

Improving community welfare through Non-Cash Food Support Programs in Jeneponto Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Peningkatan kesejahteraan masyarakat melalui Program Bantuan Pangan Non Tunai di Kabupaten Jeneponto, Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia

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Abstract

To improve people's welfare, policies are needed that can help people get above the poverty line. This study aims to describe how the implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program can improve the welfare of the people in Jeneponto Regency. This study uses a qualitative research design. Data collection techniques are through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that the Non-Cash Assistance Program in Jeneponto Regency can improve people's welfare which is marked by a decrease in the percentage of the poverty rate from 14.28 percent in 2021, down in 2022 to 13.73 percent. This decrease in the percentage of the poverty rate has made Jeneponto Regency no longer the Regency with the highest poverty rate in South Sulawesi Province. For services, it was found that e-warongs serving the community had low competence, which affected the quality of food sold by e-warongs to beneficiary families. This study concludes, improvement is needed in determining the target group by setting strict criteria for prospective program recipients, and it is necessary to have a cluster for each category, so that the formulation is also adjusted based on needs. Determination of providers must apply a competition system, so that the quality of basic ingredients is maintained at affordable prices.

Keywords: poverty alleviation; public policy; public welfare

Abstrak

Untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan masyarakat, diperlukan kebijakan yang dapat membantu masyarakat keluar dari garis kemiskinan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bagaimana pelaksanaan Program Bantuan Pangan Non Tunai dapat meningkatkan kesejahteraan masyarakat di Kabupaten Jeneponto. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Program Bantuan Non Tunai, di Kabupaten Jeneponto dapat meningkatkan kesejahteraan masyarakat yang ditandai dengan penurunan persentase angka kemiskinan dari tahun 2021 sebanyak 14,28 persen, turun di tahun 2022 menjadi 13,73 persen. Penurunan persentase angka kemiskinan ini menjadikan Kabupaten Jeneponto tidak lagi menyandang kabupaten dengan angka kemiskinan paling tinggi di Provinsi Sulawesi Selatan. Untuk layanan ditemukan bahwa e-warung yang melayani masyarakat memiliki kompetensi rendah, yang berpengaruh pada kualitas makanan yang dijual oleh e-warung kepada keluarga penerima manfaat. Studi ini menyimpulkan, dibutuhkan perbaikan pada penentuan kelompok sasaran dengan penetapan kriteria yang ketat pada calon penerima program, serta diperlukan adanya klaster untuk masing-masing kategori, sehingga formulasinya juga disesuaikan berbasis kebutuhan. Penentuan penyedia harus menerapkan sistem kompetisi, agar kualitas bahan pokok terjaga dengan harga terjangkau.

Kata kunci: pengentasan kemiskinan; kebijakan publik; kesejahteraan masyarakat

Introduction

The creation of social welfare is the goal of all countries in the world. Abramovitz (2018) defines community welfare as the fulfillment of all community needs in accordance with the rights they deserve from the state, in the long term. Social welfare can also be defined as the fulfillment of health, education, safety, freedom, environment, entertainment, decent housing, or a combination of all the things that have been mentioned (Fitzpatrick & Stephens 2014, Watts & Fitzpatrick 2018, Younghusband 2022) with well-being defined as when people get what they deserve, such as long-term security and happiness. According to Stambolieva (2016) real welfare is an appreciation of various aspects of life, not limited

to the fulfillment of good health, good education, fulfillment of safe and proper housing as well as sufficient money and resources. According to Siza (2018) groups of people with precarious income and status make up most of many OECD countries that have a middle-class society. Finally, the growth of social strata forms an upper class that has very high wealth and welfare, an established middle class, and a disadvantaged family class. To combat this vulnerability, the relevance of changes in strata conditions should be used as a starting point in creating strategies and solutions.

