

## THE ROLE OF AHAD SHOLIH ACTIVITIES IN DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S NOBLE CHARACTER

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji peran program Ahad Sholih di Masjid Istiqamah, Candirejo, sebagai inisiatif pendidikan Islam nonformal yang bertujuan untuk menanamkan Akhlakul Karimah pada anak-anak. Dilaksanakan secara rutin setiap hari Minggu sejak tahun 2020, program ini melibatkan anak-anak berusia 4–12 tahun dalam kegiatan terstruktur yang meliputi salat, pembacaan Asmaul Husna, menghafal doa-doa sehari-hari, hadits-hadits pendek, serta pelajaran tentang adab. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa program ini berkontribusi signifikan terhadap perkembangan moral dalam tiga dimensi: menumbuhkan ketaatan kepada Allah melalui praktik ibadah yang konsisten, menanamkan disiplin diri, kejujuran, dan kepercayaan diri, serta menumbuhkan rasa hormat dan tanggung jawab terhadap orang lain melalui interaksi sosial dan keterlibatan keluarga. Lingkungan masjid menyediakan atmosfer keagamaan yang mendukung, sementara metode pembiasaan dan teladan yang diberikan oleh instruktur memperkuat internalisasi nilai-nilai. Faktor pendukung meliputi partisipasi yang antusias, strategi pengajaran yang efektif, dukungan kuat dari pengelola masjid, dan keterlibatan orang tua. Namun, tantangan seperti keterlibatan orang tua yang terbatas, rentang perhatian anak-anak yang pendek, keterbatasan sumber daya di kalangan staf masjid, serta faktor eksternal seperti kondisi cuaca juga teridentifikasi. Secara keseluruhan, Ahad Sholih menunjukkan keefektifan pendidikan nonformal berbasis masjid dalam menanamkan nilai-nilai Islam dan menawarkan model yang dapat direplikasi oleh komunitas lain. Memperkuat kolaborasi antara keluarga, pemimpin masjid, dan pendidik sangat penting untuk memaksimalkan dampaknya terhadap pertumbuhan moral dan spiritual anak-anak.

**Kata Kunci:** Ahad Sholih, Akhlakul Karimah, Pendidikan Islam Nonformal

### Abstract

This study explores the role of the Ahad Sholih program at Masjid Istiqamah in Candirejo as a nonformal Islamic education initiative aimed at shaping children's *Noble Character*. Conducted routinely every Sunday since 2020, the program engages children aged 4–12 years in structured activities including prayer, recitation of Asmaul Husna, memorization of daily supplications, short hadiths, and lessons on manners. Findings indicate that the program significantly contributes to moral development across three dimensions: fostering devotion to Allah through consistent worship practices, cultivating self-discipline, honesty, and confidence, and nurturing respect and responsibility toward others through social interaction and family engagement. The mosque environment provides a supportive religious atmosphere, while habituation methods and exemplary role modeling by instructors reinforce value internalization. Supporting factors include enthusiastic participation, effective teaching strategies, strong backing from mosque administrators, and parental involvement. However, challenges such as limited parental engagement, children's short attention spans, resource constraints among mosque staff, and external factors like weather conditions were identified. Overall, Ahad Sholih demonstrates the effectiveness of mosque-based nonformal education in instilling Islamic values and offers a replicable model for other communities. Strengthening collaboration between families, mosque leaders, and educators is essential to maximize its impact on children's moral and spiritual growth.

**Keywords:** Ahad Sholih, Noble Character, Non-Formal Islamic Education

## INTRODUCTION

Discussions regarding children's moral character in the modern era cannot be separated from the influence of technological advancements, the rapid flow of information, and the increasingly complex changes in society's lifestyle. Phenomena such as declining respect for parents and teachers, weakening discipline, and low levels of social awareness have become common issues encountered in daily life. These conditions indicate that fostering noble character in children requires serious attention and sustainable strategies. Education, from an Islamic perspective, is positioned as the vanguard in shaping individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and of noble character. Through education rooted in Islamic values, children are taught to understand religious teachings and emulate the character of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This education takes place not only through formal channels in schools but also through non-formal channels that emerge from community initiatives (Arif, 2011).

