

EMPOWERING THE POOR COMMUNITY IN GAMPONG ATEUK PAHLAWAN THROUGH PROGRAM KELUARGA HARAPAN (PKH)

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ABSTRACT

Family Hope Program (PKH) is a poverty alleviation program, especially in the fields of education and health for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, or those with toddlers. The purpose of this study was to determine community empowerment through the Family Hope Program (PKH) implemented in Gampoeng Ateuk Pahlawan. This study uses a Qualitative method. Data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The results of the study on whether the Family Hope Program (PKH) assistance has reached the right target for PKH assistance recipients according to the acceptance criteria in Gampoeng Ateuk Pahlawan and examines the extent of community empowerment in Gampoeng Ateuk Pahlawan through the existence of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in the fields of health and education, namely by not having children drop out of school. In the fields of education and in the field of health, namely free health care services. Meanwhile, the supporting factors in the implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in empowering the community through the Family Hope Program which aims to improve the welfare of the community receiving PKH assistance are also reviewing the community who are entitled to receive PKH assistance so that they can be helped with this program, improving government services by continuing to update data on poor people who are entitled to receive PKH assistance, so that they can be helped with this program. The inhibiting factors in the implementation of the Family Hope Program in empowering the community through the Family Hope Program (PKH) are the use of funds that are not following the program's designation, such as being used for daily needs. The suggestion of the results of this study for the Banda Aceh City Social Service is expected to continue to update data on beneficiaries of the Family Hope Program (PKH), so that the poor can be helped in the fields of education and health. And for the community receiving the Family Hope Program (PKH), it is expected not to use the assistance funds for other consumptive purposes, such as to meet the costs of daily family needs.

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, as in many other developing countries around the world, poverty alleviation remains a key aspiration for every national leader and ruling regime. In

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Indonesia, efforts to reduce poverty have continually been launched by the government through various assistance models and poverty reduction programs that directly interact with communities. Islam defines poverty not only as the inability to meet basic needs, but also as a cultural issue, where individuals become poor due to unfavorable behaviors such as laziness and unwillingness to work (Syauqi et al., 2016:70). Poverty is a global issue that affects both developed and developing countries, though with different degrees of severity. In Indonesia, as a developing country, poverty is a crucial and serious issue as it causes many people to struggle in meeting their basic needs, such as clothing, food, housing, education, and healthcare (Oos M. Anvas, 2014:84).

Community empowerment is a continuous and active effort to improve the condition of a community, based on principles of social justice and mutual respect. Community workers aim to facilitate the process of achieving social justice and mutual respect through broad development programs that involve all elements of society. Community empowerment promotes values of transparency, equality, accountability, opportunity, choice, participation, mutual benefit, reciprocity, and continuous learning. At its core, community empowerment is about educating and enabling people to act by providing the necessary strength or tools (Zubaedi, 2013:4).

The Family Hope Program (PKH), initiated by the Indonesian government (Ministry of Social Affairs), provides conditional non-cash financial assistance to Beneficiary Families (KPM). In return, these families are required to meet specific conditions related to human resource development, particularly in education and health. The main goals of PKH are to reduce poverty, break the cycle of intergenerational poverty, improve the quality of human resources, and encourage behavioral changes among beneficiaries that support their welfare improvement (UPPKH, Ministry of Social Affairs RI, 2007:1).

For poor communities, economic issues remain complex and critical. Economic hardship affects many other aspects, such as quality of life, education, and healthcare, significantly influencing the community's socio-economic welfare. It also affects the decline in the Human Development Index (HDI), which hinders Indonesia's progress from becoming a developed nation. A developed country is characterized by citizens with a high standard of living, achieved through a strong and equitable economy that is adaptable to technological advancements in all aspects of life (Usman, 2018:3). Indonesia's large population, especially in urban areas, creates various social problems. These problems often arise from the gap between societal values and existing realities. Causes of social issues include social processes and natural disasters. The identification of social problems is typically determined by authorized institutions such as community leaders, government bodies, social organizations, and public deliberations (Seotomo, 2006:315).

