

The Effectiveness of Distribution Direct Cash Assistance on The Poverty Level in Lambara Village, Tawaeli District

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the distribution direct cash assistance to the poverty level in Lambara Village, the research uses a descriptive method with an approach. The research population amounted to 239 Heads of Families, while the sample of 71 respondents was determined using the Slovin formula. Data collection was carried out through the distribution of questionnaires using the Guttman scale, while data analysis used effectiveness analysis with reference to theory. The results of the study showed that the effectiveness of direct cash assistance distribution obtained a value of 75.1 percent, so it was included in the effective category. In detail, the target accuracy indicator obtained a score of 77.4 percent (effective), the accuracy of the amount of assistance 100 percent (very effective), the timeliness of 81.6 percent (very effective), the accuracy of administration 100 percent (very effective), the accuracy of price 100 percent (very effective), and socialization and service 100 percent (very effective). However, the indicator of meeting basic needs only obtained a score of 42.2 percent (quite effective), while the indicator of reducing the burden of poverty obtained a value of 0 percent (ineffective). These findings show that although the implementation of direct cash assistance distribution has gone well according to the provisions, the assistance provided has not been able to reduce the poverty level significantly. Therefore, supporting programs are needed in the form of community economic empowerment, increasing employment opportunities, and updating beneficiary data so that the impact of direct cash assistance on poverty reduction can be more optimal.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a major issue in economic development that continues to be a serious concern for governments, especially in developing countries such as Indonesia. Various policies have been designed to reduce poverty, one of which is through social assistance programs. Direct cash assistance is a policy instrument that aims to improve people's welfare and help meet the basic needs of poor and vulnerable groups (Putri et al., 2022). In this context, Direct cash assistance is seen as part of a social protection system that can provide direct financial support to people affected by unstable economic conditions. More specifically, the implementation of the Direct cash assistance program is considered to have contributed to poverty reduction, especially in the short term (Achmad, 2024). Direct cash assistance can increase the purchasing power of the poor, allowing them to meet their basic needs, especially during times of economic crisis. However, some studies show that the impact of Direct cash assistance tends to be temporary and has not been able to overcome poverty structurally or create economic independence for recipients (Awalia & Sumayya, 2024).

The Direct cash assistance program is a form of government intervention that aims to maintain the purchasing power of the poor and vulnerable, especially in economic conditions that are experiencing pressure (Susantyo et al., 2023). The success of this program is not only measured

by the distribution of aid to recipients, but also by the extent to which the assistance is able to meet the basic needs of the community and reduce the economic burden they face. Therefore, evaluation of the effectiveness of the distribution of direct cash assistance is important to find out whether the program's objectives have been achieved in accordance with the set goals (Adif et al., 2022).

At the local level, such as in Lambara Village, the effectiveness of Direct cash assistance distribution is an important issue that requires further study. This is because the success of the program is not only determined by central-level policies but also by implementation in the field. Previous research has shown that while Direct Cash Assistance can help meet the basic needs of poor people, barriers remain in their distribution and utilization (Putu et al., 2026).

The Direct cash assistance program in Lambara Village is a form of assistance that is very much felt by the community. According to data obtained from the Lambara Village Office, as many as 239 Heads of Families received Direct Cash Assistance. Each Beneficiary Family receives assistance of IDR 300,000 per month which is distributed according to government provisions or IDR 900,000 every three months. The assistance is expected to be able to help meet the basic needs of the community and reduce the economic burden on poor households.

Recipients of Direct Cash Assistance are determined by the government based on the National Socio-Economic Single Data which contains the classification of household welfare levels. The Direct cash assistance program is prioritized for households that are included in the lowest welfare decile group in accordance with government regulations. However, this study does not elaborate on the decile classification of each recipient because the data cannot be accessed by researchers from the village. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research to analyze the extent of the effectiveness of Direct Cash Assistance distribution on the poverty level in Lambara Village.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a concept used to measure the success of a program or activity in achieving predetermined goals. In the context of public policy, effectiveness is measured not only by the results achieved, but also by the extent to which the program has a real impact on society (Terziev, 2019). According to Dunn (2003) effectiveness is a measure of the achievement of policy objectives as seen from the conformity between the results obtained and the planned targets. Effectiveness is the level of success of a program in achieving the goals that have been set (Robbins & Coulter, 2016). According to Najjar (2020), effectiveness is also related to the ability of an organization to optimally utilize resources to achieve these goals. In the context of public policy.

Direct Cash Assistance Distribution Effectiveness Indicators

According to Subagyo (2000), effectiveness is the level of success of a program in achieving the goals that have been set. Therefore, the measurement of the effectiveness of the distribution of Direct Cash Assistance in this study is carried out through several aspects related to the success of the program implementation, namely the accuracy of the target, the accuracy of the amount of assistance, the timeliness, the accuracy of administration, the accuracy of prices, as well as socialization and service.