Non-formal Islamic education possesses distinctive characteristics because it arises from the social and religious needs of the community. One strategic space for its implementation is the mosque. Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the mosque has played a very broad role. After migrating to Medina, the Prophet Muhammad built the Prophet's Mosque, which served not only as a place of worship but also as a center for education, moral development, consultation, and the social development of the community. The Prophet directly mentored his companions through scholarly gatherings, instilling values of faith, and shaping the character of the community to embody noble ethics. The presence of the Ahlus Suffah within the mosque's vicinity demonstrates that the mosque functioned as a center for intensive development in both scholarly and spiritual aspects. This underscores that the mosque holds both a historical and functional role in shaping the character of the community (Daulany, 2004).

In practice, the mosque, as the center of community activities, is not only used as a place for ritual worship but also serves as a venue for various religious development programs. Activities such as religious study circles, Quranic education programs, regular religious lectures, worship training, and character-building programs for children have been widely implemented in various mosques. These programs demonstrate that mosques play a strategic role in fostering Islamic values, particularly in cultivating noble character among the younger generation (Mulyadi, 2022). This aligns with Allah's revelation in Surah Al-Mujadilah, verse 11, which emphasizes the importance of gatherings of knowledge as a means to elevate the level of faith and moral character. This verse emphasizes that Allah will elevate the status of the faithful and the learned; thus, community-based religious activities conducted in mosques are relevant to study, particularly in relation to the development of children's noble character.

One form of mosque-based religious activity worth examining is the "Ahad Sholih" program, which has been held at Istiqamah Mosque in Candirejo Village since December 5, 2020. This program is a religious education initiative for children conducted regularly every Sunday and attended by children from Early Childhood Education through elementary school. The existence of this activity is part of the community's efforts to instill Islamic values and foster children's *Noble Character* through a mosque-based approach. Initial observations conducted on

October 26, 2025, indicate that the Ahad Sholih activity has been running regularly, with children participating in every session. This situation indicates that the activity possesses specific characteristics worthy of deeper analysis, particularly in understanding its role in fostering children's moral character.

Previous research suggests that mosques play a significant role in nurturing children's moral character. Damaiyanti et al. (2024) emphasize that children's active involvement in mosque activities has a positive impact on their social and religious behavior. Children become more accustomed to religious activities, develop moral awareness, and demonstrate improved attitudes within both family and community settings. The cultivation of *Noble Character* is achieved through the practice of worship, the reinforcement of moral values, and the exemplary conduct of mentors and religious figures. Maulidiya et al. (Maulidya et al., 2023) add that habits formed through routine and consistent practice can shape children's religious character, such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect. Teachers serve as role models, while the madrasah environment acts as a social space that reinforces the internalization of moral values.

Another study by Abdiah (2025) indicates a positive relationship between an Islamic environment and the development of *Noble Character* in early childhood. An environment rich in Islamic values—such as the practice of worship, the use of polite language, and the exemplary behavior of adults—influences the development of children's attitudes and behaviors. Ikhwan (2013) emphasizes that mosques possess significant potential as non-formal educational institutions in fostering children's moral character. At the micro level, mosques serve as venues for cultivating religious practices and instilling moral values through religious activities that directly involve children. At the macro level, mosques function as centers for character development that are integrated into the social life of the community. Sari, Mulyani, and Sutrisno (2023) reinforce this view by demonstrating that the Al-Qur'an Education Garden activities at mosques are effective in instilling the values of *Noble Character* in children on an ongoing basis. Meanwhile, Nur'aina and Khairun Nisa (2023) emphasize that the practice of memorizing daily prayers in the dawn education program at the mosque has been proven to play a role in shaping children's character through the early cultivation of religious practices.

