic' in Indonesia's Communal Conflicts: Violence in Ambon, Poso, and Sambas," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 12 (2017): 2096–2114, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1277030>.

the sources of conflict and what strategies are most effective in implementing this concept to create sustainable peace in Poso.

The inter-religious conflict in Poso has had a comprehensive impact on social stability and harmony in Indonesia, triggering diverse debates and responses from Indonesian society. Firstly, there is a need to comprehensively understand how Indonesians respond and perceive the inter-religious conflict in Poso, which includes not only knee-jerk reactions but also broader views on proposed solutions and the effectiveness of interventions.² Secondly, it is important to examine the application of the concept of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin in this context of conflict resolution. Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, defined as "mercy for all nature," offers a perspective that can guide interactions between religious and ethnic groups more peacefully. This research aims to identify and analyse the factors that influence the effectiveness of the application of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin in reducing and resolving inter-religious tensions in Poso. The benefits of this research are expected to provide new and comprehensive insights into effective ways of overcoming inter-religious conflict, especially through the application of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin. The results of this research are expected to serve as a reference for policymakers, religious leaders and stakeholders in designing more inclusive and comprehensive strategies to create sustainable peace, not only in Poso but also in other regions in Indonesia that experience similar tensions.

A literature review of previous studies on the Poso conflict shows that these studies have revealed the dynamics and complexity of the conflict from various perspectives. I Alganih (2016) describes the Poso conflict as an interreligious conflict issue that widened from fights between youths, explaining the transformation of a local issue into a complex religious conflict. D McRae (2016) provides a comprehensive picture of religious violence in post-reform Poso, emphasising the long-term impact of the conflict on local communities. IA Widayat et al. (2021) emphasise that the Poso conflict was driven not only by religious issues but also by broader social and political factors. M Sulhan and MR Januri (2022) analysed the Poso conflict using Karl Marx's theory, focusing on the role of religion in social conflict. Finally, L Ismail et al. (2024) discuss conflict resolution efforts through the perspective of peace and pluralism. However, there is still a lack of emphasis on concrete solutions based on theology and local approaches.

Although this study has opened up important aspects, there is still a gap in understanding how Islamic theological concepts, such as Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, can be integrated into conflict resolution. Previous research tends to focus on socio-political and historical aspects, while the practical application of Islamic values in conflict mediation and resolution remains largely unexplored. This research proposal aims to fill this gap by investigating how Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin can be practically applied to reconcile the disputing groups in Poso. It is hoped that this research will provide new insights into the application of Islamic teachings in a practical and relevant context, resulting in a model that can be replicated in other regions experiencing similar conflicts. The research aims to contribute to a more sustainable conflict resolution practice based on the universal values of compassion and peace in Islam through this approach.

The hypotheses in this study depart from the assumption that the concept of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin can be an effective conflict resolution framework in resolving inter-religious tensions in Poso, Indonesia. Firstly, the response of Indonesian society to the conflict in Poso tends to be influenced by diverse social, political, and cultural perspectives. Most people perceive the conflict to be based not solely on religion but also socio-economic factors and structural injustice. Therefore, the first

² R Diprose and M N Azca, "Past Communal Conflict and Contemporary Security Debates in Indonesia," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 49, no. 5 (2019): 780–805, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2019.1619186>; J Coté, "Creating Central Sulawesi: Mission Intervention, Colonialism and 'Multiculturalism,'" *Bijdragen En Mededelingen Betreffende de Geschiedenis Der Nederlanden* 126, no. 2 (2011): 3–29, <https://doi.org/10.18352/bmgn-lchr.7308>.

hypothesis is that the responses of Indonesian society indicate the need for a holistic approach to resolving inter-religious conflicts involving social, economic and cultural elements in addition to faith-based interventions. Secondly, the concept of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, which explains the values of universal compassion, justice and tolerance, has the potential to be applied to conflict resolution. The second hypothesis is that the values of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin if applied systematically through multicultural education, interfaith dialogue and community-based mediation, can reduce tensions and create harmony in Poso. Thus, this research will test the extent to which this Islamic theological and praxis approach can respond to the challenges of religious conflict in Poso and strengthen social harmony, not only in the region but also in the wider context of Indonesian society.³

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to examine the potential of the Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Verse Resolution in resolving inter-religious conflict in Poso, Indonesia.⁴ The focus of this research includes two main aspects: (1) understanding the response of Indonesian society to the inter-religious conflict in Poso, and (2) analysing how the concept of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin can be applied to resolve the conflict. This research aims to fill the knowledge gap regarding applying Islamic universal values in building interfaith harmony in societies that have experienced conflict.⁵ Research participants included religious leaders, local communities, local government, and relevant academics. Information was also obtained through documentation of literature reviews, previous research results, and transcriptions of community interviews, as illustrated in videos and netizen comments related to the conflict in Poso.⁶ Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted with key figures to explore their perspectives on the conflict and potential Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin-based solutions. Secondary data in the literature and reports on the Poso conflict were also thoroughly analysed.⁷ Analyses were conducted using thematic methods to identify the data's patterns, themes, and relationships. The results of this analysis will be used to develop a Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin value-based conflict resolution model, adapting it to the social, cultural and religious context of the Poso community. Using this method, the research is expected to produce applicable recommendations, strengthen interfaith tolerance, and offer a relevant Islamic value-based approach to resolving similar conflicts in other regions.⁸

³ A Sukanto and R Pramono, "The Roots of Conflicts between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia in 1995–1997," *Transformation* 37, no. 3 (2020): 208–21, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265378820937722>.

⁴ L B Mohr, "The Qualitative Method of Impact Analysis," *The American Journal of Evaluation*, 1999, <https://doi.org/10.1177/109821409902000106>.

⁵ M Niaz, "Qualitative Methodology and Its Pitfalls in Educational Research," *Quality & Quantity*, 2009, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-007-9136-9>; J Toro et al., "A Qualitative Method Proposal to Improve Environmental Impact Assessment," ... *Impact Assessment Review*, 2013, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0195925513000516>.

⁶ N K Denzin and K E Ryan, "Qualitative Methodology (Including Focus Groups)," ... *Handbook of Social Science Methodology* (handoutset.com, 2007), <https://handoutset.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/The-Sage-Handbook-Of-Social-Science-Methodology-Stephen-P.-Turner-William-Outhwaite.pdf#page=595>; R Furman, C Lietz, and C L Langer, "The Research Poem in International Social Work: Innovations in Qualitative Methodology," ... *Journal of Qualitative ...* (journals.sagepub.com, 2006), <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500305>.

⁷ C J G Campos and E R Turato, "Content Analysis in Studies Using the Clinical-Qualitative Method: Application and Perspectives," *Revista Latino-Americana de Enfermagem* (SciELO Brasil, 2009), <https://www.scielo.br/j/rlae/a/ncc5MZ9hYGGhQXDgXW7sVnb/?format=html&lang=en>.

⁸ E Groenland and L P Dana, *Qualitative Methodologies and Data Collection Methods: Toward Increased Rigour in Management Research* (World Scientific, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1142/9789811206542_0001.

