



LEGAL GOVERNANCE FOR EXTREME POVERTY REDUCTION: ADVANCING JUSTICE THROUGH PARTICIPATORY PUBLIC POLICY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines extreme poverty alleviation in Pekalongan Regency from a legal governance perspective by integrating normative and empirical analyses. It addresses the gap between Indonesia's comprehensive legal framework and its implementation at the local level. Using a normative empirical juridical approach, the study analyzes the 1945 Constitution, Law Number 25 of 2004, Law Number 23 of 2014 as amended by Law Number 6 of 2023, Presidential Regulation Number 15 of 2010, and Presidential Instruction Number 4 of 2022, alongside their implementation in poverty reduction policies. The findings show that Indonesia has a strong normative foundation for poverty alleviation through social protection programs, including PKH, JKN, PIP, food assistance, and Village Funds. However, implementation remains dominated by an administrative approach, while justice, accountability, transparency, and public participation have not been fully institutionalized. The Pekalongan case reveals persistent problems, including inaccurate beneficiary data, institutional fragmentation, limited transparency, and weak public participation. The study concludes that strengthening legal governance through integrated welfare data, outcome-based accountability, digital transparency, and meaningful community participation is essential for achieving more just, effective, and sustainable extreme poverty alleviation.

1. Introduction

Extreme poverty is a multidimensional issue that is not only related to limited income but also reflects people's inability to access basic rights such as education, health care, food, and housing. From a welfare state perspective, extreme poverty is not merely an economic issue, but rather a legal and public policy issue that places the state as the duty bearer in ensuring the welfare of its citizens.¹ Thus, alleviating extreme poverty is a manifestation of the state's constitutional responsibility, as mandated by the 1945 Constitution, which emphasizes the protection of vulnerable groups through equitable public policies. From a legal theory perspective, the success of public policy is measured not only by administrative achievements but also by the fulfillment of three legal objectives: justice, legal certainty, and utility (Radbruch).² In the context of extreme poverty, justice cannot be understood solely as the distribution of social assistance, but rather encompasses equal access to public services and socio-economic opportunities. This perspective aligns with John Rawls' theory of justice as fairness, which prioritizes the least advantaged in public policy design.³

Empirically, Indonesia has developed various poverty alleviation policies, such as the Family Hope Program (*Program Keluarga Harapan*/PKH), the National Health Insurance (*Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional*/JKN), food aid, and economic empowerment programs. However, various studies indicate that the effectiveness of these policies still faces serious challenges, particularly in terms of targeting accuracy, institutional coordination, and sustainability of impact.⁴ In fact, it was found that most of the problems lie in weaknesses in the governance system, including weak data, low transparency, and ineffective oversight.⁵ This indicates that the problem of extreme poverty is no longer confined to substantive policy, but also lies at the governance level.

Within this framework, good governance is a key element in effective poverty alleviation. Studies show that the principles of transparency, accountability, and

¹ Sri Kusriyah., Government policy in achieving community welfare through the effectiveness of management of Zakat in Indonesia, *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol.7, no.5, 2020, page.160. See too, Carlos A. Moreno., Transport policy: empowering local community for poverty alleviation in a deprived neighborhood in Colombia, *Case studies on transport policy*, Vol.13, no.4, 2023, page. 101027; Masa Sylvester Motadi., A strategy for poverty eradication towards sustainable development, *OIDA International Journal of Sustainable Development*, Vol.18, no.9, 2025, page.145.

² Sofjan Aripin Rulinawaty, Andriyansah, and Lukman Samboteng., Participatory governance capacity building: the missing link of poverty eradication in food diversification policies in Indonesia, *Electronic Government, an International Journal*, Vol.19, no.2, 2023, page.214.

³ John Rawls., *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1971, page.84.

⁴ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.265. See too, Abu Huraerah, Adi Fahrudin, and Husmiati Yusuf., The Strategies of Social Protection to Reduce Poverty in Indonesia, In *Social Work in Asia: Education, Practice, and Service*, Cham, Springer Nature Switzerland, 2026, page.464.

