

# Implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) Program in Improving Social Empowerment in Karangsari Village, Bantur District, Malang Regency

Ina Urifah<sup>1</sup>, Renny Oktafia<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Development Economics, Faculty of Economics and Business, UPN  
"Veteran" Jawa Timur, Indonesia

Correspondence author: [renny.oktafia.es@upnjatim.ac.id](mailto:renny.oktafia.es@upnjatim.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

Karangsari Village is one of the villages in Bantur District, Malang Regency. There is a lot of potential including natural resources and human resources that can be developed. However, the level of education and economy of the people in Karangsari Village is still relatively low. On the other hand, students' enthusiasm for learning is very high, but the lack of support and limited facilities make it difficult for students to develop. Lack of understanding and knowledge makes it difficult for people to create business opportunities. This shows that social empowerment in Karangsari Village has not been achieved. Therefore, to assist in overcoming this, it is necessary to implement social empowerment programs, one of which is Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program. The method used in this service is ABDC (Asset Based Community Development). Data were collected through direct observation and documentation. The results obtained show that the implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program provides positive changes in increasing social empowerment, especially in increasing the knowledge and creativity of the community in Karangsari Village.

**Keywords:** Program Implementation, Social Empowerment, Ruang Belajar Aqil Program

Received:	Revised:	Accepted:	Available online:
14.12.2023	17.12.2023	19.12.2023	20.12.2023

## Suggested citations:

Urifah, I., et al (2023). Implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) Program in Improving Social Empowerment in Karangsari Village, Bantur District, Malang Regency. *International Journal of Community Service*, 02 (02), 242-255. DOI: 10.55299/ijcs.v2i2.710

Open Access | URLs:

<https://ejournal.ipinternasional.com/index.php/ijcs/OpenAccessPolicy>

## INTRODUCTION

The development of the times in the current era of globalization has a considerable impact on all aspects and order of society in Indonesia. People are required to master science and technology as well as skills in order to develop and not be left behind by the times, including in the aspects of education, socioeconomics and health. This is often a problem in rural communities, including the community in Karangsari Village. Karangsari Village is one of the villages in Bantur District, Malang Regency. The majority of people in Karangsari Village are religious people who focus on religious matters, so in terms of knowledge and education they are still minimal. In line with the times, both in the fields of knowledge, technology and skills, people in Karangsari

Village often face challenges in terms of access to education, training and resources that support the development of their potential, so that this becomes an obstacle in social empowerment in Karang Sari Village.

The economy of the people in Karang Sari Village is still relatively low. Lack of understanding and knowledge makes it difficult for the community to create business opportunities. This is evidenced by the majority of the female community in Karang Sari Village as housewives. This condition causes empowerment in the community to not be achieved. In addition, the education level of the community in Karang Sari Village is considered lower when compared to other villages in Bantul District. This is influenced by several factors including economic disparity, lack of support from parents, lack of educators, limited facilities and lack of digital knowledge.

**Table 1.** Data on primary schools in Bantul District

No	School Name	Status	Students	Teachers	Classrooms	Library
1	SD Negeri 1 Bandungrejo	Negeri	223	9	7	0
2	SD Negeri 1 Bantul	Negeri	332	13	12	1
3	SD Negeri 1 Karang Sari	Negeri	103	4	6	0
4	SD Negeri 1 Pringgodani	Negeri	140	8	6	1
5	SD Negeri 1 Rejosari	Negeri	188	11	11	1
6	SD Negeri 1 Rejoyoso	Negeri	49	7	6	1
7	SD Negeri 1 Srigonco	Negeri	153	10	6	1
8	SD Negeri 1 Sumberbening	Negeri	145	8	6	1
9	SD Negeri 1 Wonokerto	Negeri	437	25	18	1
10	SD Negeri 2 Bandungrejo	Negeri	124	4	5	0
11	SD Negeri 2 Bantul	Negeri	153	6	6	0
12	SD Negeri 2 Karang Sari	Negeri	59	10	6	0
13	SD Negeri 2 Pringgodani	Negeri	96	7	6	0
14	SD Negeri 2 Rejoyoso	Negeri	107	9	6	1
15	SD Negeri 2 Srigonco	Negeri	157	8	6	0
16	SD Negeri 2 Sumberbening	Negeri	116	9	6	1
17	SD Negeri 3 Bandungrejo	Negeri	86	7	6	0
18	SD Negeri 3 Bantul	Negeri	142	8	10	0
19	SD Negeri 3 Karang Sari	Negeri	54	4	6	0
20	SD Negeri 3 Pringgodani	Negeri	122	8	6	1
21	SD Negeri 3 Rejosari	Negeri	154	7	6	1

