

# A SUCCESS STORY OF SMART PARTNERSHIP IN DAKWAH BIL HAL OF KLINIK AL-AMIN KUANTAN PAHANG

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## ABSTRACT

A group of like-minded Muslim professionals from an NGO, Islamic Medical Association Malaysia (IMAM) had proposed a 'Smart Partnership in Dakwah bil hal' concept to Majlis Ugama Islam dan Adat Resam Melayu Pahang or MUIP and Masjid Negeri Pahang in 2003 to establish a clinic within the mosque's premise. MUIP and the Mosque management accepted the proposal and finally succeeded in establishing Klinik al-Amin in 2004. This paper describes the success story in brief: conception of ideas, convincing the 'Smart Partners', its business model, management, success, challenges and business sustainability.

**Keywords:** Muslim; Professionals; Smart partnership; Dakwah bil hal

## Introduction

The Muslim community, *ummah*, which is often labeled as weak, non-progressive, non-civilized and etcetera is probably the result of non-practicing and wrong perception of the true Islamic teaching by the *ummah* as a whole<sup>1</sup>. It is an ugly reality that a significant portion of the *ummah* is still ignorant about Islam and its ingrained strength that enables to empower them to succeed in this life. Many still believe that the teaching of Islam only confines to the practice of certain rituals like *solat*, *sawm*, *hajj* and *zakat* and has nothing to do with the development of the people. This is probably the product of dualism in education, which Muslim scholars are currently striving to correct this situation through reformulation of our education system. It is important that the *ummah* understands the true teaching of Islam and have firm belief that the Quran and *Sunnah* which are two main sources of knowledge and guidance, empower them to excel in this life and the hereafter. Getting back to the basic of the teaching of Quran and *Sunnah* ensures the inculcation of the correct mindset of integration between *naqli* (divine) and *aqli* (acquired) knowledge, which are prerequisite to a successful transformation that enable them to compete in this highly competitive world. This return to the fundamental teaching and sincere practice of Islam ensures strength and solidarity as promised by Allah. Through education that emphasizes on integration and islamisation of human knowledge, Muslim will be empowered to change their fate from backwardness to progress. Empowerment begins with the inculcation of positive mindset and going back to the basic of Islamic paradigm such as sincerity of purpose and seeking excellence in whatever undertaking that one chooses to take.

## Intellectual's Role In Leadership

The *ummah* must change their mindset and attitude if they desire to rise up once again as the best people created for mankind, *khaira ummah*<sup>2</sup>. The characteristics of *khaira umma*, as stipulated by Allah, which are enjoining the good, shunning the evil and believing in God, should be the basis of culture of excellence in this noble effort to once again bring the *ummah* to glory and excellence. A good leadership is required to promote and establish this culture and establishes it firmly within the community, which the intellectuals can provide through various platforms such as learning

institutions, governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations, NGO. The intellectuals should pave the way and become leaders and agent of change in transforming the ummah, which begins with the sincere return to the fundamental teaching and practice of Islam. They have the duty to guide the ummah to realize and firmly belief that Islam is the key to empowerment that must be understood, internalized and applied in every undertaking. Rightly motivated, they are capable of changing the mindset of the community and propel it to greater heights. As learned and highly respected individuals in their respective communities, their views and thoughts have great impact on the ability and commitment of the community to change. Thus, it is imperative that they adopt the attitude first and be the role model for others to emulate, thus hastening the empowerment process. It is indeed the intellectual's collective responsibility, *fardh kifayah* to empower the *ummah* such as developing human resources to continue the agenda of 'self empowerment' that strengthens the *ummah*.

### **Empowering The *Ummah* Through Ngos**

The intellectuals can be relied upon to carry out the daunting task of empowering the *ummah* through education (*dakwah bil lisani*) and providing charity service (*da'wah bil hal*) in the community. They can bring about positive changes in the community through organized *dakwah bil hal* or charitable activities, which can be effectively carried out through a non-governmental organization, NGO. The NGO's have been described as associations formed by personal initiative of few committed people dedicated to the design, study and implementation of development projects at the grassroots level<sup>3</sup>. They are a recognized force in a community *that* must be encouraged and supported both by the community and the government. However, to ensure sustainability it requires qualified full time worker to execute the project although the 'mastermind' shall remain as volunteers. Such approach helps reduce operational cost without affecting the quality of the services provided. Involvement of professionals as 'mastermind' of NGO's is a practical way to strengthen the culture of excellence in the *ummah*. Through organized work, the ideals and objectives of the NGO's could be materialized, especially when there is a smart partnership with another party such as government agencies. Such partnership provides a win-win situation that benefits every party i.e. the government, the NGO and the community it serves. For the NGOs, such collaboration provides opportunities for networking and consultation at a much-reduced cost, thus reducing its financial burden. From the government perspective, NGOs are the proper channel through which government can disburse appropriate grants and subsidies to those in need of assistance.