According to Rahayu (2012), the benefits of the Family Hope Program can be seen in both the short and long term. In the short term, it reduces household expenditures (income effect); in the long term, it helps break the poverty cycle by improving nutrition, education, and children's income capacity (price effect), and offering future assurance (insurance effect). Moreover, it aims to change the behavior of poor families, who often lack access to information about rights, benefits, opportunities, and face high indirect costs (transportation, uniforms, etc.) and opportunity costs (children working instead of attending school). PKH also helps reduce child labor, prevent social disintegration, and

enhance the quality of public services through complementary improvements in health and education, social protection systems, and decentralization (Rahayu, 2012:101). To reduce dependency on social assistance, the Ministry of Social Affairs collaborates with the Ministry of Industry to support Joint Business Groups (KUBE). This cooperation also links KUBE production results with entrepreneurs' needs, enabling social aid recipients to run independent businesses and access marketing channels (Sasono, 1998:833). The legal foundation for these programs is Law No. 40 of 2004 on the National Social Security System (State Gazette of the Republic of Indonesia Year 2004 Number 150, Supplement Number 4456), which defines:

The Family Hope Program (PKH) as conditional cash assistance to poor and vulnerable individuals/families registered in the unified poverty database, processed by the Social Welfare Information and Data Center, and designated as PKH beneficiaries.

Social Assistance Providers as working units under ministries/agencies of the central or local governments tasked with implementing poverty alleviation programs, including social protection, social security, social empowerment, social rehabilitation, and basic services. Complementary Assistance as cash, goods, or services in the fields of health, education, energy subsidies, economy, housing, and other basic needs that support PKH. Based on these expert opinions and legal frameworks, the PKH is expected to change the behavior of the poor in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan, particularly by increasing their awareness of the importance of education, health, and social welfare. With improved and proactive behavior, it is hoped that communities can better utilize the aid provided to enhance their quality of life. The success of PKH largely depends on the active involvement of both the community and local government. Thus, full support from all stakeholders in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan is essential to ensure that the aid reaches those truly in need and is used wisely.

One of the key objectives of PKH is to build economic independence among beneficiaries. Through training and business support, beneficiaries are expected to run independent enterprises and reduce their reliance on social assistance. Another goal is to motivate recipients to improve their living standards through self-initiative. Cooperation with KUBE and skills development is anticipated to provide greater opportunities for poor families to escape poverty. According to the researcher's observation, the empowerment process in this village still faces several challenges that require serious attention. One major issue is the lack of active community participation. Many residents are not fully engaged in existing programs, whether due to a lack of information, low education levels, or widespread apathy. This low participation may hinder the effectiveness of empowerment initiatives.

Furthermore, limited resources, both financial and human, pose significant obstacles. Often, the budget allocated for empowerment is insufficient to meet the needs of the entire community, and there is also a shortage of professionals capable of providing training and mentoring. This leads to suboptimal or even failed program implementation. This study will also explore how coordination among village governments, community organizations, and non-governmental institutions affects the effectiveness of the Family Hope Program (PKH). The focus is on how programs overlap or gaps occur and their impact on

beneficiaries. Moreover, the research will examine how the community in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan engages in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of PKH as part of the empowerment process.

RESEARCH METHOD

In conducting an analytical study on improving community welfare through the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan, the author employed a qualitative method and a descriptive qualitative approach. The qualitative method was chosen for this study because it does not prioritize numerical data collection, as is the case with quantitative methods. Instead, this method focuses on in-depth exploration of the phenomenon being studied, based on the natural setting of the research object – such as its physical and social conditions – which serve as indicators throughout the research process. (Herdiansyah, 2012:17).