Discussion

Interfaith Conflict Resolution in Tafsir Al-Anbiya' 107

Various scholars have comprehended the concept of rahmah in Islam, exploring its broad meaning and application in daily life. Al-Suyuthi explains that rahmah includes gentleness, forgiveness and compassion, similar to *marhamah* and *ruhm*. This word describes feelings and actions, as in the expression "*rahimabullah*", which means praying for someone to have Allah's mercy. In addition, rahmah is also related to the kinship relationship called the uterus, signifying a bond born of God's mercy and compassion. Al-Farabi added that mercy is the tenderness that encourages one to do good to the beloved. In the context of Allah's attributes, rahmah refers more to granting favours and kindness without the tenderness that exists in humans.⁹ This is reflected in the hadith about the creation of the womb, where Allah says that He is Ar-Rahman, and the womb is taken from His name, explaining the importance of maintaining friendship as a manifestation of His mercy. Furthermore, Al-Farabi elaborated that the term rahmah in the Qur'an has various meanings depending on the context, such as the Qur'an as guidance, the Prophet Muhammad as a mercy to the universe, the provision of sustenance, and the gift of salvation from punishment. For example, rahmah can mean the revelation of the Qur'an as a source of guidance ("*وننزل من القرآن ما هو شفاء ورحمة للمؤمنين*"), or sending the Prophet as a mercy to all nature ("*وما أرسلناك إلا رحمة للعالمين*"). From these explanations, it can be seen that mercy is a fundamental concept that covers both spiritual and social aspects of Islam. Rahmah is not only an attribute of Allah, who is the most merciful, but also a principle that should be realised in human relations and the universe.¹⁰ By understanding and applying rahmah, Muslims are expected to build a society of compassion, justice and balance. This concept leads individuals to receive Allah's mercy and become a medium of mercy for others, thus creating harmony and peace in the common life.

The scholars of tafsir have provided various comprehensive explanations of the verse "*وما أرسلناك إلا رحمة للعالمين*" in the Qur'an. Al-Thabari says that Allah spoke to the Prophet Muhammad, confirming that he was sent as a mercy to all His creatures. In this interpretation, there is a difference of opinion among scholars as to who is included in "al-'alamin" or "all of nature". Some scholars argue that mercy includes both believers and disbelievers. They say that for the believers, the Prophet Muhammad is the source of guidance and the path to salvation in the hereafter. As for the disbelievers, his presence still brings mercy by delaying the punishment that had befallen the previous nations, allowing them to accept the truth. Ibn Kathir also explains the role of the Prophet Muhammad as a mercy for the universe. He states that anyone who agrees with this mercy and is grateful for it will gain happiness in this world and the hereafter. Conversely, those who reject this grace experience loss in both lives.¹¹ Ibn Kathir quotes a hadith in which the Prophet said, "I was not sent as a curse, but I was sent as a mercy." This shows that the prophetic mission is to spread compassion and kindness, not to bring curses or destruction.

Al-Baghawi, in his tafsir, expands the discussion on the meaning of "mercy" and who is included in "al-'alamin". He considers whether the term also includes angels or is limited to humans. Al-Alusi tends to argue that the Prophet Muhammad is a mercy for all creation, including angels, jinn and humans, believers and disbelievers. He explains that even though the disbelievers did not accept the Prophet's teachings, they still benefited from him, such as being spared from direct punishment and being allowed to recognise and accept the truth. In addition, Al-Alusi asserts that the mercy

⁹ (Al-Syafi'i & Idrīs, 1951; Muhammad & al-Syafi'i, 1973)

¹⁰ S al-Amidi, "Al-Ihkam Fi Ushul al-Ahkam, Juz II," *Beirut: Dar al-Fikr*, 1967; S D A Al-Amidi, "Al-Hasan, al-Ihkam Fi Ushul al-Ahkam," *Beirut: Ar al-Fikr, t. Th, Juz IV*, 1967.

¹¹ (Al-Shukânî, 2007; Al-Shukani, 2012)

brought by the Prophet Muhammad is not only limited to the spiritual aspect but also covers various other aspects of life.¹² For example, with the Prophet's sending, humanity received guidance on how to live a good life, build a just society, and maintain a harmonious relationship with the universe. Even in the context of the angels, Al-Alusi mentions that they also benefit from the existence of the Prophet Muhammad because, through him, many divine knowledge and secrets are revealed, increasing their understanding and closeness to Allah.

From these various explanations, it can be seen that although there are different views on the scope of the mercy brought by the Prophet Muhammad, all scholars agree that he is the greatest mercy granted by God to the universe. This universal grace offers a path of salvation and happiness for anyone who wants to accept it. For those who believe, this grace is a direct guide to the pleasure of Allah and His paradise. For those who do not think so, this grace provides an opportunity and time to contemplate the truth and finally receive guidance. The presence of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad as a mercy for all nature is a manifestation of God's infinite love. His prophetic mission carries universal messages of justice, compassion, and peace.¹³ By understanding and appreciating the meaning of this mercy, Muslims are expected to emulate the noble qualities of the Prophet, spread goodness, and establish harmonious relationships with fellow creatures. The mercy from Prophet Muhammad SAW is not only for one particular group or community but for the entire universe, inviting all creatures towards a better and more meaningful life.

Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, Interfaith Tolerance and Interfaith Conflict in Poso

Grounding Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin in Poso

The verse 'وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ' (QS. Al-Anbiya: 107) encompasses numerous meanings with regards to the verse's explanation that the prophetic mission of Prophet Muhammad SAW encompasses an all-embracing mercy. Al-Thabari and Ibn Kathir mentioned that the role of Prophet Muhammad was not limited to the prophethood of the believers; rather he was to act as a mercy unto all, to the believers as well as the disbelievers. The mercy, as Ibn Kathir mentions, is not in the form of religious teachings alone, but rather includes protective mercy that saves them from the punishments that had previously befallen the nations, as the scholars explain. Everyone that Prophet Muhammad was sent to, whether they accepted such teachings of Islam or not, had to benefit as a result of the sending of Prophet Muhammad, and they benefited in terms of protection from punishment or an opportunity to return to the right path. Al-Alusi, in explaining this, mentions that the mercy of Prophet Muhammad SAW encompasses even those who do not directly receive the revelation, the angels and the jinn. They too possessed knowledge and blessings derived from the prophethood of Muhammad.¹⁴ This mercy is not primarily a slogan, constructed on principles of 'good' organisation, 'good' order of society, 'good' behaviour and humanity, etc.

The concept of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, meaning "mercy for all nature", has a comprehensive historical basis and wide contemporary application in Islamic societies, with diverse interpretations

¹² A M Al-Baghawī, "Tafsīr Al-Baghawī," *Tahqiq: 'Abd al-Razāq al-Mahdī, Beirut: Dār 'Ihyā' al ...*, 2002; A Al-Baghawī, "Sharḥ Al-Sunnah (A. Awad, A. Abd al-Mawjud, Eds.)," *Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah*, 1992.

¹³ A J Al-Thabari, "Tafsīr Al-Thabari" (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, 2000).