Based on this literature review, research on the Ahad Sholih program offers distinctiveness and novelty compared to previous studies. Earlier research generally focused on character development through Quranic Education Centers, habits formed in madrasahs, Islamic environments, or morning education programs—all of which were partial and centered on a single specific activity. Meanwhile, this study specifically examines the Ahad Sholih program as an integrated mosque-based initiative that combines elements of worship, character education, social conditioning, role modeling, and children's religious interactions into a single routine activity conducted weekly. This study not only examines the outcomes of children's character development but also analyzes the process of internalizing *Noble Character* values through a participatory approach involving mentors, mosque administrators, parents, and the surrounding community. Another distinction lies in the local context of the research at the Istiqamah Mosque

in Candirejo Village, which highlights the socio-religious dynamics of rural communities as the foundation for children's character development. Thus, this study offers a new contribution to the development of research on mosque-based non-formal Islamic education through the Ahad Sholih activity model, which is more integrative, collaborative, and oriented toward the sustainable development of *Noble Character*.

## **METHOD**

The research employed a qualitative approach designed to explore and interpret the social and religious phenomena surrounding the Ahad Sholih program at Masjid Istiqamah in Candirejo. Qualitative inquiry was chosen because it allows for a nuanced understanding of behaviors, motivations, perceptions, and interactions that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative methods (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This approach emphasizes descriptive analysis and inductive reasoning, enabling the researcher to highlight the perspectives of participants and uncover the meanings embedded in their lived experiences. The study was conducted over seven months, from October 2025 to May 2026, ensuring sufficient time to observe the continuity of the program and the consistency of community participation.

The primary data sources consisted of direct observations, interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out in a passive participatory manner, with the researcher present during the Ahad Sholih sessions to record the activities and behaviors of children without interfering in the process. This method provided insight into the natural dynamics of the program and the ways in which values were internalized through routine practice. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including the program organizer, parents of participating children, and members of the mosque's management board. These interviews allowed for flexibility in exploring themes while maintaining focus on the research questions. Documentation complemented these methods by providing supporting evidence in the form of attendance lists, teaching materials, and photographs of activities, which helped to triangulate and validate the findings.

Purposive sampling was employed to select respondents who were most knowledgeable and relevant to the study. This included individuals directly involved in organizing and participating in the program, as well as those responsible for overseeing mosque activities. Secondary data sources, such as written records and visual documentation, were used to enrich the analysis and provide context to the primary data. The credibility of the data was ensured through triangulation, combining multiple techniques, sources, and timeframes to cross-check information and strengthen validity. Triangulation of techniques involved comparing data obtained from observation, interviews, and documentation, while triangulation of sources involved gathering perspectives from different stakeholders. Triangulation of time was achieved by observing the program across several sessions to capture consistency and variation in practices.

Data analysis followed a continuous and iterative process, beginning with data reduction, where information was organized, summarized, and focused on key themes relevant to the research objectives. This was followed by data presentation in narrative form, allowing patterns and relationships to emerge clearly. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified against the evidence

collected, ensuring that interpretations were credible and aligned with the observed reality. The analysis emphasized the systematic description of how the Ahad Sholih program contributed to the moral development of children, highlighting both the processes and outcomes of value internalization (Sugiyono, 2011). Through this methodological framework, the study sought to provide a comprehensive and reliable account of the role of mosque-based nonformal education in shaping *Noble Character* among children in Candirejo.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Implementation of the “Ahad Sholih” Program at the Mosque**

The findings of this study reveal that the implementation of the Ahad Sholih program at Masjid Istiqamah in Candirejo is carried out in a structured and continuous manner every Sunday, with activities designed to instill Islamic values in children through both knowledge transmission and behavioral habituation. The program includes the teaching of daily prayers, short hadiths, and lessons on manners, alongside practical exercises that encourage children to embody Islamic conduct within the mosque environment. This aligns with the mandate of the Indonesian National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, Article 26, which emphasizes that nonformal education functions to develop learners’ potential by focusing on mastery of functional knowledge and skills as well as the cultivation of attitudes and personality. The Ahad Sholih program fulfills these requirements by systematically delivering Islamic content while simultaneously fostering moral discipline among participants.

The program also demonstrates the optimal use of the mosque as a nonformal Islamic educational institution. Historically, mosques during the time of the Prophet Muhammad served not only as places of worship but also as centers for education, character building, and community development. Scholars such as Ahmad Yani have highlighted the role of mosques as centers of enlightenment and schools of knowledge, where the Prophet himself taught and nurtured the companions. In this context, Masjid Istiqamah has successfully revitalized this historical function by transforming its space into a hub for learning and moral cultivation through the Ahad Sholih program. The activities conducted within the mosque reflect the continuity of this prophetic tradition, positioning the mosque as a vital institution for nurturing children’s religious and ethical development (Mulyadi, 2022; Sucipto, 2014).