Direct Cash Assistance

Direct Cash Assistance is a government policy in the form of cash social assistance that aims to help the poor and vulnerable meet their basic needs (Karima et al., 2022). The Direct cash assistance program plays an important role in maintaining people's purchasing power, reducing the impact of poverty, and improving social welfare, especially in times of economic instability (Simangunsong & Sihotang, 2023). By distributing direct assistance to the community, Direct cash assistance is expected to provide effective social protection, improve people's living standards, and support the equitable distribution of prosperity. According to Mankiw (2018), the government has a role in creating equitable welfare through fiscal policies and income transfers to low-income communities. These policies are implemented to improve welfare and reduce the impact of poverty.

The success of the Direct cash assistance program is influenced by accurate recipient targeting, distribution transparency, and oversight by the government and the community. If the distribution of aid is carried out correctly and on target, the Direct cash assistance program can be effective in helping the poor. However, if there is an error or delay in data collection, the program's goal to improve people's welfare will be less than optimal.

Poverty

Poverty is a condition in which individuals or households are unable to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and health (Greger, 2022). In economic theory, poverty is divided into absolute poverty and relative poverty. Absolute poverty is related to the inability to meet basic needs, while relative poverty is related to the unequal distribution of income in society. According to Todaro & Smith (2015), poverty can also be caused by poor quality of human resources, limited access to capital, and lack of employment opportunities.

Poverty Level Indicators

According to BPS (2025) poverty is a condition when a person or household is unable to meet basic needs measured based on the poverty line. In this study, the poverty level was measured through two indicators, namely the fulfillment of basic needs and the reduction of the burden of poverty. The indicator of meeting basic needs is used to find out the extent to which Direct cash assistance helps meet the basic needs of households, while the poverty burden reduction indicator is used to find out the extent to which the assistance is able to ease the economic burden of the beneficiaries.

HYPOTHESIS

The Effect of Direct Cash Assistance on Poverty

Direct Cash Assistance has a significant impact on poverty reduction, especially in helping people meet their daily basic needs. The Direct cash assistance program is able to increase the purchasing power of low-income people, thereby easing the economic burden on households (Rini et al., 2023). Furthermore, Direct cash assistance also functions as a form of government social protection to maintain the economic stability of the poor, especially during economic crises and rising prices of basic necessities. With this assistance, people can maintain household consumption and reduce the risk of deeper poverty (Nasution et al., 2022).

However, the effectiveness of Direct cash assistance in poverty reduction is highly dependent on the accuracy of targets, the amount of aid, and the distribution mechanism. If distribution is carried out accurately and equitably, Direct cash assistance can be an effective instrument in improving the welfare of the poor. Conversely, if there are errors in data collection or distribution delays, the benefits of Direct cash assistance will be less than optimal. Therefore,

regular monitoring, evaluation, and updating of recipient data is necessary to ensure that the Direct cash assistance program truly helps communities reduce poverty in a sustainable manner.

METHODS

The type of research is descriptive that describes or explains a phenomenon, situation, or event in a systematic, factual, and accurate manner based on data obtained in the field. This study aims to find out the actual condition without providing treatment or manipulation of the object under investigation. According to (Sugiyono, 2019), descriptive research is research conducted to determine the value of independent variables without making comparisons or relationships with other variables.

The research was conducted in Lambara Village, Lambara Village was chosen as the research location because there are still people who receive Direct Cash Assistance and a study is needed on the effectiveness of its distribution on the poverty level. In addition, this research was conducted to find out whether the distribution of direct cash assistance has been effective in helping to reduce the poverty level of the community in Lambara Village, The object of this research is the effectiveness of the distribution of Direct Cash Assistance to the poverty level of the community in Lambara Village.

The data in this study uses a data collection technique using a questionnaire with the Guttman Scale. The Guttman scale is used to obtain a firm answer to each statement submitted to the respondent. In this study, each statement only has two alternative answers, namely: agree (1) disagree (0) (Arikunto, 2019).

The analysis used in this study is an effectiveness analysis, as according to Subagyo (2000), namely:

$$\text{Effectiveness} = \frac{R}{T} \times 100 \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where : R = Number of answers

T = Total number of answers

After calculating the effectiveness of the distribution of direct cash assistance, the results of the calculation are interpreted using the basic reference in determining the effectiveness of the reference Direct cash assistance as follows:

Table 1. Measurement Standards According to Effectiveness Predicate Reference

No	Effectiveness Ratio	Attainment Rate
1	0-20	Ineffective
2	21-40	Less Effective
3	41-60	Quite Effective
4	61-80	Effective
5	81-100	Very Effective

Source: Riduwan, 2003

The characteristics of the respondents provide an overview of the profile of the respondents in this study. The characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 2 as follows.