The high level of poverty in developing countries makes it difficult to achieve social welfare. According to Payne (2013), social stratification has caused social inequality in society in recent decades. In the 1990s, almost all research focused on high poverty rates or the consequences of abolishing rules when many OECD countries experienced inequality, which should have focused more on reducing the number of middle classes and finding solutions to address existing social inequality (Andrews & Caldera Sánchez 2011, Dallinger 2013). Hacker & Pierson (2010) and Stiglitz (2015) state that the increasing financial difficulties of the lower class are due to inequality in employment opportunities and increased wealth of the upper class. The Iranian state itself had a new social security and welfare ministry established in 2004 even though Iran's constitutional law from the start emphasized this responsibility on the government (Harris 2010, Kamal et al. 2015). The social welfare system in Iran is quite successful in providing health and education but not strong enough for social insurance and housing services (Mohseni & Jouzaryan 2016). This is also supported by the opinion of Kamal et al. (2015) who found that if you look at it objectively there are six components of social welfare namely, fulfillment of job needs, social security, economic fulfillment, education, health, and housing. The selection of the above categories is based on the backward status of society and the inadequate rules for achieving basic fulfillment in Iran. This is in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs which states that for people to move to a higher level of needs, basic needs must be met first. However, according to Fleckenstein & Lee (2017), countries in East Asia have started to show the need to increase welfare on par with Western countries. Social policy in the field of education in Germany itself has been neglected for quite a long time, finally, in 2000, social policies concerning inequality, inclusion and giving equal opportunities to everyone in criticizing education began to be discussed in social policy (Feely et al. 2020, Schmidt et al. 2010)

Various policies have been made by the government to overcome poverty. However, the inability of social policies to respond and protect the middle class from the risk of instability makes mobility and improvement of socioeconomic conditions difficult (Siza 2018). Policy makers are faced with the challenge of being able to always improve the capabilities of everyone which in fact is difficult to determine with certainty, and must be prepared to target the community, which certainly comes from various social strata as well (Koepe 2015). Bureaucrats become an important feature of welfare development in East Asian countries. While politicians set broader policy objectives, technocrats must be involved in policy planning, development of current policies, and their implementation. For economic growth, it requires coordination of different policies and bureaucracy is the key to deal with this. Policy making for welfare development is also still heavily dominated by the bureaucracy (Gonzalez Benson 2020, Kirsch et al. 2023).

Poverty eradication policies give birth to programs that will support underprivileged communities. To fulfill the slogan 'social justice' which is the main slogan of the revolution, social assistance for citizens by realizing support for the poor and vulnerable groups must be carried out by government organizations. Limited opportunities for the poor and working class make economic growth even more difficult. The negative effects that must be overcome are not by overcoming poverty but by increasing the income of the community at large, especially those with low incomes (OECD 2015). Although it was not uniform in all countries from 1985 to 2005, based on research in 19 countries, it was found that the existence of public policies that regulate people's welfare can reduce income gaps at every level of society (Pressman 2007, 2010, 2017).

The most common assistance program provided by the government to the community is socioeconomic assistance. Fields such as social services, social support, rehabilitation, medical services, pension services and support for vulnerable groups are part of social assistance organizations. The main activity under social assistance is welfare organizations with subsidized food and basic goods programs. In addition, the state offers various subsidized public services such as water, gas, and electricity, as well

as food and basic consumption goods to meet the basic needs of its citizens (Kamal et al. 2015). Hettne (2010) for example, argues that citizens should be used as a substantial variable so that they are not degraded, which ultimately eliminates their existence. Especially in the context of welfare, it is very important to have rules that support access to welfare for every citizen.

Especially in Indonesia, Non-Cash Food Assistance or basic food programs have long been implemented to help the poor. The results of research by Hermawan et al. (2021) which was carried out in the City of Yogyakarta found that the Non-Cash Assistance Program had been running effectively but still needed to improve performance in various aspects. In various regions in Indonesia, the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program or the staple food program is still not on target. The Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Paleran Village, Umbulsari District, Jember Regency is not in accordance with the 2018 Non-Cash Food Assistance guidebook, especially in the socialization process so that the community does not receive clear information, which in the end means many people do not understand this program (Nabila et al. 2021). Sassen (2015) highlighted how the fulfillment of welfare, public services, and differences in social strata in society affect their welfare and fulfillment of their rights in obtaining public services. New programs in many cases are expected to be able to reduce inequality in society, but these programs create social inequality and new stratification in society (Pintelon et al. 2013).