22	SD	Negeri	3	Negeri	75	8	6	0
	Rejoyoso							
23	SD Negeri 3 Srigonco			Negeri	190	8	7	1
24	SD	Negeri	3	Negeri	120	7	6	0
	Sumberbening							
25	SD	Negeri	3	Negeri	120	9	6	1
	Wonokerto							
26	SD	Negeri	4	Negeri	104	7	6	0
	Bandungrejo							
27	SD	Negeri	4	Negeri	205	9	8	0
	Rejoyoso							
28	SD	Negeri	4	Negeri	148	8	6	1
	Wonokerto							
29	SD	Negeri	5	Negeri	79	8	5	0
	Pringgodani							
30	SD	Negeri	5	Negeri	34	8	5	0
	Sumberbening							
31	SD	Negeri	5	Negeri	0	0	3	0
	Wonokerto							
32	SD	Negeri	6	Negeri	143	7	6	1
	Bandungrejo							
33	SD Negeri 6 Bantur			Negeri	181	7	6	0
34	SD Negeri 7 Bantur			Negeri	96	7	6	0
35	SD	Islam	Darul	Swasta	78	6	5	0
	Hikmah							
36	SD YBPK Wonorejo			Swasta	63	6	6	1
37	SDI	Pesantren		Swasta	48	10	6	1
	Assalam Rejoyoso Bantur							
<b>Total</b>					<b>4.824</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>17</b>

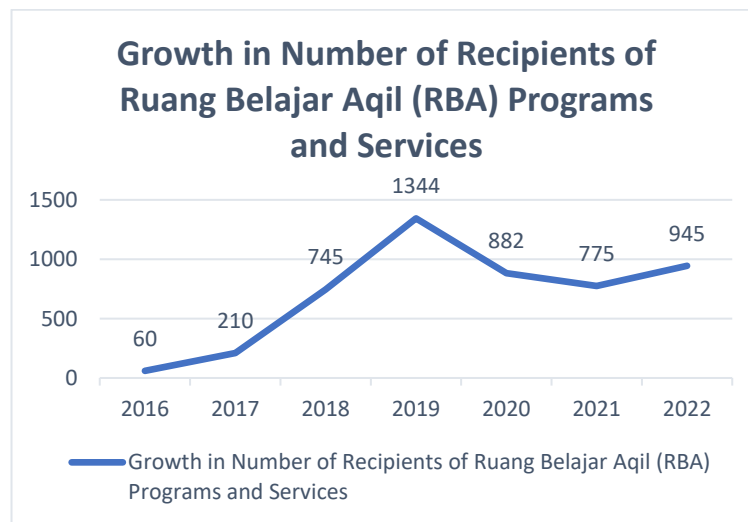
**Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology**

Based on the table above, it is known that there are three schools with "Negeri" status in Karang Sari Village that have inadequate facilities. From the data above, it is mentioned that there are no facilities such as libraries for these three schools. In addition, it can be seen from the table of student numbers that there are schools from Karang Sari Village that are in 5th and 6th place with 54 and 59 fewer students than other schools. The lack of teaching staff also proves that the number of teachers and students in schools is not balanced. The low number of students at SDN Karang Sari is also due to the interest of the community, the majority of whom prefer Islamic schools, so they prefer to attend madrasah rather than public schools.