Table 2. Characteristics Respondents

No	Characteristics	Result
1	Total Respondents	71 People
2	Average Age	45 Years Old
3	Job	Farmer
4	Average Family Members	4 People

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2026

Based on Table 2, this study involved 71 respondents who were recipients of Direct Cash Assistance in Lambara Village. Based on the results of data collection, the average age of respondents was 45 years. Most of the respondents worked as farmers, followed by laborers, traders, and housewives. The average number of respondents' family members was 4 people. These characteristics show that the majority of Direct Cash Assistance recipients come from households with economic conditions that still need government support in meeting basic needs.

Table 3. Questioners

No	Questions	Confident Agree	Not Confident
On Target Indicator			
1	Is Direct Cast Assistance given to people who really need it ?		
Accurate Quantity Indicator			
2	The amount of assistance received is in accordance with government provisions without deduction		
Timely Indicator			
3	Is Direct Cash Assistance distributed according to schedule/Late ?		
Proper Indicator of Administration			
4	The process of collecting data on Direct Cash Assistance recipients is clearly defined		
Price Indicator			
5	Recipients are not burdened with external costs		
Indicator of Socialization and Service			
6	The village government provides Direct Cash Assistance information and serves the community well		
Indicator of Fulfillment of Basic Needs			
7	Does Direct Cash Assistance help buy daily necessities ?		
Poverty Burden Reduction Indicator			
8	Does Direct Cash Assistance help reduce the poverty rate of the community ?		

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The research data was obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to 71 respondents who were recipients of Direct Cash Assistance in Lambara Village. Each statement item was measured using the Guttman scale with two alternative answers, namely confident (score 1) and unsure (score 0). Furthermore, the collected data was processed using effectiveness analysis by calculating the number of "confident" answers on each indicator, then compared with the maximum number of answers to obtain the effectiveness percentage value.

Based on the results of data processing in Table 4, the total number of "confident" answers obtained by respondents was 427, while the maximum number of answers was 568 (71 respondents $\times$ 8 indicators $\times$ 1 score). Based on the effectiveness formula, the following values are obtained:

$$\text{Effectiveness} = (427 \div 568) \times 100 = 75,1\%$$

This value is included in the effective category, which shows that in general the distribution of Direct Cash Assistance in Lambara Village has been carried out well according to the program's objectives. However, the effectiveness is not evenly distributed across all indicators, so there are still several aspects that require the government's attention.

Table 4. Indicator Effectiveness Rate

No	Indicator	Score Obtained	Score Maximum	Percentage (%)	Category
1.	Target Accuracy	55	71	77,4	Effective
2.	Quantity Accuracy	71	71	100	Very Effective
3.	Timeliness	58	71	81,6	Very Effective
4.	Administrative Accuracy	71	71	100	Very Effective
5.	Price Accuracy	71	71	100	Very Effective
6.	Socialization and service	71	71	100	Very Effective
7.	Fulfillment of basic needs	30	71	42,2	Quite Effective
8.	Reduction of the burden of poverty	0	71	0	Ineffective
Total		427	568	75,1	Effective

Source: Data Processed, 2026

The target accuracy indicator obtained an effectiveness value of 77.4 percent with the effective category. These results show that most respondents consider that Direct Cash Assistance has been given to the community in accordance with the criteria for beneficiaries, although there are still some respondents who consider that the distribution is not fully on target.

The quantity accuracy indicator of the amount of assistance obtained an effectiveness value of 100 percent with the category of very effective. All respondents stated that the assistance was received in accordance with the amount that had been set by the government without any deductions.

The timeliness indicator obtained an effectiveness value of 81.6 percent and was included in the very effective category. These results show that most respondents consider that the distribution of Direct Cash Assistance has been carried out according to the set schedule.

The indicator of administrative accuracy obtained an effectiveness value of 100 percent in the category of very effective. All respondents assessed that the data collection and administration process of Direct Cash Assistance recipients had been carried out well according to the procedure.

The price accuracy indicator obtained an effectiveness value of 100 percent and was included in the category of very effective. These results show that the assistance was received in its entirety without any additional fees or deductions during the distribution process.

The socialization and service indicators obtained an effectiveness value of 100 percent with the category of very effective. This shows that information about the Direct Cash Assistance program and the services provided to the community is considered very good by all respondents.

The indicator of meeting basic needs obtained an effectiveness value of 42.2 percent and was in the category of quite effective. These results show that Direct Cash Assistance helps meet some of the basic needs of the community, but has not been able to meet all the needs of beneficiary households.