¹⁴ M bin Jarir al-Thabari, "Tafsīr Al-Thabari," in *Jami'al-Bayān'an Ta'wīl Ayi al-Qurān, Libanon ...*, preprint, 1994; Muslim Ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar Bi Naql al-'Adl 'an al-'Adl Ilā Rasūl Allāh Ṣallā Allāh 'alaih Wasallam*, vols. 1–5, ed. Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqī (Dār 'Ihyā' al-Turāṡ al-'Arabiy, 1955), <https://shamela.ws/book/1727>; Sulaimān ibn al-Asy'aṡ ibn Ishāq ibn Basyir ibn Syidād ibn 'Amru al-Azdiy al-Sijistāniy Abū Dāwud, *Sunan Abi Dāwud*, vols. 1–7, ed. Syu'aib al-Arna'ūṡ and Muḥammad Kāmil Qurah Balaliy (Dār al-Risālah al-'Ālamiyah, 2009), <https://shamela.ws/book/117359>; Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā'il ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mugīrah al-Ju'fiy al-Bukhāriy, *Al-Jāmi' al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar Min Umūr Rasūl Allāh Ṣallā Allāh 'alaih Wasallam Wa Sunanib Wa Ayyamih*, vols. 1–9, ed. Muḥammad Zuhair ibn Nāṡir al-Nāṡir (Dār Ṭauq al-Najāt, 1422), <https://shamela.ws/book/1681>.

across different Islamic traditions. Historically, the concept is based on Islamic teachings aimed at guiding the ummah towards happiness in this world and the hereafter, and it explains the role of Islam in appreciating any social, technological, and environmental changes that bring prosperity to humanity. The practice of compassion and mercy demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad became a role model that inspired his companions and was admired by many during his leadership. Interpretations of this concept differ across Islamic traditions. In Indonesia, Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin is considered essential in economic development, particularly in the 4.0 era, and is realised through social services such as waqf and the halal industry.¹⁵ Nahdlatul Ulama explains the nature and attitude of mercy for all beings, reflecting the philosophy of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin. For example, the Bani 'Alawiyyin community prioritises civility towards all humanity and carries out non-radical missions based on this principle in Southeast Asia.

Contemporary applications of this concept are also seen in other countries such as Egypt, where Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin is essential for Muslim scholars, especially in the context of al-Azhar, to understand the current times and self-identity. The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted discussions on the application of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin in assisting those affected, with recommendations for establishing waqf institutions to complement the government's efforts in addressing social challenges. The main scholarly debate around this concept involves discussions on Islamic turāth, with various approaches and tendencies in revising it, including critical rationalism that places religion under the determinants of reason and reality.¹⁶ In rural Java, the transformation of previously religiously inactive Muslims has resulted in a new identity as Nationalist-cum-Nahdliyin, reflecting a blend of modern ideological categories and religious practices that accommodate local customs and traditions. Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin has a strong historical basis in Islamic teachings and continues to be interpreted and applied in various ways across different Islamic traditions, fuelling scholarly debates on its relevance and implications in contemporary society.

The concept of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, which means "mercy for all nature", is a fundamental principle in Islam that explains universal compassion, mercy, and kindness. This principle encourages Muslims to show compassion and care to fellow humans and animals, plants, and even inanimate objects.¹⁷ This teaching is based on the example of the Prophet Muhammad, who showed compassion in his interactions with various groups, including enemies and prisoners of war. The Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin principle also includes environmental responsibility, encouraging sustainable practices and planetary protection. By integrating this concept with the development of empathy, a culture of environmental responsibility and sustainable moral development is created. This is important in

¹⁵ M Muharis, "Menciptakan Habitus Moderasi Beragama: Upaya Pondok Pesantren Sunan Pandanaran Dalam Meneguhkan Islam Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin," *Islam & Contemporary Issues*, 2023, <https://www.jurnal.medanresourcecenter.org/index.php/ICI/article/view/903>; W Angranti and M Barni, "Moderasi Beragama Dalam Mengimplementasikan Islam Rahmatan Lil'alamin," *Intelegensia: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan ...*, 2023, <http://intelegensia.web.id/index.php/intelegensia/article/view/135>.

¹⁶ F A Maulida, A S Salsabilah, and ..., "PREVENTIVE EFFORTS TO ATTACK RADICAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH ISLAMIC EDUCATION RAHMATAN LIL ALAMIN," ... : *Journal of Islamic ...*, 2024, <https://journal.aspublisher.co.id/index.php/syahadat/article/view/308>; S E Dasopang and F Rahmania, "FRAME WORK MENUJU INDONESIA RAHMATAN LIL 'ALAMIN:(Framework Towards Indonesia Rahmatan Lil'Alamin)," *Raqib: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 2024, <https://jurnal.isqi.or.id/index.php/raqib/article/view/10>; R Damayanti, "The Role and Challenges of Muslim Families in Building a Rahmatan Lil Alamin Image of Indonesian Islam," *Islam and the Contemporary World*, 2024, https://icwj.edihe.ac.ir/article_191587.html.

¹⁷ Abdul Basid and Nur. Faizin, "REINTEPRETASI AYAT-AYAT AHKAM TENTANG ZAKAT (Analisa Terhadap Qs Al-Baqarah Ayat 110, Qs al-Taubah Ayat 60 Dan Qs al-An'am Ayat 141)," *Al Yasini : Jurnal Keislaman, Sosial, Hukum Dan Pendidikan* 06, no. 36 (2021); Abdul Basid, Nur Faizin, and Bakri Mohamed Bkheet Ahmed, "Kontribusi Ayat-Ayat Zakat Di Era Covid-19 Terhadap Perkembangan Ekonomi: Telaah Pemikiran Al-Tabari Dalam Jami' Al-Bayan Fi Ta'wil Al-Qur'an," *KACA (Karunia Cahaya Allah): Jurnal Dialogis Ilmu Ushuluddin* 11, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.36781/kaca.v11i2.127>.

building awareness of protecting nature as a trust that must be preserved. Regarding social justice and economic equality, Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin seeks to reduce social disparities and promote fairness in economic activity. This is realised through social services such as waqf and support for the halal industry, ensuring that the principles of justice and welfare are applied in everyday life. Tolerance and balance are also key in this principle, with *tasamuh* (tolerance), *tawazun* (balance), and the implementation of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (inviting to good and preventing evil).¹⁸ These values are essential for building social cohesion and counteracting radical ideologies that can divide communities. As a universal guide, Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin is adaptive to social change, technology and environmental needs, ensuring the well-being and prosperity of humanity. Applying these principles is hoped to create a harmonious and just society that respects and cares for all aspects of creation.

To implement the concept of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin in Poso, some strategies can be adopted that are in line with the principles and practices that have been put forward. First, promoting social justice and economic equality can be realised by integrating Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin values in financial activities, such as organising social services in the form of waqf and encouraging the development of halal industries. This approach aims to build justice, narrow social gaps, and revive Islamic values that can be adapted to local contexts such as Poso. Second, countering radical ideology through the role of organisations such as Nahdlatul Ulama is crucial. They play a vital role in promoting Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin values by explaining tolerance, balance and peaceful upholding of religion - all essential to fostering a harmonious community in Poso. Thirdly, the development of environmental awareness can be achieved by integrating Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin in the development of empathy, involving cooperation between parents, teachers and the community to foster a culture of respect for the environment, which is essential for sustainable development in Poso.¹⁹ Fourth, educational initiatives such as virtual pesantren can be used to teach the principles of Islam Nusantara and deradicalisation. This method uses technology to provide education promoting Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin values, ensuring the teachings reach a wider audience in Poso. By focusing on these strategies, the principles of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin can be effectively instilled in Poso, promoting social harmony, economic justice and environmental sustainability.