The low level of education and the lack of public awareness of the importance of education cause people in Karang Sari Village to experience difficulties in finding work. From various aspects including economic, educational, social and cultural, it shows that the community in Karang Sari Village needs programs to encourage, motivate and explore their potential so that conditions will change from being powerless to empowered.

Social Empowerment is a process of building autonomy, power and confidence to make changes for the better. Empowerment plays an important role in village development, one of which is through the implementation of programs that involve village communities. The purpose of implementing the program is to empower the community so that they are more independent and able to overcome local problems and can contribute to the village development process. One of the institutions that drive empowerment programs is Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), including one of them is Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA).

Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) is a forum for the community, especially youth in improving self-capacity and constructive learning. The purpose of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) is to create a better future for the community by caring and applying the value of learning through empowering Indonesian youth in carrying out development programs in a participatory manner. Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) is a not for profit (NFP) association (SK Kemenkumham Number AHU-0005334.AH.01.07 TAHUN 2020) and operates as part of the third sector. In running its program, Ruang Belajar Aqil has 4 focuses, namely Improving the Quality of Education (EDU), Economic Empowerment (ECO), Improving Health and Quality of Life (HQL) and Institutional Strengthening (IE) in the community. In running its program, Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) has received a lot of support from various parties including Community Reading Gardens, Schools, Interest Studio, Companies, MSMEs and Individual literacy activists and students.



**Figure 1: Data on Recipients of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) Programs and Services**

**Source: Ruang Belajar Aqil**

From 2016-2019, Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) has successfully delivered 4,881 programs and services. The number of recipients Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) programs and services continues to increase every year. The highest peak of recipients of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) programs and services was in 2019 with a total of 1,344 recipients. However, in 2020, the number of program and service recipients decreased drastically. This is due to the Covid-19 pandemic which continues to increase, causing the

implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) programs and services to not run optimally. In 2022, the RBA program increased again and began to implement offline programs. Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program continues to be implemented to create an empowered society through youth. The implementation of the RBA activity program refers to a governance framework such as CoPE (Collaborative, Participative & Empowerment). Collaborative means that in implementing the program, Ruang Belajar Aqil works together with other institutions or entities. Participative is the joint program implementation between Ruang Belajar Aqil and collaborating entities. Empowerment is the implementation of programs with the aim of community empowerment.

In running the empowerment program, Ruang Belajar Aqil provides programs according to the needs of the community. In addition, the problems that occur in the community in Karangasari Village will also be considered in the focus of the program to be implemented. Some of the problems that often occur in the community in Karangasari Village are low education levels, many teenagers who drop out of school and do not work, low productivity, lack of digital knowledge, and low levels of literacy and skills.

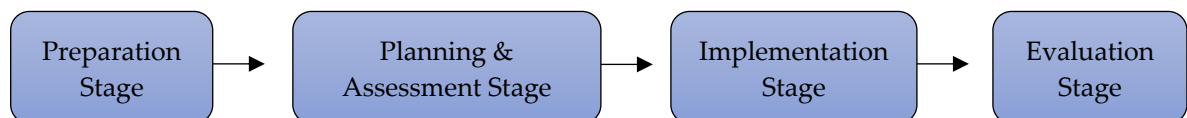
Therefore, Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program will increase social empowerment in Karangasari Village. Through quality programs such as literacy programs, namely reading degree, digital literacy, financial literacy, numeracy literacy. This activity can help to improve community education in Karangasari Village. In addition, the extension program will help increase public awareness of the importance of health. Then, the implementation of lokakarya and garage sale activities will also help in encouraging the creativity and entrepreneurship of the village community, such as designing small businesses and inviting people to engage in local economic activities.

## METHODS

The method used in carrying out this service program is the ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) method, which is an approach model that emphasizes the inventory of assets that support community empowerment activities. Asset here is defined as the potential owned by the community, which can be in the form of wealth that has been owned to encourage empowerment activities. In this approach, the facilitator will identify the assets and potential that exist in the community to be used as material in implementing social empowerment programs or activities in the community.

Data collection techniques in this service use direct observation of the community in Karangasari Village, approaches with community agencies or institutions through direct discussions about the problems faced by the community and Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens and documentation.