The program’s design also resonates with Samad’s theory, which underscores that Islamic education in nonformal institutions, particularly mosques, is deeply rooted in community needs, religious identity, social culture, and local aspirations. The Ahad Sholih initiative emerged from the community’s own concerns, particularly in response to the social challenges faced by children during the Covid-19 pandemic. This illustrates the adaptability of mosque-based education in addressing contemporary issues, offering a flexible and contextually relevant approach that formal schools often struggle to provide. The responsiveness of the program to local needs highlights the dynamic role of nonformal education in sustaining moral and spiritual resilience within society (Siswanto, 2005; Sutangsa, 2026).

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with Afiful Ikhwan's research, which emphasizes that mosques hold significant potential as nonformal educational institutions for character development, provided that programs are well-structured, supported by mosque administrators, and involve active participation from parents and the wider community. The Ahad Sholih program embodies these criteria, with clear organizational structures, strong backing from the mosque's management board, and active parental involvement in encouraging children's participation. This synergy between institutional support and family engagement enhances the effectiveness of the program, ensuring that the values taught are reinforced both within the mosque and at home (Damaiyanti et al., 2024).

The program's success can also be attributed to its holistic approach, which integrates cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of learning. Children are not only taught religious knowledge but are also guided to practice it in their daily lives, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice. The emphasis on habituation—such as regular recitation of prayers, respectful behavior, and communal participation—creates an environment where Islamic values are internalized through repetition and social reinforcement. This experiential learning model fosters a sense of discipline, responsibility, and respect among children, which are essential components of *Noble Character*. The communal nature of the program further strengthens intergenerational transmission of values, as children observe and emulate the conduct of elders and peers within the mosque setting.

The broader implications of these findings suggest that mosque-based nonformal education programs like Ahad Sholih play a crucial role in complementing formal schooling, particularly in rural communities where access to structured moral education may be limited. By situating learning within the familiar and spiritually significant environment of the mosque, the program enhances children's sense of belonging and identity while simultaneously cultivating moral consciousness. The participatory nature of the program, involving parents, mosque leaders, and the community, ensures that the educational process is not isolated but embedded within the social fabric of the village. This collective approach fosters a shared responsibility for moral development, reinforcing the idea that character building is a communal endeavor rather than an individual task.

In conclusion, the Ahad Sholih program at Masjid Istiqamah exemplifies how nonformal education rooted in religious and cultural contexts can effectively contribute to the moral formation of children. Its structured implementation, alignment with national education objectives, historical continuity of mosque functions, responsiveness to community needs, and integration of parental and institutional support collectively demonstrate its significance as a model of Islamic character education. The program not only addresses immediate challenges faced by children but also lays the foundation for long-term moral resilience, offering valuable insights into the role of mosque-based initiatives in shaping ethical and socially responsible generations. With its emphasis on experiential learning, communal participation, and contextual relevance, Ahad Sholih stands as a testament to the enduring potential of nonformal Islamic education in nurturing *Noble Character* among children in Candirejo.

## The Role of “Ahad Sholih” Activities in Fostering Good Character in Children at the Mosque

The results of the study indicate that the Ahad Sholih program plays a significant role in shaping children’s *Noble Character*, encompassing their relationship with Allah, themselves, and others, while being supported by the mosque environment as a center of religious and character development. The presence of the mosque as the venue for Ahad Sholih activities carries strong significance in the process of moral formation. The religious atmosphere of the mosque indirectly influences children’s behavior in a positive way. From the perspective of empiricism, external environments such as social surroundings and structured guidance are dominant factors in shaping character. This is reinforced by statements from the mosque management board, which observed that since the program began, the number of children attending congregational prayers has increased, and some even encouraged their parents to join them. This phenomenon demonstrates that the mosque environment impacts not only the children but also extends its influence to their families. Such findings are consistent with Nor Amaliyah’s research, which emphasizes that Islamic environments in homes, schools, and mosques play a crucial role in holistic moral development, with children raised in such contexts tending to display politeness, obedience, and moral awareness from an early age (Fajrin Jafar et al., 2023; Hikmawati & Asyhari, 2024).