Interfaith Tolerance in Poso

Amidst Poso's ethnic and religious diversity, daily interactions between Muslim and Christian communities reflect a concerted effort to build harmony. For example, traditional markets are places where traders and buyers from different religious backgrounds transact with mutual respect. At community events, such as cultural festivals or harvest celebrations, interfaith participation is a common sight, demonstrating a spirit of togetherness that transcends differences in faith.²⁰ Education

¹⁸ T Ushama, "Islam's Rahmah (Compassion) as Applied by Hadrat Muhammad Rasūlullah Khātam Un Nabīyyīn Sallallāhu 'alaihi Wa 'Alā Ālihi Wa Ashābihi Wa Sallam," *Hamdard Islamicus* 44, no. 2 (2021): 9–35, <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-85114708187&partnerID=40&md5=35af1d4d2f2381d62a0154dc08f6bccd>; A Y Musa, "Raḥma: Universal Divine Mercy in the Qur'an and Hadith," *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies* 6, no. 1 (2021): 131–39, <https://doi.org/10.2979/jims.6.1.10>; H Ahyani and M Slamet, "Building the Values of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin for Indonesian Economic Development at 4.0 Era from the Perspective of Philosophy and Islamic Economic Law," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial* 16, no. 1 (2021): 111–36, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-lhkam.v16i1.4550>.

¹⁹ A G Don et al., "Da'wah in the West: An Analysis of the Role of the Islamic Foundation (If) in Promoting the True Image of Islam," *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences* 6, no. 4 SPLISS. 3 (2012): 541–44, <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-84876710096&partnerID=40&md5=5fac3d6ba9045180096041d8a5f3f497>; L Muhtifah et al., "The Theology of Islamic Moderation Education in Singkawang, Indonesia: The City of Tolerance," *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.4102/HTS.V77I4.6552>.

²⁰ A Basid, "Pandangan Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyah Tentang al-Ba'sâ', al-Dharrâ', Dan al-Zilzâl; Kajian Tafsir Metafora Al-Qur'an," *Tafâqqub: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Kajian Keislaman*, 2014, <http://jurnal.iaibafa.ac.id/index.php/tafaqqub/article/view/34>; A Basid, "PERGESERAN KULTUR BUDAYA HAJI

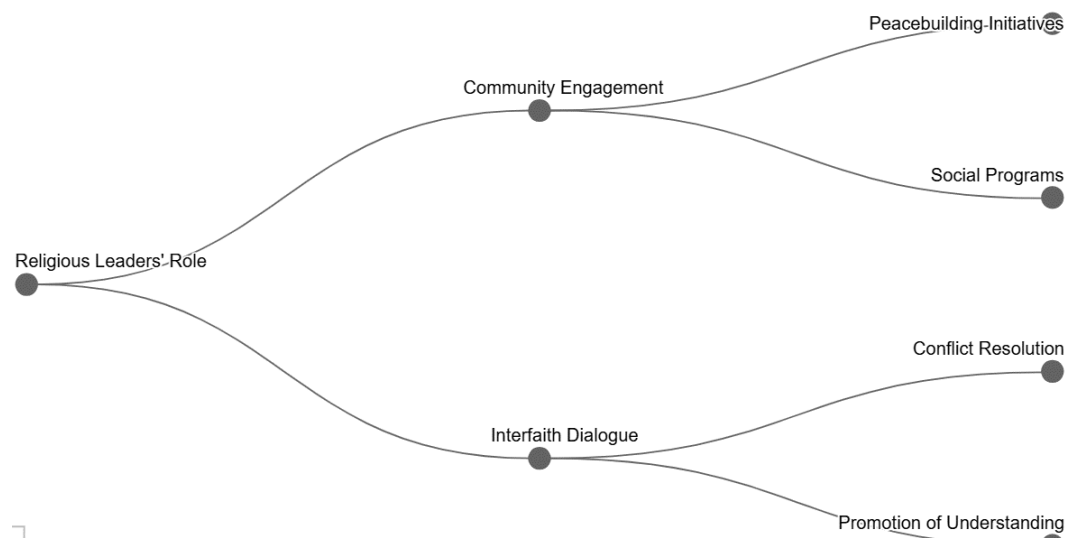
programmes in local schools also explain the importance of tolerance, with teachers teaching their students universal values such as mutual respect and cooperation. In addition, interfaith dialogue initiatives led by community leaders and religious leaders have successfully created spaces for open communication where sensitive issues can be discussed constructively. Despite past conflicts, reconciliation efforts involving various elements of society have yielded positive results, such as the establishment of peace forums and joint social activities. Awareness of the importance of peaceful coexistence is growing, fuelled by the understanding that shared prosperity can only be achieved through tolerance and cooperation. All these examples illustrate that interfaith tolerance in Poso continues to grow and provides a strong foundation for a harmonious future.²¹

Efforts to strengthen interfaith tolerance in Poso have shown significant progress. Through implementing multicultural religious education in schools, young people are taught to appreciate differences and uphold human values above religious differences. This inclusive curriculum involves collaboration between Muslim and Christian teachers and students, promoting cooperation and mutual understanding in the classroom and social activities. In addition, developing and evaluating a religious moderation curriculum, such as the one at the Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ponorogo, equips students with the knowledge and attitudes to promote tolerance, reject violence and accommodate cultural diversity. Legal and cultural frameworks also play an important role in facilitating tolerance. The establishment of regulations that clarify human rights and democracy, as well as the promotion of a legal culture that prioritises horizontal relations between religious communities, helps to resolve conflicts and prevent discrimination. The active participation of local and central governments, along with individual initiatives, strengthens harmony through support for forums such as the “Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama” (FKUB) - Religious Harmony Forum. These forums serve as platforms for dialogue and cooperation, empowering religious communities to contribute to maintaining tolerance. These strategies collectively strengthen interfaith tolerance in Poso, incorporating educational, legal and community-based approaches. Through the effective implementation of these initiatives, Poso can build a solid foundation for harmonious co-existence, prevent future conflict, and create an environment where religious differences are valued as cultural richness. It is therefore important that all parties continue to support and develop efforts that promote tolerance for the sake of shared prosperity and peace.²²

DAN UMROH DI ERA COVID 19 (STUDI PEMIKIRAN FAKHRUDDIN AL-RAZI DALAM TAFSIR MAFATIH AL-GHAIB),” *Konferensi Integrasi Interkoneksi Islam Dan Sains*, n.d., <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/saintek/kiiis/article/view/3152>.

²¹ C.-Y. Hoon, “Between Evangelism and Multiculturalism: The Dynamics of Protestant Christianity in Indonesia,” *Social Compass* 60, no. 4 (2013): 457–70, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0037768613502758>; T Setiawan et al., “Memory of Conflicts and Perceived Threat as Relevant Mediators of Interreligious Conflicts,” *Religions* 13, no. 3 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13030250>.

²² C Lowry and S Littlejohn, “Dialogue and the Discourse of Peacebuilding in Maluku, Indonesia,” *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2006): 409–26, <https://doi.org/10.1002/crq.147>; A S Harahap et al., “Dalihan Na Tolu as a Model for Resolving Religious Conflicts in North Sumatera: An Anthropological and Sociological Perspective,” *Samarah* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1943–70, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v7i3.13091>.



