



Evaluation of the Ministry of Social Affairs Policy on Social Protection Programs in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the effectiveness of Indonesia's social protection policies, focusing on two key programs: Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) and Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP). The research addresses the broader issue of poverty and social inequality in Indonesia, with particular attention to the challenges faced by vulnerable populations, including low-income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities. The study's purpose is to assess how well these social protection programs are achieving their intended outcomes of poverty alleviation and social inclusion. A qualitative research design was employed, utilizing secondary data from government reports, program evaluations, and relevant academic literature. The study analyzes the policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation processes of these programs through the lens of Dunn's Circular Policy Evaluation Model, which emphasizes problem identification, policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. The findings indicate that while PKH and BSP have contributed to immediate poverty relief and food security, they have not addressed the underlying structural causes of poverty, such as limited access to education and healthcare. The research concludes that although the programs provide significant short-term benefits, their long-term effectiveness is limited due to logistical challenges in program delivery and the failure to integrate broader development goals. The study suggests that future social protection strategies should focus on sustainable poverty reduction by addressing the root causes of inequality and improving service delivery mechanisms.

Keyword: Evaluation, Policy, Social Protection



INTRODUCTION

The issue of social protection in Indonesia has long been a focal point of the national development agenda. The Ministry of Social Affairs (Kementerian Sosial) is tasked with leading the government's efforts to ensure social welfare and combat poverty. This policy landscape has evolved through several phases, with a variety of programs aiming to support vulnerable populations, such as the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) and Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP), both of which

have been instrumental in addressing poverty and improving social security across the country (Alam et al., 2023; Habibullah, 2017). However, despite these efforts, challenges persist in achieving comprehensive social protection for all citizens, particularly for marginalized groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and migrant workers (Ayunda et al., 2021; Sutiyo, 2023). Understanding the effectiveness and limitations of the Ministry's policies is crucial for identifying areas where improvements are needed to better support Indonesia's most vulnerable populations (Davies et al., 2013; Devereux & McGregor, 2014).

The urgency of addressing the effectiveness of social protection policies in Indonesia has grown in recent years, driven by multiple factors. One of the primary concerns is the persistence of poverty, particularly in rural areas, despite overall economic growth (Arnall et al., 2010; Davies et al., 2009). As Indonesia continues to evolve as a middle-income country, disparities in wealth distribution remain a significant challenge, underscored by the country's Gini coefficient, which remains high compared to other Southeast Asian nations (Devereux & White, 2010). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the weaknesses of existing social protection systems, highlighting the need for more adaptive, resilient, and inclusive policies to address future crises (Nawawi, 2021). This article aims to evaluate the Ministry of Social Affairs' current policies and their impact on reducing inequality and poverty in Indonesia, offering recommendations for enhancing their efficacy (Holzmann & Jørgensen, 2001; Kurnianingsih et al., 2020)

In this article, the focus is placed on evaluating the Ministry of Social Affairs' social protection programs, particularly through the lens of their reach and effectiveness in targeting those most in need (Kuriakose et al., 2013). To achieve this, the article will examine key programs such as PKH, which provides conditional cash transfers to low-income families, and BSP, which supports food security for vulnerable populations. A critical aspect of this analysis will involve assessing how well these programs are integrated with other national development strategies and how they contribute to reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion.

Furthermore, this article will explore the broader context of social protection in Indonesia, drawing on relevant literature to situate the Ministry's efforts within a global discourse on welfare policies (Sinayi & Rasti-Barzoki, 2018). Previous studies have shown that effective social protection can significantly reduce poverty and inequality, particularly when it is designed to be inclusive and adaptive to changing socioeconomic conditions (Kuriakose et al., 2013; Niedzwiedz et al., 2016; Sari & Sanjani, 2023). Building on this knowledge, the article will contribute to existing scholarship by providing an updated evaluation of the Ministry's policies, offering insights into their practical implementation, and suggesting areas for reform (Hoddinott & Mekasha, 2020)

The scientific contribution of this study lies in its focus on the evaluation of Indonesia's social protection policies, providing a rigorous analysis of their outcomes and challenges. As such, this research aims to inform policymakers, researchers, and practitioners in the field of social welfare about the strengths and weaknesses of the Ministry of Social Affairs' strategies. By linking theory and practice, the article will highlight the potential for reforms that could better meet the needs of Indonesia's vulnerable populations while promoting long-term social inclusion (Hall, 1993; Krings et al., 2019)

This evaluation is timely and significant, as the Indonesian government has been committed to reducing poverty and enhancing social welfare as part of its development agenda (O'Campo et al., 2015; Sinaga et al., 2022; Snyman, 2014).