The mosque functions not only as a place of worship but also as a social space that strengthens brotherhood and the practice of Islamic teachings in daily life. Beyond the environmental factor, the Ahad Sholih program implements habituation strategies as its primary method of moral education. Through weekly routines, values of *Noble Character* are gradually instilled until they become ingrained habits. This approach is supported by the findings of Difa Maulidya and colleagues, who argue that consistent habituation fosters religious character traits such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect. Importantly, the program does not rely solely on the delivery of material but also emphasizes role modeling by instructors. The teachers exemplify *Noble Character* in their interactions with children, reinforcing the idea that moral education requires integration of knowledge, habituation, and lived examples. This combination ensures that children not only understand values cognitively but also experience them affectively and behaviorally.

The program’s effectiveness is evident in the formation of akhlak toward Allah, where children are trained to engage in worship and remembrance. Observations revealed that children were accustomed to praying before and after activities, reciting Asmaul Husna, and memorizing daily supplications such as those for eating, ablution, traveling, and sleeping. These practices reflect the implementation of tauhid and obedience to Allah, which are central to commendable character. Parents reported noticeable changes, such as children becoming fluent in prayer movements and recitations and incorporating supplications into daily routines. This demonstrates the internalization of worship values, aligning with Al-Ghazali’s view that akhlak is

a settled state of the soul that produces spontaneous actions without lengthy deliberation, formed through consistent habituation (Kusumawati & Saputra, 2025; Masdiwanti et al., 2022).

In terms of akhlak toward oneself, the program cultivates discipline, honesty, and self-confidence. Children were observed arriving punctually, filling attendance lists truthfully, queuing orderly, and maintaining decorum during sessions. These behaviors embody the principle of shidqu, or honesty, which requires alignment between words and deeds driven by moral awareness. Additionally, the program nurtures self-confidence, with parents noting that their children became more willing to speak in public and engage actively in group activities. This development of a positive self-concept is crucial in protecting children from negative external influences, showing that the program strengthens both external behavior and internal cognitive and affective dimensions.

The dimension of akhlak toward others is equally prominent. Interviews revealed that children were taught to speak politely to elders, avoid disturbing peers, and honor their parents. These values reflect the principles of ukhuwah, ta'awun, and mutual respect in social life. Importantly, these values were not only taught but practiced in daily interactions. Children reported applying habits such as greeting family members with salam, shaking hands with parents, and showing respect to teachers at school. This indicates that the moral training provided by Ahad Sholih has been internalized and extended beyond the mosque environment. Such outcomes align with Emroni's perspective that moral development results from deliberate and continuous cultivation rather than instant formation (Vidiawati et al., 2023).

Taken together, the findings highlight that the Ahad Sholih program is an effective method for instilling *Noble Character* in children through the synergy of a religious environment, structured programming, habituation strategies, and exemplary role models. The success of the program underscores that moral formation is an ongoing process requiring consistency and support from multiple stakeholders, including mosque leaders, parents, and the broader community. The program demonstrates that character education is most effective when embedded in communal religious life, where values are reinforced through shared practices and collective responsibility. By fostering akhlak toward Allah, oneself, and others, Ahad Sholih contributes to the holistic development of children, preparing them to become individuals who embody Islamic virtues in both personal and social contexts. The evidence suggests that such initiatives are vital in sustaining moral resilience and nurturing generations capable of navigating modern challenges while remaining grounded in Islamic ethical principles.

### **Factors Supporting and Hindering the Implementation of Ahad Sholih Activities in Fostering Good Character in Children**

The analysis of supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of the Ahad Sholih program at Masjid Istiqamah Candirejo reveals a complex interplay between internal and external dimensions that shape the effectiveness of moral education. The supporting factors identified include the enthusiasm of the children who participate, the structured and effective methods of instruction, the strong involvement of the mosque management board, and the conducive religious environment

of the mosque itself. These elements collectively create a nurturing ecosystem in which Islamic values can be instilled and reinforced. The enthusiasm of the participants is particularly important, as it reflects intrinsic motivation and receptiveness to moral guidance. When children are eager to attend and engage, the process of internalizing values becomes smoother and more impactful. The structured methods employed, such as consistent routines, clear teaching materials, and role modeling by instructors, further enhance the program's ability to translate abstract values into lived practices. The support of the mosque management board and the active involvement of parents also provide institutional and familial reinforcement, ensuring that the lessons learned during Ahad Sholih are echoed in the broader social environment.