The location that the author took to conduct a community service program was Karangasari Village, which is a village located in the Bantur District, Malang Regency. In carrying out this community service program, there is a flow of activities as follows:



**Figure 2. Flow of Community Service Program Activities**

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program is divided into 4 focuses, namely Improving the Quality of Education (EDU), Economic Empowerment (ECO), Improving Health and Quality of Life (HQL), and Institutional Strengthening (IE). In this case, the main target in the implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program is the community in Karangasari Village, Bantur District, Malang. By looking at the potential that exists in the community, the program is implemented to improve and develop empowerment according to the focus of RBA program. Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program is implemented by working with third parties/sectors. In this case, Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens collaborates with Ruang Belajar Aqil to improve the knowledge and creativity of the community, especially children in Karangasari Village through quality programs from Ruang Belajar Aqil.

The following table is attached to Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program implemented in Karangasari Village:

**Table 2.** Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) Program in Karangasari Village

No	Activity	Number of Activities	Targets
1	Reading Degree	29	School
2	Language and Skills Open Class	13	School
3	Financial Literacy	3	School
4	Numeracy Literacy	9	School
5	Digital Literacy	8	School
6	Study Mentoring	45	Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens
7	Lokakarya and Extension	3	School
8	P3BB	3	School
9	Family Health Counseling & Assistance	3	Karangasari Village Community
10	Garage Sale	1	Karangasari Village Community
11	Procurement of 150 Children's Books	1	Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens

Source: Data Processed, 2023

In the process of implementing Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program in increasing social empowerment in the community in Karangasari Village, there are stages that must be carried out, including:

### Preparation Stage

At this stage, the author collects data and information needed for program implementation in Karangasari Village. In addition, the author maps the area, the number of hamlets, the number of schools, the number of institutions or other agencies, the number of health posts and health centers, the number of organizations, information related to the potential and needs of the Karangasari Village community, and other data

containing information about Karangasari Village. The data obtained will later be made as a Location Mapping Document for the Karangasari Village area which can be used by facilitators as an illustration in implementing the program.

### **Planning and Assessment Stage**

At this stage, the author as a facilitator conducts planning related to what programs are in accordance with the needs of the community in Karangasari Village. In this case, the facilitator is placed at Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens in collaboration with Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) to improve community empowerment and children's education in Karangasari Village. The preparation is to determine the target of the program or activity. After that, determining the place or location that will be used as a place to implement the program. In addition, facilitators establish relationships with the village government and mingle with the community in Karangasari Village. Meanwhile, in the assessment stage, which is to further examine the needs and potential of the village community, by identifying the problems of community needs and resources owned. With identification, it will be easier to implement the program.

### **Implementation Stage**

At this stage, facilitators implement empowerment programs to the community in Karangasari Village. The method at this implementation stage, as has been done in community service regarding the implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program. Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program is implemented based on 4 focuses, namely:

1. Education Quality Improvement

Children's education in Karangasari Village is still relatively low, and the lack of facilities also affects children's learning at school. When viewed from the learning process at school, children have potential. This can be seen from their high learning spirit. However, due to the lack of support both in terms of facilities and economy as well as the lack of support from parents, children cannot develop. Therefore, Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program in the form of improving student literacy and numeracy is carried out in various schools in Karangasari Village to help develop students' knowledge and skills through fun learning. Activities carried out include: Reading Degree, Numeracy Literacy, Financial Literacy, and Digital Literacy as well as Language and Skills Open Classes.



**Figure 3. Reading Degree Activity at MI Makarimal Akhlaq**



**Figure 4. Numeracy Literacy Activity at SDN 02 Karang Sari**

In these activities, children are very enthusiastic in participating in classroom activities. In addition, children who understand English in class but have not been able to pronounce words correctly using English, so the implementation of the Language and Skills Open Class to hone and improve children's ability to pronounce English vocabulary in everyday life. Skills in children can also be improved through the Lokakarya program, which is a utilization program for used goods that can produce a product that can be used.