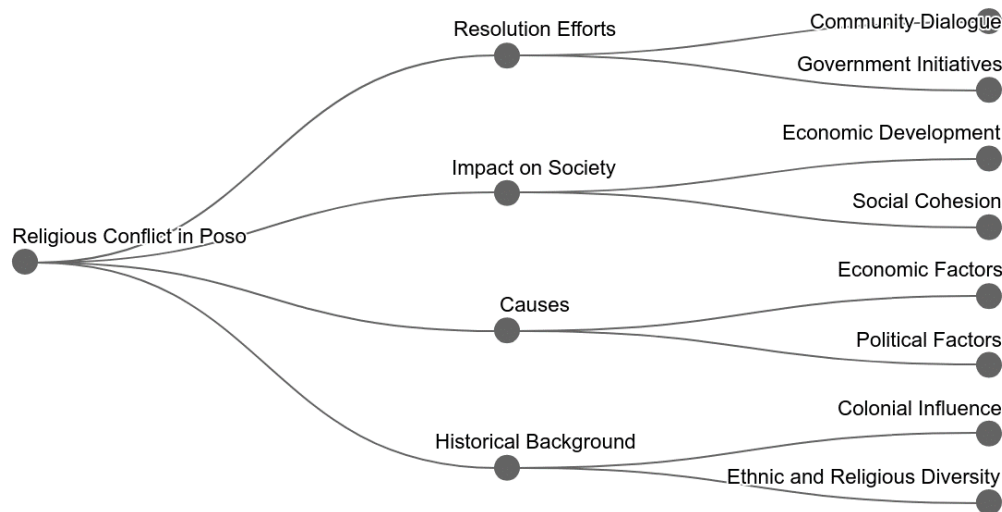
In Poso, initiatives have been taken to strengthen interfaith tolerance, particularly in the aftermath of the conflicts that have engulfed the region. Religious leaders acted as mediators in these conflicts, using customary approaches and local philosophies such as those applied in Mandailing communities with *Dalihan na Tolu*. This method successfully resolved disputes through negotiation and dialogue between villages. In addition, they encourage the development of intellectual humility and cognitive flexibility among their followers, which research suggests can enhance religious tolerance. Through collaboration with academics, religious leaders also engage in educational initiatives to spread a more comprehensive understanding of tolerance, help overcome misconceptions and promote interfaith dialogue. Their involvement in building inclusive civic identities helps prevent the domination of one group over another, promoting unity in ethnic and religious diversity. In addition, religious leaders strengthen interfaith relations in Poso by explaining values such as respect, forgiveness and doing good - as practised in Malaysia. Through these roles, conflict mediators, educators, and guardians of positive values-religious leaders play a key role in strengthening tolerance and harmony in Poso's diverse society.²³

The Dark History of Religious Conflict in Poso

The religious conflict in Poso, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, is one of the most important examples of sectarian violence in the post-Suharto era. The conflict primarily involved violent clashes between Muslim and Christian communities, which began in 1998 and continued sporadically until 2007. This conflict not only became part of a broader pattern of religious violence in Indonesia after the fall of President Suharto but was also influenced by the rise of Islam in Indonesia since the 1990s, which placed this conflict within a religious framework, although there were also ethnic elements involved. From 2000 to 2007, the Poso conflict entered a more organised jihad phase than the Ambon jihad. This jihad was led by mujahideen from Java and aimed to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. Organisations such as Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and Mujahidin KOMPAK played an important role in organising and strategically directing this jihad, learning from the mistakes made in the previous Ambon jihad. This conflict caused prolonged social friction and hindered the development of a cohesive community in Poso. Various efforts have been made to resolve this conflict, including by

²³ G Acciaioli, "Finding Tools to Limit Sectarian Violence in Indonesia: The Relevance of Restorative Justice," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 76, no. 5 (2017): 1219–55, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajes.12207>; A Rasyid et al., "Local Wisdom Recognition in Inter-Ethnic Religious Conflict Resolution in Indonesia from Islah Perspective," *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 22, no. 1 (2023): 13–26, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v22i1.8432>.

promoting multicultural religious education in schools to build sustainable harmony and peace between different religious communities.²⁴ Although this conflict ended in 2007, its impact is still felt in the social life of local communities. The Poso conflict illustrates how religious and ethnic tensions in post-Suharto Indonesia can affect each other and the great challenges in achieving lasting peace.



Religious conflict in Poso is Influenced by social and cultural factors and a comprehensive historical basis. Since the past, Poso's historical fragmentation, coupled with ruling policies that favoured certain religious groups, has exacerbated inter-religious tensions. Regional divisions and the manipulation of power by the authorities have further exacerbated social conditions, leading to religious conflicts that continue to this day. The impact of these conflicts is significant, not only disrupting social harmony but also affecting inter-community relations. Continued tensions worsen social cohesion and hinder the formation of harmonious communities. When religion is used as a unifying tool in group life, value differences become sharper, leading to discrimination and prejudice against individuals who hold different religious views. Various legal and policy measures have been implemented to defuse existing tensions in the face of these religious conflicts. A legal approach emphasising human rights and democracy is one of the solutions offered by explaining the horizontal relationship between religious groups. This step aims to create a conflict resolution system that is law-based and respects diversity in a cosmopolitan society. In addition, local religious institutions play an important role in defusing inter-group violence by strengthening horizontal and vertical networks within religious communities. From a psychological perspective, religious conflict increases intergroup tensions, creates a comprehensive need for order and compliance, and makes views of God more punitive.²⁵ The influence of religion in shaping inter-group behaviour is even more pronounced, where belief in a particular religion can influence how that group interacts with other groups. Thus, the religious conflict in Poso has a very complex social, legal and psychological impact.

²⁴ T Setiawan et al., "Memory of Conflicts and Perceived Threat as Relevant Mediators of Interreligious Conflicts," *Religions* 13, no. 3 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13030250>; A S Harahap et al., "Daliha Na Tolu as a Model for Resolving Religious Conflicts in North Sumatera: An Anthropological and Sociological Perspective," *Samarah* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1943–70, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjkh.v7i3.13091>.

²⁵ T Pangalila and C A Rumbay, "Multicultural Relation between Religious Communities in Indonesia," *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 80, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9645>; Y I Indainanto et al., "Islamic Communication in Voicing Religious Moderation as an Effort to Prevent Conflicts of Differences in Beliefs," *Pharos Journal of Theology* 104, no. 4 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.104.415>.

The religious conflict in Poso, Indonesia, has significantly impacted many aspects of local life. One of the impacts is the disruption of community access to basic services such as health and education, which have become increasingly difficult to reach due to the tensions. In addition, the social stability of the community has also been disrupted, leading to potential disruptions in daily life and decreased social cohesion. The conflict has also impacted regional political stability, with tensions fuelling challenges in governance and potentially fuelling social instability. Another impact is seen in inter-ethnic relations in Poso, which are likely to have been affected by the religious conflict. Tensions between ethnic groups can exacerbate social divisions, fuelling tensions and damaging previously harmonious relationships. Although not directly addressed in the available information, we can infer that the religious conflict may have hurt the local economy. Disruptions in daily life and damage to infrastructure may have reduced economic productivity in the area. The religious conflict in Poso had a wide-ranging impact, covering aspects such as social stability, inter-ethnic relations, access to basic services, and the local economy.²⁶ While existing data does not provide complete information on the economic impact, further research is needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of this aspect.