The Ministry of Social Affairs plays a central role in this effort, yet there is limited research on the impact of its policies and programs over time. This study, therefore, fills an important gap in the existing literature by assessing the Ministry's policy implementation and the actual outcomes for beneficiaries. It will examine the factors that have contributed to the success or failure of specific programs, such as the challenges in policy coordination and the adequacy of funding for these initiatives (Najwa et al., 2024; Sepriandi, 2018; Wahyuni et al., 2023).

The following sections of this article will provide a detailed overview of Indonesia's social protection programs, a framework for evaluating their effectiveness, and an analysis of the Ministry's role in ensuring that these policies reach the intended populations. Through this research, the article seeks to make a meaningful contribution to the ongoing discourse on social protection in Indonesia, offering practical recommendations for improving policy design and implementation. By drawing on both local and international case studies, the article will provide a well-rounded perspective on the future direction of social welfare in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

The Research Method section of this article outlines the approach used to conduct the study in a comprehensive and systematic manner. This research employs a qualitative design (Clark, 1998), focusing on a descriptive approach to explore the effectiveness and challenges of the Ministry of Social Affairs' social protection programs in Indonesia, particularly the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) and Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP). The research aims to evaluate the reach, impact, and policy integration of these programs in alleviating poverty and improving social welfare. A qualitative approach is particularly well-suited to understanding the deeper dynamics of social protection programs, allowing for the analysis of program effectiveness based on existing reports and documents (Miles et al., 2014).

For this study, secondary data was utilized, with a particular focus on the Rencana Strategis Kementerian Sosial 2020-2024 (Ministry of Social Affairs Strategic Plan) (Kementerian Sosial, 2020). This strategic document outlines the Ministry's goals, objectives, and the ongoing programs aimed at poverty alleviation and social welfare improvement, providing a rich source of information regarding the Ministry's policy intentions and long-term vision (Bowen, 2009). Secondary data is essential for understanding the broader policy context and offers a detailed overview of the Ministry's approach to addressing social welfare issues, which forms the foundation for evaluating the outcomes and effectiveness of specific programs such as PKH and BSP.

Furthermore, secondary data from previous studies and evaluations of social protection programs in Indonesia were incorporated to provide context and compare the Ministry's strategies against existing academic and governmental assessments (Devereux & McGregor, 2014). This secondary data included evaluations of the impact of PKH and BSP on poverty reduction, food security, and social inclusion, as well as the effectiveness of the Ministry's delivery mechanisms. By triangulating these secondary data sources, the study could draw more robust conclusions about the overall effectiveness of social protection policies and the challenges they face in the Indonesian context.

This study relies solely on secondary data analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of the Ministry of Social Affairs' social protection programs. Through

the use of thematic analysis, the study synthesizes findings from official documents, program reports, and previous evaluations to provide a comprehensive assessment of the programs' successes, challenges, and alignment with the Ministry's strategic goals. This method allows for an in-depth understanding of the policies' impacts and offers practical recommendations for improving their implementation and effectiveness in the future.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs (Kementerian Sosial) for 2020-2024

The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs (Kementerian Sosial) for 2020-2024 outlines the Ministry's overarching goals and frameworks to address social welfare challenges in Indonesia. It sets a clear direction for the country's social protection strategies, aiming to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion through coordinated efforts across national and local levels. The plan aligns with national development goals and is based on a comprehensive review of the Ministry's previous performance and the changing needs of Indonesia's population.