⁵ Engkus, Fadjar Tri Sakti, and Indra Kristian., Good governance: Implementation of the non-cash food assistance program in Bandung City of Indonesia, *Res Militaris*, Vol.13, no.1, 2022, page.291.

bureaucratic effectiveness contribute significantly to reducing multidimensional poverty, although their impact is highly dependent on the quality of institutions and the country's context.⁶ Some findings even suggest that the effect of governance on poverty is non-linear.⁷

Furthermore, a participatory approach is also a crucial element in poverty alleviation governance. Public participation is no longer understood as supplementary but as a substantive right in the public decision-making process. Research shows that public participation can increase policy effectiveness through legitimacy, data accuracy, and program appropriateness.⁸ However, practice in the field remains formalistic, rather than meaningful. From an administrative law perspective, the effectiveness of public policy is determined by the relationship between legal substance, institutional structure, and legal culture, as stated by Lawrence M. Friedman.⁹ In the Indonesian context, there is a gap between legal norms and policy implementation (*das sollen dan das sein*), particularly in the distribution of social assistance, which still experiences data inaccuracies.¹⁰ This indicates weak legal governance.

Normatively, Indonesia has a comprehensive legal framework for alleviating extreme poverty, starting with the 1945 Constitution, Law Number 25 of 2004, Law Number 23 of 2014 in conjunction with Law Number 6 of 2023, Law Number 1 of 2022, Presidential Regulation Number 15 of 2010 and Presidential Instruction Number 4 of 2022, as well as technical regulations related to the disaster data collection (*Data Terpadu Kesejahteraan Sosial*/DTKS). However, various studies indicate that institutional fragmentation, weak cross-sectoral coordination, and

⁶ Christoph Jindra, and Ana Vaz., Good governance and multidimensional poverty: A comparative analysis of 71 countries, *Governance*, Vol.32, no.4, 2019, page.662. See too, Huck-ju Kwon, and Eunju Kim., Poverty reduction and good governance: Examining the rationale of the Millennium Development Goals, *Development and Change*, Vol.45, no.2, 2014, page.359.

⁷ Anis Ochi, Yosra Saidi, and Mohamed Ali Labidi., Nonlinear threshold effect of governance quality on poverty reduction in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa: A dynamic panel threshold specification, *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, Vol.15, no.1, 2024, page.4246. See too, Yosra Saidi, Mohamed Ali Labidi, and Anis Ochi., Economic growth and extreme poverty in sub-Saharan African countries: Non-linearity and governance threshold effect, *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, Vol.15, no.2, 2024, page.7831.

⁸ Sofjan Aripin Rulinawaty, Andriyansah, and Lukman Samboteng., Participatory governance capacity building: the missing link of poverty eradication in food diversification policies in Indonesia, *Electronic Government, an International Journal*, Vol.19, no.2, 2023, page.214. See too, Andi M. Rusli, Suhardiman Syamsu, and Muhammad Chaeroel Ansar., The effects of governance and multidimensional poverty at the grassroots level in Indonesia, *Public Policy and Administration*, Vol.23, no.2, 2024, page.263.

⁹ Lawrence M. Friedman., *The legal system: A social science perspective*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1975, page.25.

¹⁰ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.267.

poor data integration remain major obstacles.¹¹

In this context, Pekalongan Regency serves as a relevant case study because extreme poverty is multidimensional due to the dominance of the informal sector, limited access to public services, and vulnerability to tidal flooding and climate change. These conditions demonstrate that poverty is not only economic, but also social and ecological, necessitating an adaptive, collaborative, and law-based governance approach. A weak economic structure, coupled with the impact of disasters and limited infrastructure, increases the risk of community vulnerability. Therefore, poverty alleviation strategies cannot be achieved solely through social assistance. They need to be strengthened by economic empowerment, MSME development, the use of smart governance, and cross-stakeholder collaboration to create more sustainable solutions.

Studies on extreme poverty alleviation within the framework of good governance show that the principles of transparency, accountability, and bureaucratic effectiveness contribute to the reduction of multidimensional poverty,¹² even with non-linear effects that only become significant when institutional capacity reaches a certain threshold.¹³ However, this literature generally positions good governance as an administrative-economic variable, rather than as a legal construct within the welfare state. Studies also emphasize the relationship between governance, economic growth, and international aid without elaborating on legal dimensions such as justice and legality in policy implementation.¹⁴ In terms of participation, research shows that participatory approaches and community-based governance can increase policy effectiveness and inclusion.¹⁵ However, participation

¹¹ Sangkala Widyawati, and Muhammad Rusdi., Integrative governance for extreme poverty alleviation in Jeneponto Regency of Indonesia, *Discover Sustainability*, Vol.14, no.5, 2026, page.321.

¹² Chamhuri Siwar., Good governance for poverty alleviation: The case of Malaysia, *Chinese Public Administration Review*, Vol.3, no.3, 2006, page.6. See too, Adrino Mazenda., The poverty implications of governance in South Africa, *Journal Global Policy and Governance*, Vol.11, no.2, 2022, page.40; Soumyadip Chattopadhyay, and Seemantini Chattopadhyay., Contours of Governance Reforms in India: Constraints and Possibilities, *South Asian Survey*, Vol.19, no.1, 2012, page.121.