This research was conducted to describe how is the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Jeneponto Regency, by looking at the three dimensions; first is whether this program has been right on target in its implementation in the field, second by seeing service providers carry out the distribution of aid and the third dimensions by seeing whether the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Jeneponto Regency has provided services according to regulations and the community has benefited from this program. The selection of the research location, namely Jeneponto Regency by observing the phenomenon that until 2021, out of 24 Regencies and Cities in South Sulawesi Province, Jeneponto Regency is the Regency with the highest poverty rate presentation as seen in Table 1 which is a comparison for the presentation of five (5) Regencies with the highest poverty rate from 2019-2021.

Table 1.
Presentation of the Highest Poverty Rates from 2019-2021

Districts/Cities	Year		
	2019 (%)	2020 (%)	2021(%)
Jeneponto	14.88	14.58	14.28
Pangkep	14.06	13.96	14.28
Luwu Utara	13.60	13.41	13.59
Luwu	12.78	12.67	12.53
Enrekang	12.33	12.17	12.47

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics of South Sulawesi Province (2021)

By looking at the data from Table 1, Jeneponto Regency is the most suitable location for this research, because the assistance from the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program is one of the efforts of the Central and Regional Governments to improve the welfare of its people. Previous research has focused more on program implementation, evaluation, and effectiveness, while this research focuses more on the analysis of the quality of achievements in improving people's welfare by specializing in target groups, services, and benefits. With that, more complex and in-depth recommendations can be formulated for the optimization of each finding.

Research Method

A qualitative design was used in this study with an explanatory case study strategy which was sourced from primary data, research notes and secondary data. Primary data were obtained by the authors from in-depth interviews with stakeholders related to the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program, as well as the people who received assistance. In addition, direct observations were made to obtain an overview of the factual conditions of the research locations by utilizing field notes. The research was carried out in three stages: data collection, data analysis and data verification.

The location of this study is Jeneponto Regency; considering the vast area of Jeneponto Regency, the authors decided to choose three sub-districts as representations to be used as research locations, namely Bontoramba, Binamu, and Batang. This was also done to be able to analyze more deeply. These three sub-districts were selected based on population categories the largest, the medium category, and the lowest category, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2.
Population Distribution per Sub-district in Jeneponto Regency Year 2022

District	Population (soul)
Arungkeke	22.225
Bangkala	61.526
Bangkala Barat	31.943
Tamalatea	51.399
Bontoramba	41.722
Binamu	64.805
Turatea	36.179
Batang	22.076
Tarowang	25.610
Kelara	31.055
Rumbia	26.588

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics Jeneponto Regency (2022)

Based on Table 2 data, it is known that the district with the highest population is Binamu District with a population of 64,805 people, the sub-district with a moderate population is Bontoramba with a population of 41,722 people and the lowest population category is Batang District with a population of 22,076 people. This research was conducted from August to October 2022.

There were 12 informants for this study, which consisted of two stakeholders who were authorized as planners for the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program. Four informants were part of the program implementers, namely the regional coordinator, program beneficiary data collection operators, bank supervisors used by the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program, as well as village officials. Two informants from e-warong implementers, as well as four community recipients of Non-Cash Food Assistance Program assistance. The selection of informants was carried out with the consideration that the research objectives were comprehensive because the sources of data and information came from reliable sources directly related to the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program.

The data analysis process begins with reducing the raw data obtained in the field, then carrying out the process of presenting the data into each research indicator used and collecting data. The final stage of the data analysis process is verification of conclusions (Miles et al. 2014). Then the sorted data adjusts the similarities and differences through data reduction and display the results of analysis of primary data obtained from informants which are also supported by document processing from secondary data, which will support interview data which the author will then verify again as to suitability of field observations, and primary data as well as secondary data that have been analyzed, which will then guide researchers in drawing and writing final conclusions from the results of research in the field.