The mosque environment itself serves as a powerful external factor, offering a sacred and communal space that naturally encourages reverence, discipline, and social cohesion. This aligns with the theoretical perspective that external environments play a dominant role in shaping character, as children absorb cues from their surroundings and adapt their behavior accordingly. The presence of peers, elders, and religious leaders within the mosque creates a network of influences that collectively guide children toward *Noble Character*. The program thus benefits from a synergy between individual enthusiasm, structured pedagogy, institutional support, and environmental reinforcement, all of which contribute to its success in fostering moral development (Anfi et al., 2022; Fadilah & Gunawan, 2023).

However, the study also identified several inhibiting factors that pose challenges to the program's effectiveness. Among these are the limited attention span and focus of some children, the inconsistent involvement of parents, the constraints faced by mosque administrators in terms of resources and manpower, and external factors such as weather conditions that can disrupt attendance and participation. The lack of parental involvement emerges as the most significant obstacle, as parents are the primary agents of moral education within the family. When parents fail to reinforce the values taught at the mosque, the continuity of moral formation is weakened, and children may struggle to integrate these lessons into their daily lives. This finding resonates with Abudin Nata's view that education is shaped by three interrelated environments: family, school, and society. Ideally, these environments should work in harmony to support the holistic development of children's character. While Ahad Sholih has succeeded in mobilizing the mosque and partially engaging parents, greater efforts are needed to strengthen the role of the family in reinforcing moral education.

The limited capacity of mosque administrators also presents challenges, as the sustainability of the program depends on consistent leadership, adequate resources, and effective coordination. Without sufficient support, the burden of organizing and maintaining the program can hinder its long-term viability. External factors such as weather, though seemingly minor, can also affect attendance and disrupt the rhythm of habituation, which is crucial for instilling values through repetition and consistency. These challenges highlight the importance of resilience and adaptability in program design, ensuring that moral education can continue despite obstacles.

Overall, the Ahad Sholih program demonstrates that mosque-based nonformal education can be an effective vehicle for instilling *Noble Character* in children. Its success lies in the interplay of

supportive factors that create a conducive environment for moral development, while its limitations underscore the need for greater collaboration between families, mosque administrators, and the wider community. By addressing the inhibiting factors—particularly by enhancing parental involvement and strengthening institutional capacity—the program has the potential to achieve even greater impact. The findings suggest that Ahad Sholih could serve as a replicable model for other communities seeking to integrate religious education with character formation, provided that the balance between internal and external factors is carefully managed. With continued commitment and strategic improvements, the program can contribute significantly to the cultivation of morally upright generations who embody Islamic values in their personal and social lives.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of a study on the implementation of the Ahad Sholih program at the Istiqamah Mosque in Candirejo Village, it can be concluded that this program is a concrete form of mosque-based non-formal Islamic education that is effective in fostering good character in children. The activities, conducted regularly every Sunday with content including daily prayers, short hadiths, and etiquette, as well as the practice of instilling Islamic behavior, have successfully internalized Islamic values in children aged 4–12 years. The role of these activities is evident in three main dimensions: moral conduct toward Allah through the practice of worship and prayer; moral conduct toward oneself through discipline, honesty, and self-confidence; and moral conduct toward others through polite behavior, respect, and devotion to parents. The religious environment of the mosque, consistent training methods, and the exemplary conduct of the mentors are key factors supporting the program's success. However, challenges exist, such as limited parental involvement, constraints among mosque administrators, children's lack of focus, and external factors like weather conditions. Overall, the Ahad Sholih activities have made a significant contribution to children's character development and have the potential to serve as a model for mosque-based moral education that can be replicated in various other communities with the strengthening of supporting factors and the addressing of existing obstacles.

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