¹³ Anis Ochi, Yosra Saidi, and Mohamed Ali Labidi., Nonlinear threshold effect of governance quality on poverty reduction in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa: A dynamic panel threshold specification, *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, Vol.15, no.1, 2024, page.4248. See too, Yosra Saidi, Mohamed Ali Labidi, and Anis Ochi., Economic growth and extreme poverty in sub-Saharan African countries: Non-linearity and governance threshold effect, *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, Vol.15, no.2, 2024, page.7830.

¹⁴ Rana Hasan, Devashish Mitra, and Mehmet Ulubasoglu., Institutions and policies for growth and poverty reduction: The role of private sector development, *Asian Development Review*, Vol.24, no.1, 2007, page.88. See too, Edmore Mahembe, and Nicholas M. Odhiambo., Development aid and its impact on poverty reduction in developing countries: A dynamic panel data approach, *International Journal of Development Issues*, Vol.19, no.2, 2020, page.153.

¹⁵ Sofjan Aripin Rulinawaty, Andriyansah, and Lukman Samboteng., Participatory governance capacity building: the missing link of poverty eradication in food diversification policies in Indonesia, *Electronic Government, an International Journal*, Vol.19, no.2, 2023, page.217. See too, Andi M. Rusli, Suhardiman Syamsu, and Muhammad Chaeroel Ansar., The effects of governance and multidimensional poverty at the grassroots level in Indonesia, *Public Policy and Administration*, Vol.23, no.2, 2024, page.260; Hans Antlöv., Village government and rural development in Indonesia: The new democratic framework, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic*

integration remains fragmented and sectoral, while local governance practices continue to exhibit formalistic tendencies and the dominance of hierarchical structures.¹⁶

At the policy implementation level, programs such as the Family Hope Program (*Program Keluarga Harapan*/PKH), National Health Insurance (*Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional*/JKN), and food aid have been shown to have short-term impacts,¹⁷ but still face problems of inaccurate targeting and data weaknesses, with mistargeting rates reaching 35.99%.¹⁸ This confirms that the primary problem lies in governance failures, not policy design. Institutional fragmentation and weak data integration also exacerbate implementation problems.

In legal studies, although the welfare state approach has emphasized state responsibility,¹⁹ most studies are still normative in nature and have not integrated the principles of legal justice, legal certainty and legal utility in the design of policy implementation. Studies on zakat and redistribution also still focus on instruments, not on systemic legal governance design.²⁰ Meanwhile, the concept of social justice in policy is still understood as the distribution of welfare, not a legal structure that guarantees equal access and protection of rights as in Rawls' perspective.²¹

There are three main research gaps. First, existing studies have not yet integrated

Studies, Vol.39, no.2, 2003, page.198; Nagendra Nath Sinha, and Suvakanta Nayak., Graduating Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) from Extreme Poverty: Experience from Jharkhand, In *Pathways to Rural Prosperity*, Oxfordshire, Routledge, 2026, page.58.

¹⁶ Sangkala Widyawati, and Muhammad Rusdi., Integrative governance for extreme poverty alleviation in Jeneponto Regency of Indonesia, *Discover Sustainability*, Vol.14, no.5, 2026, page.321. See too, Muhammad Syukri., Neglecting the poor and marginalized: Participatory village governance in Indonesia's New Developmentalist state, *Development Policy Review*, Vol.42, no.4, 2024, page.e12776.

¹⁷ Horas Djulius, Xiao Lixian, Arnanda Novia Lestari, and Septiawan Fajar Eryanto., The Impact of a Poor Family Assistance Program on Human Development in Indonesia, *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, Vol.11, no.4, 2022, page.65. See too, Abu Huraerah, Adi Fahrudin, and Husmiati Yusuf., The Strategies of Social Protection to Reduce Poverty in Indonesia, In *Social Work in Asia: Education, Practice, and Service*, Cham, Springer Nature Switzerland, 2026, page.466.

¹⁸ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.268.

¹⁹ Sri Kusriyah., Government policy in achieving community welfare through the effectiveness of management of Zakat in Indonesia, *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol.7, no.5, 2020, page.159.