Peace efforts in Poso have had a major impact on the religious dynamics of the local community. One of the positive effects has been the implementation of multicultural religious education in schools after the conflict. This education allows students and teachers from different religious backgrounds to work together in class and social activities, transcending differences in faith and ethnicity. This process helps to create an atmosphere of harmony among groups previously involved in conflict so that interfaith tensions can be reduced. In addition, interfaith collaboration, especially between Muslim and Christian teachers and students, is important in strengthening relationships between different religious groups. This cooperation is not only limited to educational activities but also to various social activities, which help build better relationships and reduce prejudice between them. The socio-cultural approach to peacebuilding has also significantly impacted social cohesion at the local community level. Communities that participated in the peace process indicated that the main factor that drove them was not their social and demographic background but rather their attitude of tolerance towards ethnic and religious differences. In addition, religious leaders in Poso played a very important role in mobilising the peace movement. They often have strong social networks to support sustainable peace programmes, with little reliance on external funding. Peace efforts in Poso have created a more harmonious and tolerant environment, with multicultural education and interfaith collaboration as key elements in building sustainable peace.

Poso has experienced tensions fuelled by historical, social, cultural and political interventions. The migration of ethnic Muslims from different parts of Indonesia to Poso created political, racial, religious and economic divisions. The arrival of Muslim migrants, who are generally of Malay ethnicity and have higher levels of wealth, creates tensions with the indigenous Christian population, who are Melanesian and live in poverty. In addition, the rise of Islam in the 1990s in Indonesia reinforced the dominance of religious narratives in the conflict, shifting the basis of the problem from an ethnic to a more religious focus. Social and cultural dynamics also played a significant role in exacerbating tensions. The dominance of religious narratives due to the rise of Islam makes conflicts more complex. To address this, a legal culture that prioritises human rights is needed to resolve religious conflicts and prevent prolonged social friction. The adoption of cultural mechanisms that promote peace institutions is important, including incorporating local wisdom in school curricula to reach all ethnic and religious groups. Political interventions aimed at reconciling religious tensions in Poso involve the

²⁶ A Suryana, "Indonesian Presidents and Communal Violence against Non-Mainstream Faiths," *South East Asia Research* 26, no. 2 (2018): 147–60, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967828X18769393>; R Iwamony, "Coping with Religious-Based Segregation and Discrimination: Efforts in an Indonesian Context," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 76, no. 4 (2020): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i4.6071>.

active participation of various actors, such as religious leaders, government and civil society in collective peacebuilding efforts. This strategic approach sheds light on the importance of cross-sectoral cooperation to defuse religion-related hostilities. Although the economic implications of these tensions are not directly addressed, their social and political impact demonstrates how crucial a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to conflict is. By understanding the history of migration that fuels divisions, the socio-cultural dynamics that exacerbate the situation, and the political efforts made, we realise that effective solutions must be inclusive and collaborative.²⁷ Therefore, collective efforts involving all elements of society are essential to defuse tensions and build sustainable peace in Poso.

Transcriptions and Comments from Indonesians on the Interfaith Conflict in Poso, Indonesia

In the late 1990s, the Poso district in Central Sulawesi became the destination of a government transmigration programme that brought people from densely populated areas such as Muslim-majority Java and Lombok and Hindu-majority Bali. The arrival of these migrants created economic competition with Poso's native Christian and Muslim Bugis communities. The situation escalated when, on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1998, a young man from Lambogia, Roy Buntu Bisalemba, stabbed a Muslim named Ahmad Ridwan. Although religious leaders from both sides agreed that the basis of the riot was, which was later confiscated and destroyed by the police-tensions continued. A few days later, the discovery of a liquor store manned by Christian youths and Muslim youths triggered new clashes between the two groups.²⁸

Tensions escalated on 27 September 1998 when clashes broke out again, led by Herman Parimo, a Poso DPRD member, who mobilised a group of Christians in a truck. In April 2000, the trial of Regent Afgar Patanga was held, in which he was charged with misappropriating funds from the rural credit programme - with rumours that some of the funds were used to hire mobs to attack the courthouse and seize important documents. On 15 April, PPP provincial legislator Cailani Umar predicted more violence if the then-district head candidate, Damsik Ladjani, was not elected. The following day, a Muslim youth claimed to have been attacked by a group of Christian youths, which triggered retaliation and further clashes. This series of events illustrates the escalation of conflict that has become increasingly difficult to control.²⁹

The unrest reached its peak when the Poso Police Chief brought in Brimob from Palu to quell the situation, but in the process, the Brimob members accidentally opened fire on the crowd. This incident resulted in the deaths of two men, Muhammad Yusni and Yanto, and injured eight other Muslim youths. Three weeks after the incident, on 28 May, "Merah" groups from the Christian community carried out more extensive retaliatory attacks against Muslims. These attacks targeted not only adult men but also women and children, some of whom were sexually assaulted. As a result of this series of violence, 577 deaths and 384 injuries were recorded, with 7,932 houses destroyed and 510 public facilities burnt to the ground. The conflict finally ended on 20 December 2001 with the

²⁷ A Hamid, M U Shalih, and B Uyuni, "Christianization as a Challenge for Islamic Da'wah in Indonesia," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 22, no. 1 (2023): 19–60, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol22.iss1.art2>; J A Mercer, "We Teach Our Children to See a Human Being': Women Transforming Religious Conflict in Indonesia," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 20, no. 2 (2016): 261–81, <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijpt-2015-0003>.

²⁸ J Bertrand, "Legacies of the Authoritarian Past: Religious Violence in Indonesia's Moluccan Islands," *Pacific Affairs* 75, no. 1 (2002): 57–84, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4127241>; J Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia*, 2003, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511559341>.

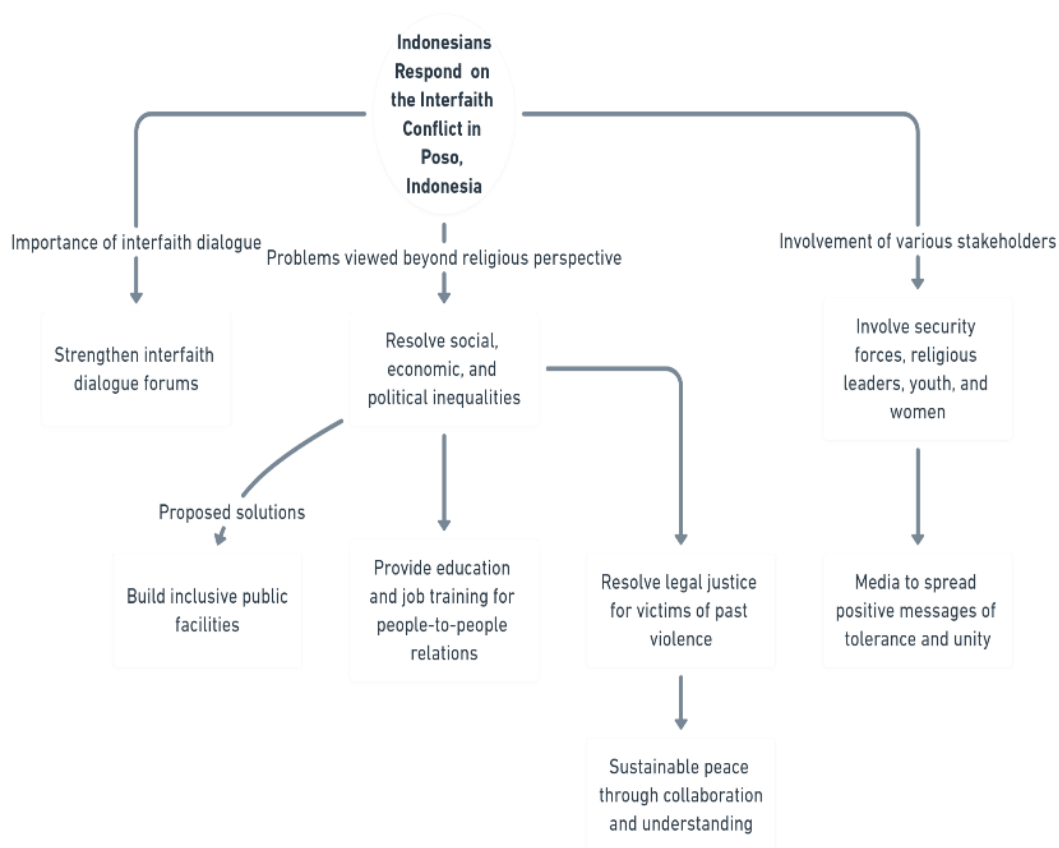
²⁹ G van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratization in Indonesia: Small Town Wars*, 2007, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203965115>; C Wilson, *Ethno-Religious Violence in Indonesia: From Soil to God*, *Ethno-Religious Violence in Indonesia: From Soil to God*, 2008, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203928981>; M van Bruinessen, "Genealogies of Islamic Radicalism in Post-Suharto Indonesia," *South East Asia Research* 10, no. 2 (2002): 117–54, <https://doi.org/10.5367/000000002101297035>.