The essence of qualitative research is understanding, which refers to comprehending what others feel, understanding others' thoughts and perspectives, and interpreting a phenomenon (central phenomenon) from the viewpoint of a particular group or community within its natural context. The kind of understanding referred to here means truly seeing from the perspective of the subject or a group of subjects, while the researcher's role is merely to convey or present what is seen and perceived by those subjects.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Family Hope Program (Program Keluarga Harapan or PKH) is one of the poverty alleviation initiatives launched by the government to improve community welfare, especially in the fields of education and health. The selection of Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan, located in Baiturrahman Subdistrict, Banda Aceh City, as the research site for studying Community Empowerment through the Family Hope Program (PKH) in improving the welfare of extremely poor households, is based on the existing problems surrounding the implementation of this program. The core objective of the program – to improve the welfare of the poor in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan – has not yet been fully achieved. The problems include inaccurate data regarding extremely poor households in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan, leading to unequal distribution of aid. Moreover, the monitoring system in the implementation of the PKH still contains loopholes that could hinder the program's effectiveness in the field.

Therefore, the issue of poverty alleviation programs remains an important topic of discussion, particularly in evaluating the effectiveness of such programs in empowering and improving the welfare of poor communities through the Family Hope Program (PKH). The distribution of PKH assistance has reportedly reached the appropriate target groups based on the eligibility criteria for receiving PKH benefits in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan, Baiturrahman Subdistrict, Banda Aceh City. According to the applicable laws and regulations, the criteria include households with children aged 0–6 years, children under 18 who have not completed basic education, and pregnant women. PKH assistance is distributed to beneficiaries four times a year and will be terminated if no family member meets the previously mentioned criteria. In accordance with the focus of this research – specifically on community empowerment through the Family Hope Program (PKH) in

achieving community welfare in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan – this process is essential to assess.

Based on field observations, it is evident that the distribution of PKH aid has successfully reached the target recipients who meet the criteria of being extremely poor. The aid is often directed toward families with school-aged children and pregnant women, as well as those vulnerable to social issues that hinder their empowerment, such as economic needs. It is known that in terms of community empowerment through the Family Hope Program (PKH), there is an element of empowerment and benefit expansion that participants can directly receive. For example, there are no longer children from poor families in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan who are excluded from the PKH protection program. As far as the researcher has observed, the implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan – particularly in education and health – has been going well, without significant obstacles that would disrupt the operation of the program in Banda Aceh City. However, a recurring problem in the implementation of the PKH in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan is the lack of awareness, especially among pregnant women or those with toddlers who receive PKH assistance. There is also a lack of understanding and participation in the socialization activities held to guide on empowering communities through the Family Hope Program (PKH).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research regarding the effectiveness of the distribution of the Family Hope Program (PKH) assistance in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan, Baiturrahman Subdistrict, Banda Aceh City, the findings are as follows: Overall, the PKH assistance in Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan has reached most of its intended targets in supporting poor communities. However, there is a need to improve the recipient data verification system, enhance transparency in distribution, and provide better education to beneficiaries on how to utilize the aid. These efforts are crucial to ensure that the PKH assistance has a truly positive and sustainable impact on the welfare of the poor in the area. Field findings indicate that community involvement in the data verification and monitoring process remains low. This lack of participation has made the program less transparent and has the potential to cause dissatisfaction among community members who feel excluded from the decision-making process, resulting in beneficiaries not being properly verified according to the available information and records.

Meanwhile, one of the inhibiting factors in the implementation of the Family Hope Program in empowering the community is the misuse of the PKH funds, which are often spent on daily living expenses. This practice deviates from the program's intended objectives, which are to support educational and health costs for pregnant women and families with young children. As a result, the purpose of the aid is not fulfilled, leading to dependency on the program's assistance. This dependency hinders the empowerment process, further compounded by a lack of participation in socialization activities designed to increase understanding of empowerment and the benefits of the Family Hope Program in achieving its intended goals.

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