²⁰ Muhammad Hadi, Jalaluddin Rum, Wahyudin Maguni, and Anwar M. Radiamoda., Toward a holistic legal framework for effective waqf implementation: Integrating Islamic socio-economic models, *Volkgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Konstitusi*, Vol.21, no.2, 2025, page.28. See too, Wiwie Heryani, Ratnawati, Maskun, Amaliyah, Andi Muhammad Aswin Anas, Muhammad Hasrul, Asmunandar, Muhammad Surya Gemilang, and Wafiq Azizah., Law Enforcement on Misuse of Social Assistance Funds: A Legal Sociology Perspective, *Laws*, Vol.14, no.6, 2025, page.93.

²¹ Fauzi, Juhari, Said Amirulkamar, and Ummunisa Hidayati., A Model of Extreme Poverty Reduction to Prevent Social Inequality in Indonesia Perspective of Sociology and Islamic Law, *Al-Risalah: Forum Kajian Hukum dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan*, Vol.23, no.2, 2023, page.222.

good governance and legal theory in the analysis of extreme poverty. Most of the literature continues to separate the normative legal approach from the empirical-administrative perspective, preventing the development of a comprehensive legal governance framework.²² Second, although community participation is widely acknowledged as important, research remains sectoral and descriptive, without examining participation as a legal principle that determines policy legitimacy. Third, empirical studies at the regional level have not combined justice, participation, and accountability within a single legal governance framework. These gaps highlight the need for a holistic legal governance approach that unites law, policy, and governance practices in addressing extreme poverty.

Based on this gap, this research aims to analyze the alleviation of extreme poverty in Pekalongan Regency through a legal governance perspective by integrating normative analysis of the legal framework and empirical analysis of policy implementation. The research questions in this study are:

1. How adequate is Indonesia's legal framework in ensuring justice-oriented governance for extreme poverty reduction?
2. What legal and governance factors hinder the effective implementation of justice, accountability, transparency, and public participation in extreme poverty reduction policies?
3. How can legal governance be reconstructed to strengthen justice and participatory public policy for sustainable extreme poverty reduction?

The novelty of this research lies in the development of a legal governance concept that positions justice, public participation, transparency, and accountability as legal principles determining the effectiveness of extreme poverty alleviation policies. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to the development of state administrative law and public policy law, while also offering a model for strengthening legal governance that is more just, participatory, and sustainable in achieving the eradication of extreme poverty in Indonesia.

2. Research Methods

This research employs a normative–empirical juridical method within the framework of legal governance analysis to examine the effectiveness of extreme poverty alleviation policies in Indonesia, with a specific case study in Pekalongan Regency. The approach is designed to bridge the gap between legal norms (*das sollen*) and policy implementation (*das sein*), particularly in the context of administrative law and public policy governance.

The normative juridical approach is used to analyze the coherence between legal instruments governing poverty alleviation and fundamental principles of administrative law, including legality, legal certainty, justice, transparency, accountability, and public participation. The regulatory focus of this study includes the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (*Undang Undang Dasar/UUD 1945*), Law Number 25 of 2004 on the National Development Planning System, Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government as amended by Law Number 6

²² Hans Antlöv., Village government and rural development in Indonesia: The new democratic framework, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, Vol.39, no.2, 2003, page.196.

of 2023, Law Number 1 of 2022 on Fiscal Relations between the Central Government and Regional Governments, Presidential Regulation Number 15 of 2010 on the Acceleration of Poverty Reduction, Presidential Instruction Number 4 of 2022 on the Acceleration of Extreme Poverty Reduction, and regulations governing the Integrated Social Welfare Data (*Data Terpadu Kesejahteraan Sosial*//DTKS) and social protection programs. This includes an examination of constitutional provisions, statutory frameworks, and policy regulations related to poverty reduction, including decentralization laws and social assistance governance. The analysis also evaluates the extent to which these legal norms embody welfare state principles and ensure protection of vulnerable groups as mandated by law.

The empirical juridical approach is applied to investigate the implementation of these legal norms in practice. This includes assessing institutional performance, inter-agency coordination, data governance, and accountability mechanisms in poverty alleviation programs. The empirical dimension also captures how legal rules are operationalized within local governance structures and how far implementation aligns with normative legal objectives.

This study focuses on three core dimensions of legal governance: (1) institutional structure, (2) legal values, and (3) legal processes. The institutional dimension examines bureaucratic arrangements and coordination mechanisms among government agencies. The value dimension emphasizes constitutional principles such as justice, equality, transparency, trust, and accountability as normative foundations of governance. The process dimension assesses procedural legality in policy implementation, including participation, deliberation, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms.

Data collection involves legal document analysis, in-depth interviews, surveys, and field observation. Legal materials include legislation, policy documents, government reports, and administrative regulations relevant to poverty alleviation. Empirical data are obtained from 209 respondents experiencing extreme poverty in Pekalongan Regency, selected through multi-stage sampling. In addition, key informants include village officials, policymakers, community leaders, NGOs, and legal or policy experts to ensure triangulated legal and contextual understanding.