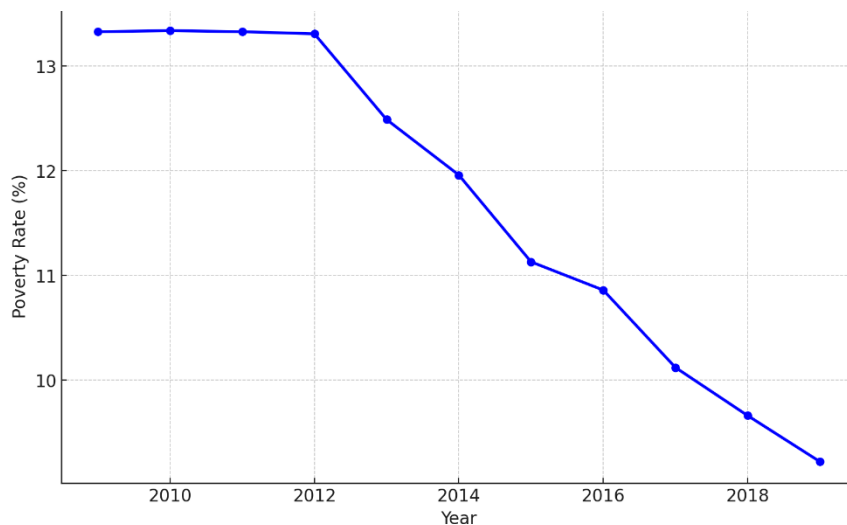


Figure 1. Development of Poverty in Indonesia Over the Last 8 Years
Source: Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs, 2020

The graph presented above illustrates the development of poverty in Indonesia over the past decade, showcasing the poverty rate as a percentage of the population from 2009 to 2019. Over this period, Indonesia saw a notable decrease in poverty, with the poverty rate gradually declining from 13.33% in 2009 to 9.22% in 2019. This indicates significant progress in the country's efforts to reduce poverty, aligned with broader economic growth and social development initiatives. The initial years between 2009 and 2013 exhibited a slower rate of poverty reduction, with fluctuations maintaining the poverty rate slightly above 13%. However, from 2014 onwards, the decline became more consistent, reflecting improved economic policies, social welfare programs, and a growing middle class. This shift was likely driven by both government efforts, such as the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH), and broader economic factors, including increased investment in infrastructure and poverty alleviation.

Despite this positive trend, the graph also highlights a slowing pace of poverty reduction in the later years, particularly after 2015. While the poverty rate

continued to decrease, the rate of improvement diminished, suggesting that persistent inequality and regional disparities still pose challenges. Rural areas, in particular, have experienced slower poverty reduction, likely due to lower levels of economic development, limited access to basic services, and inadequate infrastructure. The flattening of the decline towards the end of the decade also indicates the need for more targeted interventions, particularly for marginalized populations such as those living in remote areas, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Additionally, the gradual decline in poverty rates can be seen alongside an increase in economic inequality, as reflected by the Gini coefficient, which indicates the growing gap between the rich and poor despite overall economic growth.

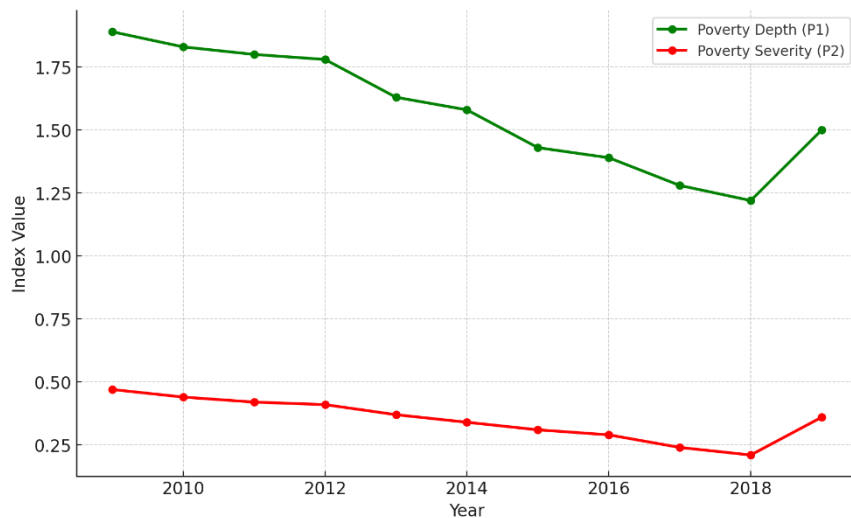


Figure 2. Depth and Severity of Poverty in Indonesia over the Last 8 years
Source: Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs, 2020