Results and Discussion

This section will describe the results of research findings conducted at the research location. The results of these findings analyze the implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance/Basic Food Assistance Program by looking at the target group dimensions of the program as well as the services and benefits of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in three districts in Jeneponto Regency.

Target group of the program

The Non-Cash Food Assistance Program is one of the social protection programs in Jeneponto district. There are other programs that also target the underprivileged, namely the Social Protection Card (KPS) Program and the Family Hope Program (PKH). These three programs have their respective percentages with the same goal, namely increasing the welfare of the people in Jeneponto district. The presentation of beneficiary households for each program is as in Table 3.

Table 3.
Percentage of Households by Type of Social Protection Program Received Year 2022

Types of Social Protection Programs	Percentage of Households Receiving
Food Assistance (BPNT/Basic Food Program)	43.08
Social Protection Card (PPP)	21.65
Family Hope Program (PKH)	29.87

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics Jeneponto Regency (BPS) (2022)

Table 3 data show that the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program with the most presentation is 43.08%, followed by the family hope program (PKH) as much as 29.87% and finally the social protection card (KPS) as much as 21.65%. With the most presentations, the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program is expected to have the biggest contribution to improving people's welfare in Jeneponto district. However, this program still has various obstacles in its implementation.

Based on data from the Jeneponto district Social Service for 2022, out of 43.08% of recipients of the social protection program who received the Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT) Program were then spread over 11 sub-districts with the distribution of the number of people as in Table 4.

Table 4.
Distribution of the Number of Beneficiary Families in each Sub-district in Jeneponto Regency

District	Population (soul)	DTKS (Integrated Social Welfare Data) (soul)	BPNT / Basic Necessities (soul)
Arungkeke	22.225	12.419	2.245
Bangkala	61.526	31.458	5.553
Bangkala Barat	31.943	18.987	3.091
Tamalatea	51.399	26.088	4.457
Bontoramba	41.722	17.593	3.572
Binamu	64.805	27.111	4.333
Turatea	36.179	21.784	3.941
Batang	22.076	11.754	2.023
Tarowang	25.610	17.308	2.986
Kelara	31.055	10.979	2.149
Rumbia	26.588	15.169	2.762

Source: Processed secondary data in 2022

Table 4 data show that all sub-districts in Jeneponto district received varying amounts of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program. The distribution of recipients is expected to be carried out right on target. Even so, there are still many problems related to determining the target group, both program beneficiary families and determining e-warong. The research findings found that there were still discrepancies in data on families receiving assistance from the government. As stated by several informants:

"I am often dizzy and confused, why are people who do not deserve assistance included in the list of beneficiaries, while there are families who really deserve to be included in the list of beneficiaries are not included in the list." (Informant RIF).

“Almost every day we receive complaints from the community or the village government about why someone is included in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS), even though the person is capable, or the person has died and other reasons, as well as our helplessness if we have entered the latest updated data which cannot be verified. or accepted by the system.” (Informant FEB).

One of the stages in changing the data is the deactivation of the beneficiary families candidate, through the SIKS-NG application, if the beneficiary families candidate dies, cannot be found within the scope of the village/kelurahan, is double registered, is capable, refuses the program, or becomes a migrant worker prior to activation. However, it was found that this data collection was not carried out effectively. There are beneficiary families candidates who have died but are still included in the list of potential beneficiaries in the SIKS-NG application, almost no tracing is carried out on the whereabouts of potential beneficiaries, and almost no community members claim that they are capable of being on the list of potential beneficiaries and ask to remove their names from the list of beneficiaries. According to Siza (2018), economic and technological changes and weak responses by policy makers create risks for people's living conditions without adequate public services.