### **Smart Partnership In *Dakwah Bil-Hal***

Smart partnership is not an alien concept in the government machinery as well as the corporate world. It is a synergistic relationship whereby respective partner's expertise is maximally utilized to achieve a common predetermined goal that benefits every member. Certainly, an NGO and government agency could work together in partnership to say, establish a charitable service that specifically aimed to assist the underprivileged group in a community. With this mindset and attitude like-minded professionals of an NGO, the Islamic Medical Association Malaysia (IMAM) had proposed a 'Smart Partnership in *Dakwah bil hal*' to MUIP (Islamic Religious Council and Malay Customs of Pahang) and the State Mosque in 2003 to establish a clinic within the mosque's premise<sup>4</sup>. The proposal was presented to the MUIP's authority whereby the concept of smart partnership was thoroughly deliberated, highlighting the professional's intention to empower the *ummah* through this endeavour, which is also part of the Council's mission. Individual member of this partnership is a smart partner with clear description of roles and responsibility to achieve the objectives of its establishment. The key persons in the partnership prepared the company's vision and mission, governance and policies and ensure its smooth implementation and sustainability. After several

discussions the final proposal was presented to His Royal Highness, the Regent of Pahang as the Head of MUIP, who earnestly supported the idea and approved the funding amounting to almost half a million ringgit to establish the service.

Registered medical practitioners run the clinic, which was established as a company of MUIP under the Company's Act and named Klinik Al-Amin. It began its service in 2004 providing outpatient service by full time staff consisting of doctors, assistant nurses, clerical staff and radiographer. One of the resident doctors, appointed as the manager take charge of the day-to-day running of the clinic, implement policies and report to the Board of Directors on matters pertaining to clinic income, meeting the business target, appraisal of individual staff performance and also provide input to annual budget preparation.

### **Sustaining The Service**

Any business endeavour requires knowledge, commitment and effective financial and human resource management. The clinic building, which is located in the mosque compound was constructed using the fund provided by MUIP. The NGO leaders prepared the terms of reference for the resident doctors and the standard operating procedures (SOPs) appropriate for running the outpatient service. MUIP appoints an executive officer to oversee the clinic's administrative, financial and human resource management as well as taking charge of the annual budget and strategic planning to ensure its sustainability. The average monthly expenditure is around RM 90,000.00 that covers staff's salaries, EPF, SOCSO and fixed allowances (3 resident doctors, six nurses, one clerk and one radiographer), medication, disposable items, utility bills and etcetera. The clinic's management is committed to high quality care in outpatient service by ensuring that its doctors and staffs adhere to the code of medical ethics and professionalism. As professionals, the doctors must ensure that they have the required knowledge and skills expected as family doctors. The clinic management gives incentives to update their knowledge by attending appropriate continuing medical education program (CME). Apart from that they are duty-bound to improve their knowledge and skills in medical practice through self-directed learning and deliver it in the most ethical manner through mastery of good communication skill and portrayal of compassion. These are the core attributes of professionalism (expertise, ethical, communication and compassion) that doctors should strive to develop, as that would gain patient's trust and confidence on them. As a business entity, it seeks to earn profit and ensures good income, which somehow fluctuates in terms of reaching its monthly target. When its performance falls below targeted value, MUIP will top up the deficit to ensure that the service is uninterrupted.

The performance of the clinic depends a lot on the dedication of the doctors and the presence of female doctor. It suffered great loss when female doctor resigned from the clinic and it takes time to get the replacement<sup>5</sup>. It also suffered a significant loss when it has to close down its only branch in Pekan due to poor returns. Another major challenge is maintaining the doctor's loyalty to the clinic. Among the reasons for resignation is death due to cancer, switching to other clinic that offers higher salary, setting up own practice and family factor such as following spouse to faraway place. In addition, it is important to note that this clinic take a longer period for its return of investment. MUIP as the owner of the clinic is committed to sustain the clinic as part of its social responsibility, even if at time, its income is below target. It has decided from the beginning that the outpatient service shall continue despite such constraints and take appropriate measures to continuously improve its performance. Klinik Al-Amin Sdn Bhd has also diversified into another business endeavor, which is establishing a dialysis service, this time in the compound of another mosque, Masjid Cenderawasih, Kuantan. The same Board of Directors manages this new service, which shows great potential to make positive return of its investment.

## Conclusion

The brief overview about the 'success story' of Klinik Al-Amin demonstrates that the smart partnership concept between an NGO and government agent is a viable option to empower the ummah. Effective leadership from both the NGO and government agency is essential to actualize the agenda of 'self empowerment' attitude. The 'Smart Partnership in Dakwah bil-hal' is a practical concept to inculcate such attitude, which the ummah needs for progress. The attitude as exemplified by this success story is a value that must be emulated and promoted as an important means to empower the ummah to excellence and glory. The ingredients for success rely on good leadership and teamwork, realistic planning, effective accounting and human resource management. Equally important, the NGO activists should be passionate in providing the leadership voluntarily for the sake of Allah and to earn His pleasure and not for personal and other worldly gain.

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