



Collaboration Multi-Actors in Poverty Alleviation in Kendari City, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines multi-stakeholder collaboration in poverty alleviation efforts in Kendari City, Indonesia. The research aims to analyze forms of collaboration among government, NGOs, academia, private sector, and local communities, highlighting its contribution to governance and welfare policy literature. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and document analysis between January–June 2025. Findings reveal that collaboration is facilitated by local regulations, leadership, and community participation, yet constrained by bureaucratic rigidity, limited funding, and institutional capacity gaps. The study concludes that collaborative governance enhances coordination and innovation in poverty reduction, with implications for strengthening institutional design, transparency, and community-based approaches in local policy

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is one of the multidimensional challenges faced by the global community to date (Aguilar et al., 2020; Poverty, O., & Human Development Initiative, 2018). Despite significant progress in poverty alleviation since the beginning of the 21st century, recent data shows that the problem of poverty is far from over. The World Bank (2022) in the Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report notes that about 9.2% of the world's population still lives below the international poverty line with an income of US\$2.15 per day. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this condition by adding more than 70 million new poor people around the world, thereby hindering the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially the first goal, No Poverty (World Bank, 2022).

In addition, socio-economic inequality further deepens the gap between rich and poor groups. Oxfam International (2023) reports that global wealth is concentrated in a handful of individuals, while millions of people are still struggling to make ends meet. This phenomenon shows that poverty is not only an economic problem, but also related to the distribution of power, access to resources, and inclusive public policies.

In the public policy literature, poverty is seen as a complex problem that requires a cross-sectoral approach. The Collaborative Governance Theory put forward by Ansell and Gash (2008) emphasizes the importance of the involvement of various actors, namely the government, civil society, the private sector, and academia, in the deliberative process to produce effective policies. This collaboration not only strengthens policy legitimacy, but also increases implementation capacity through the synergy of resources and knowledge.

Empirical studies show that multi-stakeholder collaboration in poverty alleviation can have a positive impact. For example, the research of Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh (2012) developed a framework for Collaborative Governance Regimes that emphasizes the role of leadership, trust, and institutional capacity in maintaining the sustainability of collaboration. In Indonesia, research by Tadung, Alwi, and Susanti (2025) found that multistakeholder collaboration in Kendari City involves local governments, NGOs, academics, the private sector, and local communities. This collaboration resulted in coordination mechanisms, social learning, and collaborative leadership that contributed to the transformation of poverty alleviation policies.

However, the literature also highlights various obstacles to collaboration, such as rigid bureaucracy, limited funding, conflicts of interest, and weak institutional capacity (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012). Therefore, research on collaboration between actors in local contexts such as Kendari City is important to understand the dynamics, challenges, and opportunities in poverty alleviation.

This paper aims to: first, analyze the form of collaboration between actors in poverty alleviation in Kendari City, Indonesia. Second, Identify supporting and inhibiting factors in the multi-stakeholder collaboration process. Third, Evaluate the effectiveness of collaboration in reducing poverty in Kendari City,

and Fourth, Provide policy recommendations to strengthen collaboration between actors in poverty alleviation at the local level.

The main argument of this paper is that poverty cannot be overcome by just one actor, but requires structured and sustainable multi-stakeholder collaboration. Local governments have an important role to play as facilitators, but the success of poverty alleviation policies depends heavily on the active involvement of civil society, NGOs, academics, and the private sector.

Thus, this research is not only academically relevant, but also has practical implications for public policy in Indonesia, especially in efforts to achieve poverty alleviation targets according to the SDGs agenda.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Collaboration Theory in Public Policy

Collaboration between actors in public policy has become one of the dominant approaches in addressing complex social problems. Ansell and Gash (2008) introduced the concept of Collaborative Governance, which emphasizes the involvement of various actors in consensus-based deliberative processes. This model emphasizes the importance of trust building, dialogue, and shared motivation as the foundation of successful collaboration.