Figure 2: Depth and Severity of Poverty in Indonesia over the Last 10 Years illustrates two key indicators that provide insights into the distribution and characteristics of poverty in Indonesia: Poverty Depth (P1) and Poverty Severity (P2). The Poverty Depth index measures the average distance of the poor from the poverty line. A higher value indicates that the poor are further from the poverty line, while a decrease in this value suggests an improvement in the living conditions of the poor. Over the last decade, Poverty Depth steadily decreased from 1.89 in 2009 to 1.22 in 2019, with a slight uptick in 2019. This suggests that, on the whole, the poorest segments of the population have experienced improvements in their economic status, though the upward trend in 2019 indicates that the progress may not have been uniform across all income groups.

Meanwhile, the Poverty Severity index, which measures the inequality among the poor, also showed significant improvement. A higher value of Poverty Severity reflects greater inequality within the impoverished population, while a lower value suggests that the disparity among the poor is reducing. Over the course of the decade, Poverty Severity dropped from 0.47 in 2009 to 0.21 in 2019, indicating that the gap between the poorest members of society has narrowed and that the poorest individuals are now closer to the poverty line. This downward trend in both indicators reveals that poverty is becoming less severe and more evenly distributed, signifying that economic progress is benefiting the most disadvantaged populations. However, the slight increase in both indices in 2019

implies that while overall poverty levels have improved, certain groups may still face challenges in overcoming deep poverty and inequality.

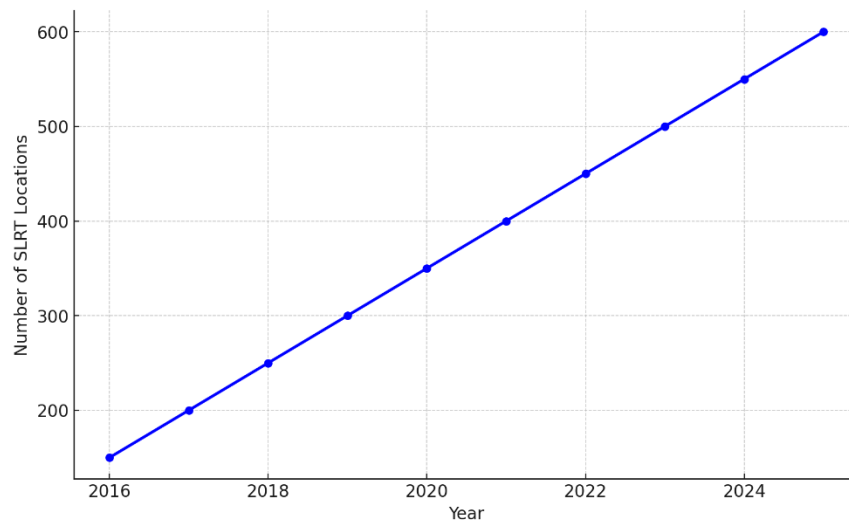


Figure 3. Distribution of SLRT Locations shows the growth of Sistem Layanan dan Rujukan Terpadu (SLRT)

Source: Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs, 2020

Distribution of SLRT Locations shows the growth of Sistem Layanan dan Rujukan Terpadu (SLRT) locations across Indonesia from 2016 to 2025. The graph indicates a steady increase in the number of SLRT locations, which were initially established in 2016 and expanded rapidly in the following years. By 2025, the number of locations has reached 600, reflecting the government's ongoing effort to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of social services for vulnerable populations, particularly in rural and underserved areas. SLRTs play a crucial role in the integration and delivery of social protection services, providing a one-stop platform for identifying needs, addressing complaints, and referring individuals to relevant social welfare programs. The growth in SLRT locations reflects a broader effort to streamline and improve the accessibility of social services, aligning with the Ministry of Social Affairs' goal of ensuring that assistance reaches those who need it most.

The Ministry's strategic framework emphasizes the sustainability of social protection programs that focus on addressing the most vulnerable populations, including the poor, elderly, people with disabilities, and children. Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH), Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP), and rehabilitation programs for vulnerable groups are key interventions in this strategic approach. The plan recognizes the need for a more inclusive, adaptive, and efficient social protection system, particularly in light of challenges such as urbanization, climate change, and economic inequality.