Beneficiary families for the basic food program are families that have a very low level of welfare and belong to a very poor community. Public welfare programs should only be aimed at people who are in a very deprived condition and cannot earn income independently (Tohyama 2015). In the decile classification (Desil) targeting beneficiary families, the very poor, the poor and the vulnerable are in decile 1, decile 2 and decile 3, namely families entitled to receive benefits from the basic food program, the Family Hope Program, the Healthy Indonesia Card, and the Indonesian Smart Card.

Classification of households in the Unified Database and/or Integrated Data on Social Welfare (DTKS) provides clear boundaries for the form of socioeconomic assistance that will be received by the community. The number of residents who receive assistance from the government from the Non-Cash Food Assistance (Sembako) sector is Jeneponto residents who are categorized as Very Poor, Poor and Nearly Poor comprising 30% of the total population of Jeneponto. The government made savings in creating welfare assistance programs that not only cut spending but also reduced the number of beneficiaries who met the criteria (Ayala & Bárcena-Martín 2020).

In general, the targeting of beneficiary families found that the targeting of the basic food program was not on target, there were still beneficiary families who were not eligible, or were not appropriate to receive assistance. An understanding of welfare by making policies based on principles without discriminating anything to create value-free services is needed (Feely et al. 2020).

On the other hand, in terms of regulation, the concept and general guidelines for the social protection program are that the beneficiaries of the Family Hope Program are also families who are beneficiaries of the basic food program, but in reality not all beneficiary families of the Family Hope Program receive the basic food program, so it appears that these two programs have not been or are not integrated enough. According to Bremer & Bürgisser (2022), the government should build a shared understanding of the importance of everyone being able to access the same welfare.

It was also found that there were poor or vulnerable families who were not covered by the basic food program, all these conditions indicated that there was something in the data source in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) that was not valid. Finally, the contribution of public services is getting less and less to the living conditions of the people at the grassroots level. Meanwhile, services in the private sector can only be reached by social groups with stable incomes and jobs (Beck et al. 2016).

To optimize the achievement of improving the welfare of the community, it is necessary to classify the target group. A program can be successful if there is a match between program implementation and the intended target group (Powell et al. 2013, Vancoppenolle et al. 2015, Lewis et al. 2018). Where the needs of groups are in the very poor category, the stimulation should be different from that of the poor category. This is because the way to get out of poverty differs in its approach between the very poor categories whose basic needs need to be met first. Meanwhile, those in the low poor category only need stimulation to improve their skills and access to improve their welfare.

Assistance service provider

The stage of distributing aid by preparing e-warongs comes after knowing the number of beneficiary families in each village (kelurahan) from the Ministry of Social Affairs, channeling banks with district/city governments and food social assistance implementing staff in the regions, identifying bank agents or traders to become e-warong. In Jeneponto District, Himbara determined the e-warong, in this case Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI), by obtaining a recommendation from the Jeneponto District Social Service.

In preparing the determination of e-warong with previously set criteria, several things were found that did not match the set criteria. In terms of this cooperation agreement, we asked for comments from the Regional Coordinator of the basic food program. Informant SAN stated "The cooperation agreement between Bank Rakyat Indonesia as Himbara's representative has never made a cooperation agreement between the e-warong agent and Bank Rakyat Indonesia, there is only a Decree on the Determination of e-warong from the Social Service."

In terms of determining which e-warong will be the place to spend KKS for the basic food program, the community (beneficiary families) is directed to a certain e-warong that has been indicated and agreed upon, and the food items spent have been packaged by the e-warong and distributed to the beneficiary family, so that the beneficiary does not have choice and control over the type of food that is spent according to needs; this has the potential for fraud. The decline in people's welfare is evidence of economic insecurity that has occurred which is also characterized by citizens' distrust of the labor market and future economic improvements (OECD 2016). Each beneficiary family has different priority needs, but because it has been packaged, the beneficiary families are not free to choose food ingredients according to the priority needs of the community.

Village deliberations or kelurahan deliberations are hardly held at the village/kelurahan level. Changes to data are carried out with input from village officials who coordinate with assistants and other staff appointed by the Social Service as executors and assessors at the village/kelurahan level. As stated by a village official informant:

"Village meetings are held if there are direct directions from above and more often, we hold them informally at the village or sub-district head's house without the public being involved, and often there are changes to the data that are determined unilaterally and irrationally or according to guidelines for determining beneficiary families (KPM)." (Informant BAS).