Then making P3BB together with teachers at school to create a big book containing serialized stories that can be used as an interesting learning media for children. In addition to schools, improving the quality of children's education can also be done at the Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens. Warung Ilmu Community Reading Garden is a Community Reading Garden in Karang Sari Village that was built with the aim of providing facilities in the form of a comfortable reading room for children in order to increase children's knowledge and skills in reading and understanding reading books. To help develop the Community Reading Gardens, one of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) programs was carried out, namely the Procurement of 150 Children's Books which will help increase the number of books at the Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens. In addition to procuring children's books, Study Mentoring is also carried out to help develop children's understanding of the material provided by teachers at school.





**Figure 5. P3BB Activity with Nurul Ulum Kindergarten Teachers**



**Figure 6. Study Mentoring at Community Reading Garden Warung Ilmu**

## 2. Economic Empowerment

The economic condition of the Karangasari Village community is still relatively low. The majority of people here work as farmers, while the average woman becomes a housewife. In this case, the author found natural resources that can be utilized into a product that can be a source of income. However, the lack of community interest in starting a business is one of the major challenges in realizing economic empowerment in Karangasari Village. Therefore, the implementation of Garage Sale activities will help provide direct knowledge to the community about how to see business opportunities around them. Garage Sale is an activity of selling items that are no longer needed to create business opportunities and additional income.



**Figure 7. Garage Sale Activity in Karangasari Village**

Through this activity, the community can learn to utilize something that can become a business opportunity and generate additional income that can be used for daily needs. In addition, Garage Sale can also provide opportunities for buyers to obtain goods at more affordable prices, creating a mutually beneficial local economic circle. Thus, Garage Sale not only creates economic

opportunities, but also has a positive impact on the social and economic environment of the community as a whole.

### 3. Improved Health and Quality of Life

The level of health and quality of life is still the focus of the Karangasari Village Government. This is due to the lack of public knowledge about health and the dangers of diseases that can cause death. After further observation, it turns out that there is an implementation of posyandu every 1 month. However, the lack of participation from the community causes the implementation of posyandu to be uneven. Therefore, the implementation of the mentoring and health counseling program is an alternative to providing health services such as checking blood pressure and counseling on conditions in the family environment. Activities are carried out by visiting each resident's house to conduct counseling starting from data collection related to cleanliness in the home environment and health services in the form of checking blood pressure to determine the health condition of the family.



**Figure 8. Family Health Counseling and Assistance Activities**

### 4. Institutional Strengthening

Institutional Strengthening is usually done through collaborators or the third sector of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA), namely Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens through literacy gathering activities to establish cooperation between Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens and several schools, agencies or other institutions as well as between other Community Reading Gardens.



**Figure 9. Literacy Meetings in Some Schools**

Through this activity, Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens can establish sustainable cooperation with schools or other agencies to assist the implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program in increasing community empowerment in Karangasari Village. The cooperation between Community Reading Gardens and several agencies in Karangasari Village can also develop and improve the relationship between Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens.

### **Evaluation Stage**

The final stage in the implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program is the evaluation stage. Evaluation is carried out to measure the extent to which the program is successfully organized. Evaluation in social empowerment in the community in Karangasari Village only involves program implementers, namely Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) interns and Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens collaborators as community leaders in Karangasari Village. The results of the evaluation showed that in the implementation of activities, participants were very enthusiastic but difficult to condition, limited facilities also made facilitators must always be prepared with existing conditions. The response of children and the community was very positive and helped by Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program, but on the other hand the level of community participation in the implementation was still low. Therefore, the implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program is made on a scheduled basis with the person in charge of the activities that have been determined before the implementation of the program.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Aqil Learning Space program is growing and increasing every year. This time Karangasari Village became one of the villages that became the focus or target in the implementation of the Aqil Learning Space program. The empowerment process is divided into 4 focuses, namely Improving the Quality of Education (EDU), Economic Empowerment (ECO), Improving Health and Quality of Life (HQL), and Institutional Strengthening (IE). The implementation of activities is carried out through 4 stages, namely: Preparation Stage, Planning and Assessment Stage, Implementation Stage and Evaluation Stage. The implementation of activities adapts to the needs of the community. This is also seen from the problems faced by the community and the potential that can be developed in Karangasari Village. Problems faced by the community in Karangasari Village such as low levels of education, lack of public awareness of the importance of health, lack of technological knowledge, lack of creativity and skills and other problems are taken into consideration in the process of implementing the Aqil Learning Space program. In addition, community participation is important in the successful implementation of the program