signing of the Malino Declaration initiated by Jusuf Kalla, marking the end of the dark history of religious conflict in Poso .

Name	Time	Comment
Informant 1	1 year ago	Peace is beautiful, Muslims, Christians, Catholics, Hindus, and Buddhists; we are one Indonesia....let us unite to advance our beloved Indonesia...
Informant 2	1 year ago	Not only religious but also inter-ethnic conflicts. Until now, they have still been very easy to happen. In my college days, it was really like a nightmare where inter-ethnic wars occurred almost every week; I was used to seeing people cut down by sharp weapons. The intention of studying what happened instead was to witness the atmosphere of brawls. Each claiming to be the strongest, the most fearless, etc. Each of them shows off the greatness of their ancestors; it's really very stupid ... Hopefully, the next generation will erase all such understandings... Take a better path, Honour the name of the family & nation, and Make achievements so that other countries are glimpsed... One day, Indonesia will recover from the disease of racism, among others...
Informant 3	1 year ago	If Islam is the majority...the minority is safe, but if Islam is the minority...it is always hated...oppressed, and even killed....hopefully, this fact will make Muslims realise...maintain cohesiveness...tighten our unity among Muslims...
Informant 4	1 year ago	This is very good news to remind future generations to be more tolerant of each other.
Informant 5	1 year ago	I thought there was a political element behind this clash ... which ended up with victims on both sides becoming more horrified by carrying the name of religion until this riot became big.
Informant 6	1 year ago	I'm a Christian, and I eat in the midst of my Muslim brothers and sisters... Never mind, guys, let's sit down and have a coffee together.
Informant 7	1 year ago	HOPE WE CAN ALL TAKE LESSONS FROM THAT EVENT, AND LOOK FORWARD TO A MORE TOLERANT INDONESIA IN THE FRAME OF DIVERSITY...
Informant 8	1 year ago	Hopefully, the Indonesian people will not be easily divided again,
Informant 9	7 months ago	I am a True Catholic born from a Catholic family. from our ancestors have been CATHOLIC indeed. now I have a Muslim wife. I am CATHOLIC. My children are 6 people. Five joined the Muslim; one girl joined

		me to convert to CATHOLIC. and we live in harmony. My wife is from Madura Sampang Regency, and I am from the Catholic Majority Island TIMOR island Atambua. greetings BHINNEKA TUNGGAL IKA. God bless
Informant 10	1 year ago	Islam, Christianity learn from here, don't be stupid to kill each other because of politics, Indonesia is built on the foundation of 6 religions tribute, it's normal for us Indonesians to have different opinions, emotions must be held back, don't ask for independence, our country is big so to build it takes a very long time, hopefully, we always live in peace and tranquillity
Informant 11	7 months ago	Solutions to address the Christian-Muslim religious conflict in Poso could include several measures: 1. Interfaith dialogue: Encourage open and constructive dialogue between Christian and Muslim communities to understand differences, build trust and seek joint solutions. 2. Local mediation and peace: Engage religious figures, community leaders, and non-governmental organisations in mediation processes to reach sustainable local peace agreements. 3. Legal strengthening and law enforcement: Ensure fair and effective application of the law in conflict resolution, and protect human rights for all parties without religious discrimination. 4. Economic and social development: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in conflict areas to reduce inequality and social tensions. 5. Education and reconciliation: Strengthen religious education that respects diversity, teaches tolerance, and conduct reconciliation programmes to rebuild inter-community relations severed by conflict. 6. Early conflict monitoring and management: Establish effective and responsive conflict monitoring mechanisms and intervene early to prevent further escalation. Combining these measures could help improve interfaith relations in Poso and promote sustainable peace and reconciliation. Show less
Informant 12	1 year ago	Remember the punishment of God and the Lord Jesus, don't kill God's creation and don't precede him because the almighty God created humans. and now there are many natural disasters earthquakes Tsunamis, flash floods, landslides, tornadoes, levees collapsed

		mountains volcanoes erupt that is God's warning to humans to repent on the right path remember God hates people who pray if he is angry no one can stop him we live must be safe peaceful be a good example.religion is the key to faith to enter heaven not to enter hell religion does not need to be defended so as not to fall into sin remember hell is a place for sinners who have no faith and humanity
Informant 13	9 months ago	Racism and intolerance in all regions of RI must be eliminated and eroded. Let's improve our morals and ethics of decency. We uphold our sense of nationalism as brothers and sisters in the homeland of Indonesia and uphold our sense of tolerance together. Mutual respect and respect between all people. Remember that intolerance and riots and attacks will potentially endanger the unitary State of RI.



Various informant comments on interfaith peace and tolerance in Poso District, Central Sulawesi, highlighted the importance of interfaith dialogue and a community approach to resolving conflicts. Many netizens explained that the problems in Poso should not be seen solely from a religious perspective but rather as a result of the area's social, economic and political inequalities. local and national governments to be more proactive in pursuing a holistic approach involving not only security forces but also religious leaders, youth, and women. Proposed solutions include strengthening interfaith dialogue forums, constructing inclusive public facilities, and providing education and job

training to strengthen people-to-people relations. There were also calls for the media to play a greater role in spreading positive messages of tolerance and unity. Some netizens also pointed out the importance of resolving legal justice for victims of past violence as part of a comprehensive reconciliation effort. These comments generally reflect people's desire to maintain harmony and uphold sustainable peace in Poso through collaboration and a more thorough understanding between groups.

Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Verse Resolution in Resolving Interfaith Conflict in Poso

The resolution of the Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin verse in resolving religious conflicts in Poso can be understood through a comprehensive understanding of the interpretations of various scholars who affirm the universal meaning of this concept of mercy. According to Al-Thabari, Allah sent the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as a mercy for all nature, including both believers and disbelievers. This shows that the Prophet's mercy is not limited to one group,³⁰ but rather is inclusive, providing opportunities for all parties to receive guidance and salvation. Ibn Kathir asserts that whoever accepts this mercy will achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter, while those who reject it will suffer loss. Tafsir Al-Alusi expands this understanding by stating that Prophet Muhammad's mercy also includes angels, jinn, and humans, both believers and disbelievers, indicating that the Prophet's existence brings widespread benefits to all of creation.