It was found in the field that the Social Service and BRI (Himbara) were never at the same table or official forum to sit together to discuss and communicate, coordinate in mapping and determining e-warong agents. Sectoral ego is depicted by each institution and stakeholders of the basic food program. This is stated by the Regional Coordinator:

"Coordination and communication between the Social Service and Bank Rakyat Indonesia as representatives of Himbara seem less harmonious and sectoral egos, the coordination is less intensive, and the communication is not smooth so that sometimes requests for data, reports and information tend not to be open to one another." (Informant SAN).

The impression is that the determination of e-warong agents is determined based on likes and dislikes (partly) from stakeholders who have the authority to determine e-warong agents, whether from social services or from Bank Rakyat Indonesia (BRI/Himbara). One of the e-warong agents stated about the procedure for his shop to become an e-warong agent:

"We were approached by the BPNT assistant asking for biodata and the identity of the stalls we owned and submitted them to the Social Service, then a Decree was issued appointing us to be e-warong agents, although until now we have never seen the form of this Decree." (Informant HAJ).

The cooperation agreement did not exist and was not carried out. In terms of this cooperation agreement, we ask for comments from the Regional Coordinator of the basic food program, informant SAN stated “The cooperation agreement between Bank Rakyat Indonesia as Himbara’s representative has never made a cooperation agreement between the e-warong agent and Bank Rakyat Indonesia, there is only a Decree on the Determination of e-warong from the Social Service.” This statement is in line with the statement by one of the informants:

“I have never signed a cooperation agreement or any other form of cooperation agreement between me and Bank Rakyat Indonesia. I only heard from the companion that there was a decree appointing me as an e-warong agent in this area.” (Informant DAG).

Beneficiary families are not given the choice and control to determine the time of purchase according to needs, the amount to be purchased, the type of food (according to guidelines) quality and the e-warong where to spend their Prosperous Family Card. In fact, according to Morel et al. (2011) it is very important to involve the community to participate in the decision-making process concerning the distribution of welfare and social services, because this will encourage them to actively participate in the provision of benefits and services. From this participation, service users, namely the community, can voice their complaints and needs directly.

Determination of e-warong should still be done based on competition. Competition-based public services can produce effective services (Bellé 2015, Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff 2015, Abdelmotaleb & Saha 2019, Guul et al. 2021). This is so that the service of the stalls as well as the quality of the goods and the prices are affordable due to competition. With the monopoly model, the e-warong service tends to not prioritize good service.

Programs provide services and benefits

In the next process, the distribution of basic food program assistance funds is carried out by the distribution bank, in this case the People’s Bank of Indonesia (BRI), without imposing a fee. With a state policy that guarantees the welfare of the community, the welfare of the lower class will increase automatically (Siza 2018). The distribution process is carried out by transferring the staple food program assistance funds from the social ministry account (Budget User Authority) at the channeling bank to the food assistance account/electronic money sub-account for the beneficiary families. The Basic Food Program Assistance Fund was transferred to seven (7) branch office units and/or sub-branch offices of Bank Rakyat Indonesia, with a total of 37,095 beneficiary families.

E-warongs in guaranteeing the supply of food needed by the community in 2021 are given to the authority to freely choose food suppliers according to the wishes of the e-warongs. Previously in 2020, in Jeneponto Regency, e-warong suppliers were determined by the province, through the South Sulawesi Provincial Social Service, and all of them had their own regulatory basis for implementing such a procedure (All justified). This was stated by the Regional Coordinator of the Sembako program:

“In 2020 the supplier or distributor of food to the e-warong will be determined by the province through the Social Service of South Sulawesi Province, but in the current year 2021 the e-warong is given the freedom to choose a food supplier for the basic food program, but in reality, the food has been distributed by certain parties and immediately brought to the e-warong agent.” (Informant SAN).