Data analysis is conducted through triangulation of sources, methods, and theoretical perspectives to enhance validity. Quantitative data are analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, while qualitative data are examined through thematic coding. Importantly, a normative-critical legal analysis is applied to evaluate the effectiveness of legal instruments in addressing structural barriers to poverty, particularly in relation to administrative justice and governance failures. Through this integrated juridical approach, the study aims to generate a comprehensive understanding of how legal governance operates in poverty alleviation and to formulate normative and practical recommendations for strengthening a more just, accountable, and effective legal framework in extreme poverty reduction.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Legal Framework in Justice-Based Governance for Extreme Poverty Alleviation

The legal framework for alleviating extreme poverty in Indonesia is fundamentally rooted in the welfare state paradigm, explicitly enshrined in the constitution, particularly the 1945 Constitution, which affirms the state's mandate to protect vulnerable groups and achieve social justice for all citizens.²³ From a public law theory perspective, this mandate positions poverty alleviation not merely as an administrative or economic policy, but as a constitutional obligation that is imperative, rights-based, and inherent in the state's function as a guardian of social welfare (social welfare obligation).²⁴

Within the legal governance framework, this principle is then translated into various sectoral legal instruments that shape the architecture of poverty alleviation policies. These instruments include development planning laws, regional government laws, and laws on central and regional financial relations, which regulate fiscal distribution mechanisms in the implementation of social programs.²⁵ This structure demonstrates that poverty alleviation has been institutionalized within the state administration system, making it an integral part of modern, law-based governance.

Furthermore, various derivative regulations, such as presidential regulations, ministerial regulations, and technical guidelines for social policy, strengthen policy operationalization, particularly in aspects of social assistance distribution, beneficiary targeting, and the integration of national welfare data.²⁶ In this

²³ Sri Kusriyah., Government policy in achieving community welfare through the effectiveness of management of Zakat in Indonesia, *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol.7, no.5, 2020, page.164. See too, Dedeng Yusuf Maolani, Fisher Zulkarnain, and Andre Ariesmansyah., Legal Framework And Governance Implications In The State Administrative Law System: A Study Of Policy Innovation In Poverty Alleviation In Developing Countries, *Corporate Law & Governance Review*, Vol.7, no.4, 2025, page.2627.

²⁴ Yanti Aneta, Asna Aneta, Rustam Tohopi, Pebriyanto A. Hulinggi, and Princess Alyssa D. Tee-Anastacio., Legal philosophy's role in human rights and fiscal governance: Indonesia and the Philippines comparative insights, *Jurnal Suara Hukum*, Vol.7, no.2, 2025, page.137. See too, Ridwan Arifin, A. Masyhar, Benny Sumardiana, Diandra Preludio Ramada, Ubaidillah Kamal, and Sultoni Fikri., Indonesian sustainable development policy: How the government ensures the environment for future generations, In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, Bristol, IOP Publishing, 2024, page.12005.

²⁵ Diego Fossati., Is Indonesian local government accountable to the poor? Evidence from health policy implementation, *Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol.16, no.3, 2016, page.318. See too, Engkus, Fadjat Tri Sakti, and Indra Kristian., Good governance: Implementation of the non-cash food assistance program in Bandung City of Indonesia, *Res Militaris*, Vol.13, no.1, 2022, page.294.

²⁶ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2,

context, the state functions not only as a regulator but also as a policy implementer, directly managing the welfare distribution system through various social programs.

At the level of social policy implementation, Indonesia has developed various programs that reflect a multidimensional approach to poverty. Programs such as the Family Hope Program (*Program Keluarga Harapan*/PKH), the National Health Insurance Program (*Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional*/JKN), non-cash food assistance, and the Smart Indonesia Program demonstrate that poverty is understood as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing economic, health, educational, and basic access dimensions.²⁷ This approach aligns with the concept of multidimensional poverty governance, which emphasizes that poverty cannot be reduced solely to income but also to access to public services and social opportunities.

At the local level, the Village Fund and Village SDGs policies expand the space for participation and decentralization in poverty alleviation. These policies empower village governments to design interventions based on local needs, including basic infrastructure development, health services, and community economic empowerment.²⁸ From a participatory governance perspective, this decentralization should strengthen local accountability and increase policy effectiveness through closer ties between the government and communities.²⁹

However, although structurally, Indonesia's legal framework appears comprehensive, various studies indicate a dominant administrative-instrumental approach in its implementation.³⁰ In this approach, the law functions primarily as

2025, page.264. See too, Horas Djulius, Xiao Lixian, Arnanda Novia Lestari, and Septiawan Fajar Eryanto., The Impact of a Poor Family Assistance Program on Human Development in Indonesia, *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, Vol.11, no.4, 2022, page.66.