The Ministry's vision is to enhance the quality of life for all Indonesian citizens, ensuring access to basic needs such as food, healthcare, and education, while also strengthening the social safety net for vulnerable groups. This is reflected in the goals of improving social resilience, reducing poverty, and addressing social inequality through integrated social welfare systems. The mission also focuses on improving the governance and effectiveness of these

systems by strengthening local government capacities and involving the private sector in social responsibility.

The strategic objectives outlined in the plan include reducing poverty, increasing the quality of life for disadvantaged communities, and enhancing the capacities of the Ministry's staff and local stakeholders. The Ministry aims to address inequality by improving access to social services, expanding financial inclusion through mechanisms such as the Social Protection Card (KIP), and improving the efficiency of service delivery at both central and local levels. A key challenge identified in the plan is the disparity in social welfare outcomes between urban and rural areas, with rural communities often having less access to social services.

A critical aspect of the strategic plan involves data integration and the creation of a more robust Data Terpadu Kesejahteraan Sosial (DTKS) system. This data-driven approach aims to provide real-time insights into the needs of the population, allowing for more targeted and effective interventions. The Ministry's commitment to digital transformation, as outlined in its 25-year roadmap for digital transformation, seeks to enhance the accessibility and transparency of social protection programs.

Additionally, the strategic plan includes improving human resources within the Ministry to ensure the effective implementation of social protection initiatives. This includes the certification and accreditation of social welfare workers, training local government staff, and promoting gender-responsive policies. The goal is to develop a skilled and capable workforce that can meet the growing demand for social services and address the diverse needs of Indonesia's vulnerable populations.

2. Evaluation of the Ministry of Social Affairs Policy on Social Protection Programs in Indonesia

This section discusses the findings from the evaluation of the Ministry of Social Affairs' social protection programs in Indonesia, Framework from Public Policy Analysis: An Integrated Approach to provide a structured analysis. Dunn's approach emphasizes understanding the policy process through the stages of problem identification, policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation (Dunn, 2015). These stages are interrelated and form the foundation for analyzing the impact and effectiveness of public policies, such as those implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

a. Problem Identification

The first stage in Dunn's framework focuses on identifying societal problems that demand governmental intervention. In the context of Indonesia, the primary issue addressed by the Ministry of Social Affairs' social protection programs is poverty reduction and social inequality. According to the Rencana Strategis Kementerian Sosial 2020-2024, the Ministry targets vulnerable populations, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, and low-income families (Bappenas, 2019). The social protection programs such as Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) and Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP) were formulated to address this problem by providing financial aid and food assistance. Despite improvements in poverty levels, as evidenced by a decline in the poverty rate from 11.2% in 2011 to 9.22% in 2019, the problem of social inequality remains pervasive, especially in rural areas where poverty levels are higher (BPS, 2019).

Through Dunn's model, the identification of this issue shows that the policy interventions are targeted at addressing persistent poverty and social vulnerability. However, the underlying causes of poverty, such as limited access to quality education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, remain inadequately addressed. This necessitates a deeper exploration of the effectiveness of the implemented policies and the need for integrating broader development goals into social protection strategies.

b. Policy Formulation

Dunn's second stage involves the formulation of policies to address the identified issues. In this case, the Ministry of Social Affairs has designed a series of social protection programs that are part of a broader set of poverty alleviation strategies. The Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH), a conditional cash transfer program, and the Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP), a food assistance program, have been central to the Ministry's strategy for improving the welfare of Indonesia's most vulnerable populations (Habibullah, 2017). These programs were formulated based on comprehensive policy documents, including the Rencana Strategis Kementerian Sosial 2020-2024, which outlined the goals and strategies to address social protection gaps.

While the programs have been aligned with national development priorities, the policy formulation process, according to Dunn, must consider not only immediate outcomes but also the long-term sustainability of these interventions. One key finding from the evaluation is that the conditional cash transfers in PKH have successfully alleviated short-term poverty by providing a safety net for the poor (Wahyuni et al., 2023). However, the program does not fully address the root causes of poverty, such as access to quality jobs, healthcare, and education. Additionally, BSP has shown effectiveness in reducing food insecurity but faces challenges in ensuring adequate distribution and quality control of food aid, especially in remote areas (Alam et al., 2023).