The Prosperous Family Card reading machine can be an EDC (Electronic data capture) machine used by e-warongs to process food purchases by beneficiary families. However, in the field it was found that, in Jeneponto Regency, there were 37,095 beneficiary families (as of July 2021), served by 153 e-warong agents spread across 11 Districts. Of these 153 e-warong agents, only nine units have EDC machines that own and use them, another 144 e-warong agents use loan machines from BRI-Link agents which are inappropriate because not all BRI-Link agents are shops/warongs selling groceries. The basic food program is not running optimally (non-compliance with the general guidelines for the basic food program). This is based on informant YUS as a supervisor at Bank Rakyat Indonesia for the Basic Food

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Program who stated: "Prosperous Family Card reader machines in Jeneponto Regency for the basic food program are only owned by nine e-warong agents spread across six sub-districts, but Himbara will equip all e-warong agents with Electronic Data Capture (EDC)."

The results of this survey by Smeru Research Institute in October 2020 show the impression that, when using the Prosperous Family Card by beneficiary families in e-warongs, beneficiary families does not know the competitiveness and quality of food prices for the basic food program, it seems that it has been packaged, there is no freedom in determining the food ingredients to be purchased and they are directed to e- certain warongs to spend their welfare family cards. This will lead to the fact that the provision of this basic food program to improve the welfare and health of the poor cannot be achieved. Koeppe (2015) emphasized that understanding how and why the achievement of the expected policy goals is usually different from the results in the field because people's ability to interpret, respond actively or only passively do not know the output of the policy. Then an analysis of the role of policy users is needed to help understand how this welfare policy is directly experienced by everyone. Making policies that are not in accordance with the needs of the community has limited access to public services for the less fortunate (Siza 2018).

In the field, it was found that there were severe conditions and circumstances or that some local government officials at the sub-district level intervened at the stages of data collection, validation, and verification of beneficiary family data by sharing reasons of interest, partiality, other emotional relationships that cannot be a fundamental basis. The determination of the family is included in the Integrated Social Welfare Data in accordance with the provisions and general guidelines for the staple food program. This was stated by one of the informants:

"Sometimes the sub-district government 'personnel' intervene with the assistants about who will be included in the list of beneficiary families (KPM), because the sub-district provides recommendations to the Social Service to be appointed as assistant staff for the basic food program (there is an honorarium/wages for assistant staff)." (Informant SAN).

The most basic reason for this to happen was because facilitators at the village/kelurahan level in a sub-district are people who personally have an emotional connection with stakeholders at the top level, whether at the sub-district or district level in the Social Service, there are even some people who are entrusted by influential people. However, a larger and more widespread welfare state would only be considered possible where welfare could be limited to the people themselves (Bremer & Bürgisser 2022).

From the observations made in the field, it was found that there was a tendency for the evaluation component of the e-warong agent criteria to not be taken into consideration in its determination. The impression is that the determination of e-warong agents is determined based on likes and dislikes (partly) from stakeholders who have the authority to determine e-warong agents. Laidley & Tabbara (2022) stated that the main reason for not realizing the redistribution of welfare in a country is because the government tends to provide unequal social welfare rights.

The essence of the basic food program is to equalize income distribution and increase the welfare of people who have very low levels of welfare with the qualifications of being poor, vulnerable to poverty and very poor. Therefore, at every stage and at every level of the implementation of the basic food program, the goal is to reach people with very low economic capacity.

People who have a steady source of income or have a better level of welfare, cannot become beneficiary families (KPM) and e-warong agents. However, it was found that there were State Civil Apparatuses (ASN), food social assistance implementing staff, both individuals or groups of people, forming business entities that became e-warong agents or e-warong suppliers, whereas this was not permitted in accordance with the general guidelines for implementing the basic food program. Layton (2020) states that, in general, the rights of citizens must be differentiated based on their level of welfare so that those who really need it have total access to welfare and those who are part of the welfare services can also become their rights. As in Table 5, for 2021 Jeneponto Regency will still be the Regency with the highest percentage of poverty rates in South Sulawesi Province.