²⁷ Lilis Hidayati Yuli Astutik, Iffatin Nur, and Mashuri Mashuri., Family expectation and poverty alleviation program: approaches to family development laws, sustainable development goals, and Maqashid Sharia, *Justicia Islamica*, Vol.19, no.1, 2022, page.44. See too, Abu Huraerah, Adi Fahrudin, and Husmiati Yusuf., The Strategies of Social Protection to Reduce Poverty in Indonesia, In *Social Work in Asia: Education, Practice, and Service*, Cham, Springer Nature Switzerland, 2026, page.469.

²⁸ Rifki Muhammad, Ach Apriyanto Romadhan, and Ali Roziqin., Creating Community Resilience Through Social Safety Nets for Poverty Alleviation in the Rural Areas, In *Community Climate Justice and Sustainable Development*, Hershey, IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025, page.114. See too, Kerkulah P. Nyeleker, and Suswanta., Zero-Poverty Villages? The Effectiveness of the Village Sustainable Development Goals Policy in Indonesia, In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, Bristol, IOP Publishing, 2025, page.12030.

²⁹ Sonia Roitman., Top-down and bottom-up strategies for housing and poverty alleviation in Indonesia: The PNPM programme in Yogyakarta, In *Dynamics and resilience of informal areas: International perspectives*, Cham, Springer International Publishing, 2016, page.191.

³⁰ Muhammad Syukri., Neglecting the poor and marginalized: Participatory village governance in Indonesia's New Developmentalist state, *Development Policy Review*, Vol.42, no.4, 2024, page.e12781. See too, Yanti Aneta, Asna Aneta, Rustam Tohopi, Pebriyanto A. Hulinggi, and Princess Alyssa D. Tee-Anastacio., Legal philosophy's role in human rights and fiscal governance:

a procedural regulatory instrument that emphasizes administrative compliance, budget allocation, and institutional coordination, rather than as an instrument for achieving substantive justice. As a result, normative dimensions such as distributive justice, protection of the rights of vulnerable groups, and legally enforceable guarantees of participation remain poorly institutionalized.³¹

These limitations are reflected in the implementation of social policies on the ground, particularly related to the misallocation of social assistance. Studies show that program targeting inaccuracies often occur due to weak data integration, inaccurate beneficiary verification, and fragmented social welfare information systems.³² This situation demonstrates a serious gap between the normative design of the law and the state's administrative capacity for implementation (implementation gap).³³

Furthermore, the decentralization system, which is normatively intended to strengthen local participation, faces structural challenges in the form of institutional fragmentation and weak cross-sectoral coordination.³⁴ In many cases, various institutional actors operate in parallel without effective integration, creating overlapping authority and weakening the chain of policy accountability. This situation is exacerbated by the dominance of a top-down approach to program implementation, which limits the space for local innovation.

From a governance theory perspective, this situation indicates that Indonesia is still in a transition phase from rule-based governance to justice-based governance. In the rule-based phase, law is understood more as a set of procedural rules that must be complied with, whereas in justice-based governance, law functions as an instrument to ensure substantive justice, equal access, and the effective protection of social rights.³⁵ The imbalance between these two approaches means that law has not yet fully functioned as a tool for social transformation.

Weaknesses in the internalization of the principle of justice are also reflected in the accountability system, which remains formal and procedural. Although

Indonesia and the Philippines comparative insights, *Jurnal Suara Hukum*, Vol.7, no.2, 2025, page.139.

³¹ Januardo Sulung Partogi Sihombing, Retno Saraswati, Yunanto, and Arida Turymshayeva., The regulation of legal protection for poor communities toward justice in Indonesia and the Netherlands, *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System*, Vol.4, no.2, 2024, page.342. See too, Dedeng Yusuf Maolani, Fisher Zulkarnain, and Andre Ariesmansyah., Legal Framework And Governance Implications In The State Administrative Law System: A Study Of Policy Innovation In Poverty Alleviation In Developing Countries, *Corporate Law & Governance Review*, Vol.7, no.4, 2025, page.2623.

³² Engkus, Fadjar Tri Sakti, and Indra Kristian., Good governance: Implementation of the non-cash food assistance program in Bandung City of Indonesia, *Res Militaris*, Vol.13, no.1, 2022, page.297.