In Dunn's terms, the policy design is robust in addressing the immediate symptoms of poverty but requires more comprehensive measures for long-term poverty reduction. This includes expanding access to employment opportunities, education, and healthcare, areas that are indirectly related to the Ministry's current social protection initiatives.

c. Policy Implementation

Dunn highlights that effective policy implementation is crucial for achieving the desired outcomes. In Indonesia, the Ministry of Social Affairs has faced significant challenges in the implementation phase of its social protection programs. The government's bureaucratic complexity and the challenge of reaching geographically dispersed populations have hindered the timely and effective distribution of benefits (Devereux & McGregor, 2014).

For instance, PKH beneficiaries must meet specific conditions, such as ensuring children attend school or receive health services, which requires local administrative bodies to monitor compliance. However, inefficiencies in local government systems, corruption, and resource limitations have often led to delays in fund disbursement and irregularities in compliance checks. As a result, the intended benefits of the program do not always reach the most vulnerable groups in a timely manner. BSP, similarly, has faced logistical issues, particularly in terms of ensuring food aid is delivered to remote or underserved areas.

In line with Dunn's implementation theory, it becomes evident that although the policies are well-designed, their execution has been uneven. The gap between policy design and implementation highlights the importance of strengthening local governance and ensuring that public servants are adequately trained and equipped to handle social protection tasks effectively (Alam et al., 2023).

d. Policy Evaluation

Dunn's final stage is policy evaluation, which involves assessing the impact of policies and determining whether they have achieved their intended outcomes. The evaluation of the Ministry's social protection programs indicates that while both PKH and BSP have contributed to short-term poverty alleviation and food security, they have not fundamentally changed the underlying structure of poverty in Indonesia. The findings show that PKH has successfully provided financial support to low-income families but has not significantly improved long-term income stability or reduced reliance on government aid (Ayunda et al., 2021). Similarly, BSP has addressed immediate food security needs but has not tackled the broader issue of nutritional inequality or ensured consistent access to quality food (Wahyuni et al., 2023).

Moreover, while the Ministry's strategic plan emphasizes sustainable development and the integration of gender-sensitive approaches, these goals have not been fully realized in the implementation of social protection programs. Issues such as gender inequality, especially in rural areas, continue to persist, and vulnerable groups like people with disabilities and elderly individuals still face barriers to full participation in the programs.

In Dunn's framework, evaluation reveals that the outcomes of these programs are mixed. On the one hand, they have made significant strides in providing immediate relief; on the other hand, they have not addressed the root causes of poverty or created long-term solutions for sustainable welfare. The evaluation of these programs also suggests the need for policy adjustments, particularly in terms of improving targeting mechanisms, ensuring better service delivery, and integrating broader development goals into social protection strategies.

3. William Dunn's Circular Policy Evaluation Model: Application to Social Protection Programs

The evaluation of public policies is a crucial process for ensuring that they effectively address societal issues and achieve their intended outcomes. William Dunn's Circular Policy Evaluation Model provides a comprehensive framework for assessing the policy process, emphasizing the interconnected stages of problem identification, policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. This cyclical approach ensures that policies are not only well-designed but also continuously refined to meet the changing needs of the population.

In the context of social protection programs in Indonesia, such as Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) and Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP), Dunn's model offers valuable insights into how these programs are designed, implemented, and evaluated. These programs aim to alleviate poverty and improve food security for vulnerable populations. By applying Dunn's framework, we can critically analyze the effectiveness of these initiatives and identify areas where improvements can be made to enhance their long-term impact.

Table 1. Evaluation Of These Social Protection Programs

Stage	Description	Application to Social Protection Programs
1. Problem Identification	Identifying societal problems that demand governmental intervention, such as poverty and inequality.	The Ministry of Social Affairs identifies poverty, social inequality, and vulnerability in populations such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and low-income families.
2. Policy Formulation	Designing policies to address the identified problems, considering the short- and long-term impacts.	Policies like Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) (conditional cash transfers) and Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP) (food assistance) are formulated to reduce poverty and food insecurity. However, challenges remain in addressing root causes such as access to education and employment.
3. Policy Implementation	Implementing policies while addressing obstacles like bureaucratic inefficiency, resource constraints, and coordination.	PKH and BSP face challenges in effective distribution, especially in remote areas. Local government inefficiencies and logistical problems hinder timely delivery of benefits.
4. Policy Evaluation	Assessing the effectiveness of policies, whether they meet their objectives, and identifying areas for improvement.	Evaluation shows PKH and BSP provide immediate relief but do not address long-term poverty causes, such as education and healthcare access. Gender inequality and accessibility for vulnerable groups like people with disabilities need further attention.

