

The Role of the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT-DD) in Improving the Welfare of Poor Families in Sibaluton Village, Basidondo District, Tolitoli Regency

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Abstract

Study of the Role of the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT-DD) in improving the welfare of poor families in Sibaluton Village, Basidondo District, Tolitoli Regency. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method, uses data reduction, presents data, and concludes in data analysis. Data sources are primary and secondary data sources. The total number is 14 respondents. This study uses data collection techniques with observation, interviews and documentation. The results of this study show: 1) The role of the village fund direct cash assistance program in improving the welfare of poor families in Sibaluton village, Basidondo District. 2) the process of managing BLT village funds is carried out by the village itself by carrying out village deliberations in accordance with the recipient criteria, which is carried out at the beginning of the grant. 3) The village fund BLT program is carried out transparently because it is distributed directly from the village to the recipients. 4) Recipients of BLT village funds in Sibaluton village are very right on target because the determination of prospective recipients through village deliberation to determine who is eligible or not. 5) BLT village funds are the authority of the village itself. 6) BLT village funds can only be used to meet daily needs such as food and medical treatment. This village fund BLT cannot be used to renovate houses and meet clothing needs if it is associated with welfare indicators, so the Village Fund BLT is not effective in improving the welfare of recipient families.

Keywords: *Direct Cash Assistance (BLT); Village Fund; and the welfare of poor families.*

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the developing countries that is still facing various structural problems in social and economic development, one of which is poverty. Poverty has become a classic problem that is still experienced by some Indonesians, especially low-income households. This condition is influenced by various factors, including low education levels, low labor productivity, inadequate wage levels, income distribution inequality, limited job opportunities, and political and economic conditions that are not yet fully stable (Todaro & Smith, 2015). The further impact of these conditions is the increase in the price of basic necessities which leads to a decrease in the purchasing power of the poor, thus further worsening their welfare level (Edi Yanto, 2020).

Poverty is also a consequence of inequality in economic development characterized by high unemployment rates and income inequality. Therefore, poverty is the focus of the study of various disciplines and the main concern in public policy, both at the national and regional levels (Sukirno, 2013). The government has a strategic role in formulating social protection policies to maintain the survival of the poor and prevent the decline in their welfare. One form of government intervention is the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance (BLT-DD) program, which is designed as a social safety net for poor and vulnerable families (Edi Yanto, 2021).

The Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) program is social assistance in the form of cash given to Target Households (RTS) who are classified as very poor and almost poor. BLT-DD recipients are determined based on certain criteria, including not receiving other social assistance such as the Family Hope Program (PKH), Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT), or Pre-Employment Cards, not having adequate economic reserves, and having social vulnerabilities such as family members suffering from chronic or chronic diseases (Kemendes PDTT, 2023). This program aims to reduce poverty rates, maintain people's purchasing power, and improve the welfare of poor families in a sustainable manner.

Based on the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration Number 6 of 2023, Direct Cash Assistance for Village Funds (BLT-DD) is defined as assistance sourced from Village Funds and intended for the poor (Ministry of Rural Development and Rural Development, 2023). This provision is also strengthened in Permendes PDTT Number 13 of 2023 concerning Operational Guidelines for the Focus on the Use of Village Funds in 2024 (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Number 963 of 2023). Through this regulation, the government affirms its commitment to supporting the improvement of the welfare of village communities.

Conceptually, the BLT-DD program plays an important role in improving the welfare of poor families through several strategic mechanisms. The direct distribution of cash assistance helps reduce economic pressure due to limited income, while the

use of Village Funds to support social services such as education and health contributes to improving the quality of life of the community (Edi Yanto, 2022). In addition, BLT-DD also opens up opportunities for poor families to develop small businesses and increase their economic capacity, which can ultimately encourage local economic growth and strengthen the social resilience of rural communities. In order for the program's objectives to be achieved optimally, transparency, accountability, and accuracy of targets are needed in the management and distribution of aid.

Based on this description, the researcher is interested in studying in more depth the role of the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT-DD) in improving the welfare of poor families. Therefore, this study is entitled "**The Role of the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT-DD) in Improving the Welfare of Poor Families in Sibaluton Village, Basidondo District, Tolitoli Regency.**"

The formulation of the problems in this study is: (1) how is the role of the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT-DD) in improving the welfare of poor families in Sibaluton Village, Basidondo District; and (2) how effective the implementation of the BLT-DD program is in improving the welfare of poor families in the village. In line with the formulation of the problem, the purpose of this research is to determine the role and effectiveness of the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT-DD) in improving the welfare of poor families in Sibaluton Village, Basidondo District.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a **qualitative descriptive** method that aims to describe, record, and interpret the conditions and phenomena that occur in the field in depth. Qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of spoken and written words based on observable behavior (Margono, 2013). The data used consisted of **qualitative data**, namely information in the form of words, schemas, and images relevant to the focus of the research, as well as **quantitative data** in the form of numbers, especially the number of recipients of Direct Cash Assistance for Village Funds (BLT-DD) (Sugiyono, 2015).