Emerson, Nabatchi, and Balogh (2012) then developed a framework for Collaborative Governance Regimes (CGR) that emphasizes three main dimensions: principled engagement, shared motivation, and capacity for joint action. This framework is relevant to analyze how actors at the local level, such as in Kendari City, build institutional capacity to address poverty.

In addition, Bryson, Crosby, and Stone (2006) emphasize that cross-sectoral collaboration can generate policy innovation through the integration of resources, knowledge, and social networks. However, they also highlight challenges in the form of conflicts of interest, power imbalances, and rigid bureaucracy.

2. The Concept of Poverty

Poverty is not only understood as a lack of income, but also as a limitation of access to education, health, and social participation. Sen (1999) through the Capability Approach emphasizes that poverty must be seen as a limitation of the ability of individuals to live the life they value as valuable.

In Indonesia, BPS defines poverty based on poverty lines that include food and non-food needs. However, multidimensional approaches such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) developed by Alkire and Foster (2011) are increasingly relevant to understanding the complexity of poverty at the local level.

3. Relevant Previous Studies

Research on multistakeholder collaboration in poverty alleviation has been conducted in various contexts. For example: the research of Tadung, Alwi, & Susanti (2025) found that in Kendari City, multi-stakeholder collaboration involves local governments, NGOs, academics, the private sector, and local communities. This collaboration results in collaborative coordination and leadership mechanisms that strengthen policy effectiveness.

Another study conducted by Purwanto & Sulistyastuti (2012) emphasizes that poverty alleviation policies in Indonesia often face problems of coordination between institutions, so multi-stakeholder collaboration becomes a strategic solution.

Furthermore, the research of Koppenjan & Klijn (2004) through Network Governance Theory emphasizes that public policy in the context of social complexity requires a network of actors that interact with each other, not just a bureaucratic hierarchy.

Thus, the literature shows that multistakeholder collaboration is not only a normative, but also empirical approach that has been shown to increase the effectiveness of poverty alleviation policies. However, the success of collaboration is highly dependent on factors such as leadership, trust, institutional capacity, and community participation.

METHODOLOGY

This methodology section describes the research approach, location, actors involved, data collection techniques, and analysis methods used.

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand in depth the dynamics of collaboration between actors in poverty alleviation in Kendari City. Case studies are used to examine the phenomenon of multi-stakeholder collaboration in specific local contexts (Yin, 2018).

This method is relevant because poverty is a complex problem that requires contextual analysis, and multistakeholder collaboration cannot be understood through quantitative data alone, but rather through the exploration of social, institutional, and policy interactions.

The research was conducted in Kendari City, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. Kendari City was chosen because it has a relatively high poverty rate compared to the national average, as well as the local government's initiative through the Regional Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team (TKPKD) involving various actors.

The actors that are the focus of the research include: first, local governments: Social Service, Bappeda, TKPKD. Second, civil society organizations (NGOs): local institutions engaged in community empowerment and poverty alleviation. Third, Academics: universities in Kendari that are involved in research and policy assistance. Fourth, the private sector: companies that run corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. Fifth, Local communities: poor groups of people who are beneficiaries of the program.

Data was collected through several techniques, namely: first, in-depth interviews with key informants to explore experiences, perceptions, and

collaboration strategies. Second, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with community representatives and NGOs to understand the dynamics of participation. Third, participatory observation of poverty alleviation program activities. And fourth, document analysis of regional policies, program reports, and poverty statistics data.