From the discussion, it can be concluded that the Karangasari Village community has a lot of potential that can be developed, but due to a lack of knowledge, support and also limited facilities, the quality of human resources is low. The implementation of Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program brought positive changes to the community in Karangasari Village. This can be seen from the very good response from the community, the enthusiasm of the participants who increased every time they participated in activities and the enthusiastic community in participating in several activities. However, this will not last for a long time, so it requires support from the village government, collaborators of Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens and participation from the community to provide continuous encouragement regarding the implementation of these empowerment programs. In addition, the collaborative relationship between Warung Ilmu Community Reading Gardens and Ruang Belajar Aqil is expected to continue from year to year so that the Ruang Belajar Aqil (RBA) program can continue to run every year and can have an impact and bring changes for the better towards social empowerment of the community in Karangasari Village.

### Thank-you note

The author would like to thank all parties who have supported and helped so that the implementation of mentoring activities can be carried out well.

### REFERENCES

- Ahmad, A., Mahsyar, A., & Parawangi, A. (2021). Implementasi Program Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Desa (P2md) Di Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Desa Kabupaten Kepulauan Selayar. *Kolaborasi: Jurnal Administrasi Publik*, 7(1), 114-124.
- Wahyu, N., Rosyida, A. A., & Bahar, N. Z. (2020). INOVASI KEGIATAN RUANG BELAJAR AQIL DALAM UPAYA MEWUJUDKAN INDONESIA EMAS 2045. *BIBLIOTIKA: Jurnal Kajian Perpustakaan dan Informasi*, 4(1), 114-120.
- Suwito, R., & Yusuf, A. (2020). Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Masyarakat Melalui Badan Usaha Milik Desa di Desa Wisata Lerep. *Journal of Nonformal Education and Community Empowerment*, 88-101.

- Padabain, F. A., & Nugroho, S. (2018). Implementasi Program Desa Wisata Dalam Rangka Pemberdayaan Masyarakat di Desa Mas, Kecamatan Ubud Kabupaten Gianyar, Provinsi Bali. *Jurnal Destinasi Pariwisata*, 5(2), 327.
- Fitria, M. R., & Prabowo, B. (2023). Penyelenggaraan Program Taman Bacaan Masyarakat Berbasis Kualitas Hidup Sebagai Relawan Magang Ruang Belajar Aqil (Studi Deskriptif Di Taman Bacaan Masyarakat Pondok BK Pakis Malang). *Cakrawala: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Global*, 2(3), 23-33.
- Batik, K., & Suman, A. (2013). Implementasi Program Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Rakyat melalui Program Mamangun Tuntang Mahaga Lewu (PM2L) (Studi Kasus di Dua Desa Tertinggal di Kalimantan Tengah). *Jurnal Ekonomi Pembangunan*, 11(1), 102-124.
- Oktafia, R., & Dewanti, M. C. (2023). PELATIHAN SERVICE EXCELLENT PADA KSP "AR ROHMAH" JAWA TIMUR MENUJU KONVERSI SYARIAH. *PRAWARA Jurnal ABDIMAS*, 2(2 APRIL), 42-46.
- Yuwana, S. I. P. (2022). Pemberdayaan dan Peningkatan Kualitas SDM Masyarakat dengan Menggunakan Metode Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) di Desa Pecalongan Kec. Sukosari Bondowoso. *Sasambo: Jurnal Abdimas (Journal of Community Service)*, 4(3), 330-338.

#### Copyright and License



This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2023 Ina Urifah<sup>1</sup>, Renny Oktafia<sup>1</sup>

Published by IPI Global Press in collaboration with the Inovasi Pratama Internasional Ltd