The source of research data includes **primary data** and **secondary data**. Primary data was obtained directly from the object of the research, namely village officials (Village Head, Village Secretary, Village Treasurer, and Head of Planning) and families of BLT-DD recipients in Sibaluton Village, Basidondo District, which is related to the implementation and role of the BLT-DD program in improving the welfare of the poor. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained indirectly through documents, literature, journals, and previous research relevant to the topic of BLT-DD and community welfare at the research site.

Data collection techniques are carried out through **interviews, observations, and documentation**. Interviews are conducted directly and orally with informants to obtain in-depth information (Subagyo, 2011). Observation was carried out by directly

observing conditions and activities at the research site (Tersiana, 2018). Documentation is used to trace historical and supporting data in the form of records, reports, and other relevant documents to strengthen research findings (Bugin, 2013).

The data analysis in this study uses **the Miles and Huberman** qualitative analysis model, which includes four stages, namely **data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion** drawn. The collected data is selected, focused, and simplified to obtain relevant information, then presented in the form of descriptives, matrices, or tables for easy understanding. The final stage is the drawing of conclusions that are temporary and continue to develop as the supporting evidence increases until a clear and comprehensive picture of the research object is obtained (Miles & Huberman, 2018).

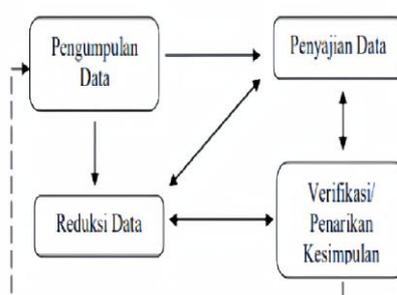


Figure 1. Qualitative data analysis techniques

According to Sugiyono (2019). The validity of the data is used to prove whether the research conducted is really a scientific research to test the data obtained. In the validity test of data in qualitative research, it includes tests, credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reability), and confirmability (objectivity).

The data credibility test was carried out by triangulation. Triangulation in this study is defined as checking data from various sources by sharing methods, and various times. In triangulation, there is source triangulation, triangulation of data collection techniques, and time: 1) Source triangulation, which is to test the credibility of data is carried out by checking data that has been obtained through several sources. Data that has been analyzed by the researcher so as to produce a conclusion is then asked to agree with all data sources; 2) Triangulation Techniques to test the credibility of data are carried out by checking data to the same source with different techniques. In the data obtained, for example through interviews, then checked with observation, documentation; 3) Time Triangulation, which is the checking of data conducted by interviews, observations, or other techniques in different times or situations.

In this study, data checking was carried out by means of triangulation techniques, namely by comparing observation data with interviews with informants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews with 14 informants, the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT-DD) in Sibaluton Village, Basidondo District has an important role in improving the welfare of poor families. This program helps meet the

basic needs of families through the provision of direct economic assistance, thereby reducing the pressure due to limited income. In addition, BLT-DD also supports improving the quality of life of the community through the use of village funds that have an impact on social and economic aspects, including opportunities for small business development. The program also encourages the strengthening of the local economy, noting that its implementation needs to uphold the principles of transparency, efficiency, and accuracy of targets so that assistance is truly received by families in need.

In terms of effectiveness, the implementation of BLT-DD in Sibaluton Village is considered to have followed the established procedures, although there are still obstacles in the aspect of timeliness of distribution, especially in the first and second months due to delays in the disbursement of village funds. However, in the following months, the distribution was carried out on time. In addition, the accuracy in determining the recipients, the amount of assistance, the calculation of costs, and the accuracy of the target have been carried out in accordance with applicable regulations. This shows that in general, the BLT-DD program is quite effective in helping to improve the welfare of poor families, although improvements are still needed in the technical aspects of distribution so that the program's goals can be achieved optimally.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the Village Fund Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT-DD) has a very important role in improving the welfare of poor families in Sibaluton Village, Basidondo District. This program helps reduce income constraints through the provision of direct economic assistance, as well as contributes to improving the quality of life of the community through support for basic needs and small business development opportunities. With transparent and efficient management, BLT-DD is able to encourage the economic strengthening of underprivileged families in meeting their daily needs. In terms of effectiveness, the distribution of BLT-DD is considered to have run according to the mechanism, especially in terms of timeliness and accuracy of targets, with the number of recipients as many as 34 Beneficiary Families (KPM), although there is still a need for improvement in the process of determining aid recipients to be more optimal.

In this regard, it is suggested that the village government in the future further increase transparency and strengthen the mechanism of networking and communication to the community to ensure equity and justice. BLT-DD recipients are expected to be able to use the assistance more productively, not only for consumption, but also as business capital to increase economic independence. Meanwhile, for future researchers, it is recommended to develop a more in-depth study by expanding the

literature study and focusing the research on certain aspects so that the research results become more comprehensive and useful.

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