Table 5.
Highest Poverty Rate in the Five Districts in South Sulawesi Province in 2021

Districts/Cities	Poverty Rate
Jeneponto	14.28%
Pangkajene Kepulauan	14.28%
Luwu Utara	13.59%
Luwu	12.52%
Enrekang	12.47%

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics of South Sulawesi Province (2021)

It cannot be denied that, even though there are many difficulties and challenges in implementing this Non-Cash Assistance Program, the beneficiary communities in Jeneponto Regency have been assisted in meeting their basic needs. This is in line with the results of interviews conducted with beneficiary families who always spend their Family Welfare Card at a designated shop. As several informants stated:

“Because there has been an appointment for a shop to provide assistance, we have no difficulty finding the materials needed.” (Informant HAR).

“This basic food package helps us to fulfill basic needs for daily consumption, I can finally use the money to buy rice and oil to pay for the children’s school fees.” (Informant FIT).

“I work daily, so my income is also daily, usually one day is used up to buy basic needs, if this assistance is available, I can buy other things.” (Informant DOH).

Statements from informants from the interview results above are supported by data on the reduction in the poverty rate each year in Jeneponto Regency in the last four years, as seen in Figure 1.

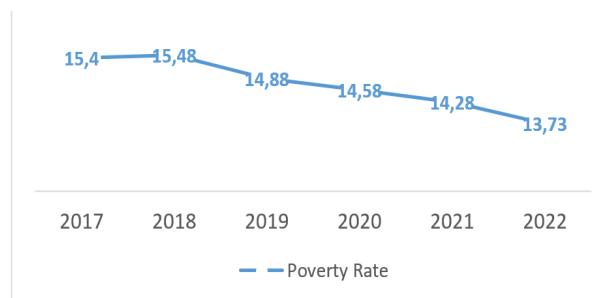


Figure 1.
Poverty Rate Data in Jeneponto Regency 2017-2022
Source: Central Bureau of Statistics Jeneponto Regency (2023)

From 2017 to 2022, there has been a decline in the poverty rate in Jeneponto Regency. This gave a change to Jeneponto Regency by no longer being the province with the highest poverty percentage in South Sulawesi Province, for the five districts with the highest poverty percentage in South Sulawesi Province as seen in Table 6.

Table 6.
Highest Poverty Rate in the Five Districts in South Sulawesi Province in 2022

Districts/Cities	Poverty Rate
Pangkajene Kepulauan	13,.92%
Jeneponto	13.73%
Luwu Utara	13.22%
Luwu	12.49%
Enrekang	12.39%

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics of South Sulawesi Province (2022)

The reduction in the poverty rate is part of the fulfillment of the community's basic needs and the affordability of access to basic needs. That way, program beneficiary families can strive to improve their welfare by saving the income they earn because their basic needs are met and they can also seek employment or entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

The Non-Cash Food Assistance Program in Jeneponto Regency can improve people's welfare which is marked by a decrease in the percentage of the poverty rate from 14.28% in 2021, down in 2022 to 13.73%. This decrease in the percentage of the poverty rate was able to make Jeneponto Regency no longer the Regency with the highest poverty rate in South Sulawesi Province. However, the increase in people's welfare has not been optimal because the target group of the basic food program has not been able to benefit the less fortunate people who are the target of this program. There are still beneficiary families who are not eligible to receive assistance. There are poor or vulnerable families who are not covered by the basic food program, it is found that e-warongs serving the community have low competence, which ultimately affects the quality of food sold by e-warongs to beneficiary families.

Therefore, it is necessary to improve the determination of target groups including the determination of strict criteria for prospective program recipients and the need for clusters for each category including very poor, poor, and vulnerable to poverty so that the formulation is also adjusted based on needs. Furthermore, it is necessary to improve the determination of providers, namely e-warongs by implementing a competitive system at stalls in the area. So that there is an increase in quality and guaranteed affordable prices due to competition between e-warongs while still referring to existing program guidelines.

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