Triangulation techniques are used to ensure the validity of the data, by comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documents (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data Analysis techniques are carried out with a thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis process includes: first, Data reduction: filtering relevant information from interviews, FGDs, and documents. Second, Categorization: grouping data into themes such as forms of collaboration, supporting factors, barriers, and effectiveness. Third, Triangulation: comparing data from different sources to improve validity. Fourth, Interpretation: linking the findings with Collaborative Governance theory and the literature on poverty.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Form of Collaboration Between Actors

Multi-stakeholder collaboration in Kendari City is realized through the Regional Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team (TKPKD). The Regional Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team is an official forum that brings together local governments, NGOs, academics, the private sector, and local communities. =====The most prominent form of collaboration is a joint program in the economic empowerment of the poor. For example, local governments work with local NGOs to organize sewing skills and seafood processing, which are then supported by the private sector through the provision of market access. In addition, there is policy coordination through regular meetings between actors. This meeting aims to harmonize poverty alleviation programs so that they do not overlap. For example, the business capital assistance program from the local government is integrated with business management assistance by local universities. Another form of collaboration is CSR partnerships, where companies in Kendari distribute CSR funds to support the education of children from poor families. Halu Oleo University is also involved in academic mentoring, by conducting research, policy evaluation, and providing data-based recommendations.

2. Factors Supporting Collaboration

The main factor that supports multi-stakeholder collaboration in Kendari is the existence of regional regulations that provide legitimacy for TKPKD. This regulation ensures that collaboration has a clear legal basis. In addition, local government leadership plays an important role as a facilitator who is able to connect various actors. For example, the Mayor of Kendari actively invites NGOs and the private sector to engage in the TKPKD forum.

Another factor is the active participation of the community in the empowerment program. For example, poor community groups in Punggolaka Village are involved in a savings and loan cooperative program supported by NGOs. Resource support from the private sector is also an important factor, such as mining companies providing CSR funds for poor public health programs. These findings are in line with the framework of Collaborative Governance Regimes which emphasizes the importance of principled engagement and capacity for joint action (Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2012).

3. Collaboration Barriers

Despite the positive forms of collaboration, the study found a number of obstacles. First, rigid bureaucracy in decision-making often slows down program implementation. For example, the process of disbursing social assistance funds requires lengthy administrative procedures, thus hindering the implementation of the program.

Second, limited funds make many programs unsustainable. Local NGOs often rely on external donors, so when funding is reduced, poor empowerment programs come to a halt. Third, there is a conflict of interest between actors, especially between the government and NGOs. NGOs often criticize the government for being less transparent in managing poverty funds. Fourth, the weak institutional capacity of TKPKD in managing multi-stakeholder programs. For example, not all TKPKD members have technical skills in policy planning and evaluation. These barriers are consistent with the findings of Ansell and Gash (2008) who emphasize that collaboration often faces challenges in the form of power inequality and low trust between actors.

4. Collaboration Effectiveness

The effectiveness of collaboration in Kendari can be seen from several aspects. First, there is an increase in coordination between actors in program planning and implementation. For example, the business capital assistance program is now integrated with business management assistance by local universities, making it more sustainable.

Second, collaboration produces community-based policy innovations, such as savings and loan cooperative programs managed by the poor themselves with NGO support. Third, there is an impact on reducing the poverty rate, although it is still limited. BPS data shows a small decrease in the poverty rate in Kendari in the last two years, partly attributed to collaborative programs. However, this impact is not statistically significant because there are still many structural factors influencing.

Empirical findings in Kendari reinforce the literature on the importance of multistakeholder collaboration in public policy. As Bryson, Crosby, and Stone (2006) affirm, cross-sectoral collaboration can result in policy innovation, but it requires adaptive institutional design. In the case of Kendari, TKPKD serves as an institutional forum that allows program integration, although it still faces capacity challenges.

In addition, the Network Governance approach (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004) is relevant to explain how actors in Kendari form complex networks of interactions. The success of this network depends on the actor's ability to manage uncertainty and conflicts of interest. In the context of poverty, the Capability approach of Sen (1999) is also relevant. Multi-stakeholder collaboration in Kendari not only focuses on increasing income, but also on expanding the capabilities of the poor, such as access to education, health, and social participation.