³⁰ A J M bin Jarir, "Al-Thabari," *Tārīkh Al-Thabari: Tārīkh al-Rusul Wa al-Muluk*, 1992.

In the context of religious conflict in Poso, the application of the Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin principle can be a strategic foundation for building peace and harmony. The conflict in Poso, fuelled by factors such as transmigration, economic competition and the dominance of religious narratives, reflects the need for a universal and inclusive approach to conflict resolution. By adopting the values of rahmah described by the ulama, Poso society can be directed to prioritise social justice, economic equality, tolerance and balance between religious groups. Strategies such as multicultural religious education, strengthening legal frameworks that clarify human rights, as well as constructive interfaith dialogue in accordance with the principles of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin could help ease tensions and prevent further escalation of the conflict.

The implementation of Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin in Poso also includes efforts to tackle radical ideologies through organisations such as Nahdlatul Ulama, which explain the importance of tolerance and peace. In addition, the development of environmental awareness and educational initiatives such as virtual pesantren can strengthen a culture of responsibility and empathy, which are essential in building a harmonious and sustainable society.³¹ The use of traditional mechanisms such as Dalihan na Tolu in conflict mediation shows how local wisdom can be integrated with the principle of mercy to achieve effective resolution. Public comments on YouTube about the Poso conflict also confirm the importance of dialogue, legal justice, and a holistic approach involving various elements of society to maintain harmony and prevent future conflicts.

By understanding and applying Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, Poso society can build a strong foundation for peaceful and harmonious coexistence. This concept not only provides a moral and spiritual framework but also offers practical strategies to address the underlying causes of religious conflict. Through collaboration between the government, religious leaders and civil society, and by prioritising the values of justice, tolerance and compassion, Poso can be a successful example of applying the principle of rahmah to resolve religious conflicts.³² This approach is not only relevant for Poso but can also be adapted by other communities facing similar challenges, demonstrating that Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin is the key to creating peace and harmony in a diverse society.

The verse Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin in the Qur'an provides comprehensive guidance for resolving religious conflicts through universal principles that include compassion, justice and tolerance. Scholarly interpretations emphasise that this mercy should be applied inclusively, encompassing all levels of society regardless of religious or ethnic background. The application of this concept in Poso, through a holistic and collaborative strategy, demonstrates how Islamic teachings can be an effective tool in defusing conflict and building a more peaceful and harmonious society. Awareness of the importance of rahmah and its application in daily life is a crucial first step in creating sustainable peace, not only in Poso but also around the world.³³

The Poso conflict demonstrates how social, economic and political frictions can erupt in violence between different religious or ethnic groups. At its core, the unrest was primarily fueled by

³¹ M bin Jarir al-Thabari, "Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil al-Qur'an/Tafsir al-Thabari," *Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, t. Th*, n.d.

³² K Masuda and M H Yudhistira, "Does Education Secularize the Islamic Population? The Effect of Years of Schooling on Religiosity, Voting, and Pluralism in Indonesia," *World Development* 130 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.104915>; N Sofyan et al., "Language and Power: How Democracy and Pluralism Shape Patterns of Minority Political Representation in Bali, Indonesia," *Social Sciences* 12, no. 12 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci12120657>; R Rudy et al., "Forest Cover Change and Legal Pluralism in Forest Management: A Review and Evidence from West Sumatra, Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Science and Technology* 6, no. 2 (2021): 299–314, <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijost.v6i2.34190>.

³³ B S Ma'arif et al., "Educational Communication Based on Qur'anic Religious Pluralism in Increasing Religious Moderation of Muslim Students in Indonesia," *International Journal of Religion* 5, no. 8 (2024): 557–69, <https://doi.org/10.61707/8j1fed40>; G P Putra, S Irianto, and E M F Manullang, "LEGAL PLURALISM IN THE SPECIAL DISTRICT PROVINCE OF YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA," *International Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies* 19, no. 1 (2023): 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.21315/ijaps2023.19.1.1>.

economic disparities between Poso's indigenous residents and settlers who participated in the government's transmigration program. When violent outbreaks, including the stabbings of 1998 took place, it was clear that these tensions were generating a growing polarisation between the Christian and Muslim communities in the region. Efforts were made by the authorities and religious leaders to reduce tensions, but local politics – over misuse of funds by local officials, violent actions by some or all involved groups – kept them high. See, based on the concept of rahmatan lil alamin wouldnt this conflict can be seen as failed application of the principle of mercy since it supposed could bring the goodness for all humanity within and around them? The Mufasssir encourage their disciples to spread love, respect plurality and live together despite differences. When the people in Poso were locked into religious enmity, they did not understand anymore rahmatan lil alamin which should have been the way to peace. Thus, it is worthwhile to further explore the value of tolerance and solidarity as a starting point to avoid conflict that allows space for dialogue among other faiths that can be filled by all elements in establishing peace in Poso in the future.³⁴

Conclusion

This research examines the application of the verse Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin as a post-conflict resolution strategy between Muslims and Christians in Poso, Indonesia, between 1998 - 2001. The conflict revealed tensions between religious groups that were exacerbated by socio-economic and political factors, requiring a holistic and inclusive approach to conflict resolution. An important finding of this research is that the response of Indonesian society to the conflict in Poso reflects the need for a strategy that brings together religious, social and cultural values. The verse Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin, which teaches compassion, justice and tolerance, became the foundation for the implementation of a peace strategy involving interfaith dialogue, legal strengthening and multicultural education to ease tensions and prevent conflict escalation. The contribution of this research lies in filling the knowledge gap related to the application of Islamic theological concepts in conflict resolution. Previously, research has mostly highlighted socio-political factors and less examined their application in resolving religious-based conflicts. This research directly examines how interpretations of the Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin concept from various scholars can be applied in the context of Poso, leading to interfaith peace and harmony. Through this theological approach, the research provides insights into how universal Islamic values, including tolerance and social justice, can be translated into effective practices in easing interfaith tensions. The conclusions of this research underscore the importance of integrating Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin values in various social, political and cultural strategies to create sustainable peace. By digging deeper into these values, the people of Poso, as well as other communities facing similar challenges, can build a foundation for coexistence in peace and harmony.

Disclosure statement

The author reported no potential conflict of interest

³⁴ Mālik Ibn Anas, *Al-Muwatta'*, vols. 1–8, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A'ẓamī (Mu'assasah Zaid ibn Sulṭān ālu Nahyān li al-A'māl al-Khairiyyah wa al-Insāniyyah PP - Abu Dhabi, 2004), <https://shamela.ws/book/28107>; Abū 'Īsā Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā ibn Saurah ibn Mūsā al-Ḍaḥḥak al-Tirmizī, *Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr Waḥuwa Sunan al-Tirmizī*, vols. 1–5, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Syākir et al. (Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī PP - Mesir, 1975), <https://shamela.ws/book/1435>; M I A Al-Syaukani, "Nail Al-Authar, Syarkh Muntaqha'al-Akhbar Min Ahadis Sayyid al-Akhyar," in *Beirut: Dar al-Fikr*, preprint, 1983; A M Al-Baghawī, "Tafsīr Al-Baghawī," in *Tahqīq: 'Abd al-Raḥḥāq al-Mahdī, Beirut: Dār 'Iḥyā' al ...*, preprint, 2002.

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