³³ Habibullah., Homelessness in the context of extreme poverty: Social policy from Indonesia, *Homelessness to Hope*, Vol.12, no.1, 2024, page.371.

³⁴ Sangkala Widyawati, and Muhammad Rusdi., Integrative governance for extreme poverty alleviation in Jeneponto Regency of Indonesia, *Discover Sustainability*, Vol.14, no.5, 2026, page.321. Muhammad Syukri., Participatory environmental governance in Indonesia: assessing the limitations, *South East Asia Research*, Vol.33, no.4, 2025, page.441.

³⁵ Hans Antlöv., Village government and rural development in Indonesia: The new democratic framework, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, Vol.39, no.2, 2003, page.199.

reporting and oversight mechanisms exist, their implementation has not been accompanied by firm and consistent legal consequences.³⁶ This weakens the corrective function of law and makes it ineffective in redressing policy failures. International literature consistently emphasizes that the effectiveness of extreme poverty alleviation depends heavily on the quality of governance, including accountability, transparency, bureaucratic effectiveness, and the rule of law.³⁷ From this perspective, good governance functions not merely as an administrative mechanism but as a structural determinant that influences the state's ability to allocate resources fairly and efficiently to the poor.³⁸ Empirical findings even suggest a threshold effect, where the influence of governance on reducing extreme poverty only becomes significant after institutional quality exceeds a certain level.

From a mechanistic perspective, good governance operates through several main channels. First, it increases economic growth through a conducive regulatory environment and stable law enforcement.³⁹ Second, it increases the effectiveness of public administration through service digitization and e-government, which expands access to basic services for the poor.⁴⁰ Third, precisely targeted poverty alleviation policies have been shown to increase the incomes of vulnerable groups, although in some cases, this can result in a trade-off with aggregate growth.⁴¹

However, the literature also shows that governance effectiveness is highly contextual. In low-income countries, limited institutional capacity often mitigates the impact of governance reforms on poverty.⁴² Furthermore, institutional

³⁶ Suteki, Abdul Jalil, Aga Natalis, and Dewi Rembulan., Community Engagement in Eradicating Corruption: Evaluating the Effectiveness and Reward Models for Whistleblowers As a Regional Strategy, *Indonesian Journal of Legal Community Engagement*, Vol.8, no.1, 2025, page.52. See too, Wiwie Heryani, Ratnawati, Maskun, Amaliyah, Andi Muhammad Aswin Anas, Muhammad Hasrul, Asmunandar, Muhammad Surya Gemilang, and Wafiq Azizah., Law Enforcement on Misuse of Social Assistance Funds: A Legal Sociology Perspective, *Laws*, Vol.14, no.6, 2025, page.95.

³⁷ Edmore Mahembe, and Nicholas M. Odhiambo., Development aid and its impact on poverty reduction in developing countries: A dynamic panel data approach, *International Journal of Development Issues*, Vol.19, no.2, 2020, page.155.

³⁸ C. Gunhidzirai, and M. J. Rankopo., Governance of social protection programmes for poverty alleviation in Botswana, *Journal of Social Development in Africa*, Vol.40, no.1, 2025, page.145.

³⁹ Rana Hasan, Devashish Mitra, and Mehmet Ulubasoglu., Institutions and policies for growth and poverty reduction: The role of private sector development, *Asian Development Review*, Vol.24, no.1, 2007, page.89.

⁴⁰ Andi M. Rusli, Suhardiman Syamsu, and Muhammad Chaeroel Ansar., The effects of governance and multidimensional poverty at the grassroots level in Indonesia, *Public Policy and Administration*, Vol.23, no.2, 2024, page.265.

⁴¹ Liuyang He, Xi Lu, and Chyen Yee Lee., Last mile in anti-poverty drive: Impact of cadres' appraisals on growth and poverty reduction, *World Development*, Vol.167, no.4, 2023, page.106255. See too, Bo Ma, Jin Zhu, and Shenjing He., Towards precise rural governance: How cadre deployment strategies shape resource delivery and poverty alleviation outcomes in rural China, *Habitat International*, Vol.174, no.2, 2026, page.103868.

⁴² Christoph Jindra, and Ana Vaz., Good governance and multidimensional poverty: A comparative analysis of 71 countries, *Governance*, Vol.32, no.4, 2019, page.664. See too, Huck-ju Kwon, and

fragmentation and capacity disparities across regions can weaken the effectiveness of policy implementation. At the global level, the effectiveness of international aid, such as Official Development Assistance (ODA), is also largely determined by the quality of recipient countries' institutions, particularly in terms of fiscal transparency and bureaucratic capacity. This reinforces the view that extreme poverty is inseparable from global and national governance architectures. Comparative studies also demonstrate that an integrative approach, which combines governance reforms with direct social policies such as social protection, financial inclusion, and community-based programs, produces more sustainable poverty reduction outcomes.⁴³ Thus, the international literature confirms that eradicating extreme poverty requires a combination of institutional quality, adaptive policy design, and social inclusion based on local contexts.