Thus, this study contributes to the literature by showing that multi-stakeholder collaboration at the local level can be an effective strategy in poverty alleviation, although it still faces structural and institutional challenges.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study shows that multi-stakeholder collaboration in poverty alleviation in Kendari City has been running through the Regional Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team (TKPKD). Forms of collaboration include joint programs, policy coordination, CSR partnerships, and academic mentoring. The main supporting factors are local regulations, government leadership, community participation, and resource support from NGOs and the private sector.

However, the study also found obstacles in the form of rigid bureaucracy, limited funds, conflicts of interest between actors, and weak institutional capacity. However, multi-stakeholder collaboration in Kendari has resulted in improved coordination, community-based policy innovation, and a positive impact on reducing poverty, although it is not statistically significant. Academically, these findings reinforce the literature on Collaborative Governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012) and Network Governance (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004), as well as relevant to the Capability approach of Sen (1999) which emphasizes the importance of expanding the capabilities of the poor.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, some of the policy recommendations to strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration in Kendari are:

First, institutional strengthening of the Regional Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team (TKPKD). The Regional Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team needs to be strengthened through increasing the technical capacity of members, providing adequate resources, and more flexible coordination mechanisms. This is in line with the recommendations of Bryson, Crosby, and

Stone (2006) on the importance of adaptive institutional design in cross-sector collaboration.

Second, increasing transparency and accountability of local governments need to increase transparency in the management of poverty funds so that trust between actors can be maintained. Accountability mechanisms based on community participation can be a solution to reduce conflicts of interest.

Third, Diversify funding sources Multi-stakeholder collaboration should expand funding sources, not rely solely on government funds and external donors. CSR from the private sector can be directed more strategically to support poor empowerment programs.

Fourth, Strengthening community participation Poverty alleviation programs must be community-based by involving the poor as the main actors, not just beneficiaries. This approach is in accordance with the Capability Approach (Sen, 1999) which emphasizes the importance of expanding individual capabilities.

Finally, the integration of academic research in local government policies needs to utilize the results of academic research as a basis for decision-making. Local universities can play a strategic role in policy evaluation and program innovation.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Every study has limitations, and so does this study. First, the research uses a qualitative approach of a case study that focuses on Kendari City. This makes the results of the research cannot be generalized widely to all Indonesian contexts. Kendari has unique social, economic, and institutional characteristics, so the dynamics of multi-stakeholder collaboration in other regions may be different.

Second, limitations arise from data sources. This research relies on interviews, FGDs, observations, and document analysis. However, limited access to the latest statistical data and internal government reports can affect the depth of analysis. Some actors may also give biased answers due to political or organizational interests.

Third, this study emphasizes more on the collaborative process than on the quantitative results of poverty reduction. The impact of collaboration on poverty rates cannot be measured comprehensively due to the limitations of longitudinal data.

Fourth, there are limitations in institutional analysis capacity. TKPKD as a forum for collaboration is still relatively new, so this study has not been able to fully assess institutional sustainability in the long term.

To strengthen academic studies and policy practice, some advanced research suggestions are:

First, Comparative studies between regions Future research can compare multi-stakeholder collaboration in Kendari with other regions in Indonesia, such as Makassar or Kupang. This will provide a broader picture of the variety of collaborative practices in poverty alleviation.

Second, Quantitative approach Advanced research can use quantitative methods to measure the impact of collaboration on statistical poverty reduction. For example, with regression analysis or difference-in-differences to see the relationship between the intensity of collaboration and changes in poverty levels.

Third, Longitudinal analysis Long-term studies are required to assess the sustainability of multi-stakeholder collaboration. It is important to see if collaboration remains effective in the face of political, economic, and social changes.

Fourth, Multidisciplinary approach Advanced research can integrate economic, sociology, and political science perspectives to understand poverty more comprehensively. For example, examining how local cultural factors affect community participation in collaboration.

Finally, Evaluation of capability-based policies Using the Capability Approach framework (Sen, 1999), follow-up research can evaluate whether multi-stakeholder collaboration actually expands the capabilities of the poor, rather than simply increasing incomes.

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