The poverty burden reduction indicator obtained an effectiveness value of 0 percent and was included in the ineffective category. These results show that Direct Cash Assistance has not been able to reduce the poverty rate significantly according to the assessment of all respondents.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that the effectiveness of the distribution of Direct Cash Assistance in Lambara Village obtained a value of 75.1 percent so that it was included in the effective category. These results show that in general, the implementation of the Direct Cash Assistance program has been able to achieve the goals that have been set, especially in the aspects of accuracy of targets, accuracy of the amount of assistance, timeliness, accuracy of administration, price accuracy, and socialization and service. However, the benefits of Direct Cash Assistance in meeting basic needs are still in the category of being quite effective, while the poverty burden reduction indicator has not shown effective results. This finding is in line with Subagyo (2000) theory which states that effectiveness is the level of success of a program in achieving the goals that have been set. The high effectiveness value in most indicators shows that the Direct Cash Assistance distribution mechanism in Lambara Village has been running in accordance with the program's objectives.

In the target accuracy indicator which obtained a score of 77.4 percent (effective), the results showed that most respondents considered that assistance had been received by people who really needed it. This condition shows that the process of determining beneficiaries through the National Socio-Economic Single Data has gone quite well, although there are still a small number of people who consider the distribution to be not fully on target. The findings are in accordance with the theory of Mankiw (2018) which states that government transfer policies to low-income communities must be given to the right target groups in order to improve the welfare of the poor.

The indicators of the accuracy of the amount of assistance, the accuracy of administration, the accuracy of prices, and the socialization and service each obtained a score of 100 percent (very effective), while the timeliness obtained a score of 81.6 percent (very effective). These results show that the community receives assistance according to government regulations without deductions, the administrative process runs well, the assistance is distributed on time, and the services provided by the village government are considered satisfactory. These results support Daft's theory which states that organizational effectiveness is reflected in the ability to optimally utilize resources to achieve organizational goals. In other words, the government has been able to manage the Direct Cash Assistance distribution process properly so that the implementation of the program can run according to the provisions.

However, the indicator of meeting basic needs only obtained a score of 42.2 percent (quite effective). This shows that the assistance received by the community does help meet some basic needs, but has not been able to meet all the household needs of the recipient. The amount of assistance of IDR 300,000 per month is still relatively limited when compared to the increase in the price of basic necessities. This condition is in line with the theory of Todaro & Smith (2015) which explains that poverty is not only influenced by low income, but also by limited access to economic resources and employment opportunities. Therefore, Direct Cash Assistance is only able to help maintain household consumption in the short term.

The poverty burden reduction indicator obtained a value of 0 percent (ineffective), which shows that all respondents considered that Direct Cash Assistance has not been able to reduce the poverty rate significantly. These results indicate that although the aid is able to alleviate household expenses, it is not enough to change the economic conditions of the recipients in a sustainable way. Thus, Direct Cash Assistance functions more as an instrument of short-term social protection than as a permanent solution in overcoming poverty. This condition occurs because poverty is influenced by many factors such as income, employment opportunities, productivity, and asset ownership, so that cash assistance alone is not enough to change the economic status of households.

Overall, the results of this study show that the effectiveness of Direct Cash Assistance in Lambara Village is more visible in the aspect of program implementation, while its impact on reducing poverty levels is still not optimal. Therefore, the Direct Cash Assistance program needs to be supported by economic empowerment policies, job creation, community skill improvement, and periodic updating of recipient data so that the benefits of assistance are not only temporary, but also able to improve people's welfare in the long term. The results of this study are in line with the research of Awalia & Sumayya (2024) which found that Direct Cash Assistance is effective in the implementation of distribution, but has not been able to significantly reduce poverty because the amount of assistance is still limited.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of the distribution of Direct Cash Assistance in Lambara Village obtained a score of 75.1 percent and is included in the effective category. This shows that the implementation of the program has run according to the objectives, especially in the indicators of the accuracy of the targets, the accuracy of the amount of assistance, the timeliness, the accuracy of administration, the accuracy of prices, as well as socialization and service.

However, the effectiveness of Direct Cash Assistance in reducing poverty levels is still not optimal. The indicator of meeting basic needs is only in the category of being quite effective, while the indicator of reducing the burden of poverty is in the category of ineffective. This condition shows that Direct Cash Assistance is able to help ease the burden of household expenditure in the short term, but has not been able to improve people's economic conditions in a sustainable manner or reduce poverty levels significantly. Thus, supporting programs are needed in the form of community economic empowerment, increasing employment opportunities, and updating recipient data so that the benefits of Direct Cash Assistance can have a greater impact on people's welfare.

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