Source: Author, 2025

The analysis of social protection policies in Indonesia, specifically focusing on the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) and Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP), reveals several key findings about the effectiveness of these programs in addressing poverty and social inequality. Based on the findings from Dunn's evaluation framework, which assesses the policy process through problem identification, policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation, we can see that while these programs have provided substantial relief, they have also highlighted several areas for improvement in achieving sustainable poverty reduction.

Firstly, the identification of the problem that the Ministry of Social Affairs addresses through PKH and BSP is rooted in persistent poverty and social inequality in Indonesia. While poverty levels have reduced from 11.2% in 2011 to 9.22% in 2019, significant disparities remain, particularly in rural areas, where poverty is more deeply entrenched. Research by Hoddinott & Mekasha (2020) supports this view, emphasizing that while immediate relief has been provided, these programs have not significantly altered the structural drivers of poverty. This highlights the need for more integrated strategies that not only provide financial assistance but also target the underlying causes such as limited access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities.

The policy formulation for PKH and BSP has been aligned with national goals, but, as noted by Devereux & McGregor (2014), these programs focus heavily on alleviating short-term poverty without tackling the root causes of social inequality. The conditional cash transfers in PKH have proven effective in reducing

immediate poverty for families with school-aged children, but the broader socio-economic challenges remain largely unaddressed. BSP, on the other hand, has made significant strides in improving food security, but issues such as food distribution, quality control, and logistical challenges in remote areas persist. As highlighted by Steinkopff et al. (2016), addressing these challenges requires a more efficient system of distribution, which ensures that aid reaches the most vulnerable in a timely and reliable manner.

During the implementation phase, challenges related to bureaucracy, corruption, and the lack of capacity at the local government level have hindered the timely and equitable distribution of benefits. According to Hoddinott & Mekasha (2020), effective implementation requires strengthening local governance systems and ensuring that public servants are well-equipped to handle social protection tasks. This is consistent with findings from Kurnianingsih et al. (2020), which found that while the programs had high beneficiary satisfaction in terms of food security, the efficiency of the implementation process, especially in remote areas, needs improvement.

Finally, the evaluation of these social protection programs indicates that while they have had a significant impact in the short term, they have not fully addressed the structural inequalities that perpetuate poverty in Indonesia. As noted by Kuriakose et al. (2013), PKH's focus on conditional cash transfers has not led to long-term improvements in income stability, and BSP has not resolved broader issues of nutritional inequality. This suggests a need for a more holistic approach that integrates long-term development strategies, such as improving access to quality education and healthcare, along with social protection interventions to ensure sustainable poverty reduction in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Evaluated the effectiveness of Indonesia's social protection policies, specifically the Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) and Bantuan Sosial Pangan (BSP), within the framework of Dunn's Circular Policy Evaluation Model. The findings reveal that while these programs have successfully provided immediate relief in terms of poverty alleviation and food security, they have not fully addressed the root causes of social inequality or created sustainable, long-term solutions. The policy formulations, while aligned with national goals, have largely focused on addressing short-term needs without fully integrating broader development objectives, such as improving access to quality education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Consequently, while poverty levels have decreased, particularly in urban areas, significant disparities remain in rural regions, suggesting a need for more comprehensive and integrated approaches to poverty reduction.

Furthermore, the evaluation of the implementation phase highlights the persistent challenges faced in the distribution of benefits, especially in remote areas, due to logistical inefficiencies and local government limitations. These issues have led to delays and inconsistencies in the delivery of assistance, hindering the full potential of the social protection programs. Despite these challenges, the evaluation process provides valuable insights for policymakers, emphasizing the need for strengthened local governance and improved service delivery systems. Future research should focus on integrating more inclusive and long-term strategies that tackle both the symptoms and root causes of poverty, ensuring that social protection programs in Indonesia can adapt to evolving

socioeconomic conditions and continue to effectively support the most vulnerable populations.

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