Thus, it can be concluded that Indonesia's legal framework for alleviating extreme poverty has a strong normative foundation, but still faces serious challenges in operationalizing the principle of substantive justice. The gap between norms (*das sollen*) and practice (*das sein*) indicates that law remains predominantly an administrative instrument rather than an instrument of social justice.⁴⁴

Therefore, strengthening legal governance going forward needs to be directed at three strategic agendas. First, the integration of accurate, standardized, and interoperable social data systems to reduce targeting errors in social assistance.⁴⁵ Second, strengthening legal accountability mechanisms that are binding and have clear sanction consequences.⁴⁶ Third, expanding substantive public participation throughout the policy cycle, from formulation to evaluation, so that the principle of justice is not merely formal but truly realized in practice.⁴⁷ By strengthening

Eunju Kim., Poverty reduction and good governance: Examining the rationale of the Millennium Development Goals, *Development and Change*, Vol.45, no.2, 2014, page.362.

⁴³ Theodore J. Davis, Good governance as a foundation for sustainable human development in sub-Saharan Africa, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.38, no.3, 2017, page.645. See too, Z. Yin, and Y. Li., Impact of mobile payments on relative poverty, *Mod. Econ. Sci*, Vol.5, no.1, 2023, page.11; Doug Porter, and David Craig., The third way and the third world: poverty reduction and social inclusion in the rise of 'inclusive' liberalism, *Review of international political economy*, Vol.11, no.2, 2004, 401.

⁴⁴ Muhammad Syukri., Neglecting the poor and marginalized: Participatory village governance in Indonesia's New Developmentalist state, *Development Policy Review*, Vol.42, no.4, 2024, page.e12779.

⁴⁵ Engkus, Fadjar Tri Sakti, and Indra Kristian., Good governance: Implementation of the non-cash food assistance program in Bandung City of Indonesia, *Res Militaris*, Vol.13, no.1, 2022, page.299.

⁴⁶ Suteki, Abdul Jalil, Aga Natalis, and Dewi Rembulan., Community Engagement in Eradicating Corruption: Evaluating the Effectiveness and Reward Models for Whistleblowers As a Regional Strategy, *Indonesian Journal of Legal Community Engagement*, Vol.8, no.1, 2025, page.54.

⁴⁷ T. Nugrahani, R. I. Saptatiningsih, and M. N. A. Azman., The effects of community empowerment and participation in the reduction of poverty: A case study on potorono and Wonokromo Bantul Villages, *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, Vol.7, no.9, 2019, page.92. See too, Achmad Irwan Hamzani, Loso, and Bhanu Prakash Nunna., Implementation of Restorative Justice in the Criminal Justice System: A Comparative Study between Indonesia and India, *Indonesian State Law Review*, Vol.8, no.2, 2025, page.127; Muhammad Mutawalli Mukhlis, Maskun, Ahmad Masum, Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin, Wa Ode Intan Kurniawati, Yusuf Ibrahim Arowosaiye, and Naswar., Examining the Implementation of Participatory Village Autonomy:

these three aspects, the law will function not only as a state administrative framework but also as an instrument of social transformation capable of realizing substantive justice in the sustainable alleviation of extreme poverty.

3.2. Factors Hindering Justice and Transparency in Extreme Poverty Reduction

Research findings indicate that the effectiveness of extreme poverty alleviation policies in Pekalongan Regency is significantly influenced by the interaction between structural vulnerabilities and weaknesses in governance in ensuring the principles of justice, accountability, transparency, and public participation. Policy implementation depends not only on the existence of regulations, but primarily on the quality of governance at the institutional and operational levels.

From a structural perspective, poverty conditions demonstrate high economic pressure. In 2024, the poverty line was recorded at IDR 505,520 per capita per month, with approximately 75% of poor household expenditure allocated to basic food needs such as rice, cigarettes, and animal protein. This indicates a predominance of subsistence consumption, which limits households' ability to invest in education, health, and productive assets. In aggregate, the number of poor people reached 81,720, with a poverty rate of 8.95%. Despite the decline, the Poverty Depth Index (P1) of 1.16 and the Poverty Severity Index (P2) of 0.23 indicate that the majority of households remain near the poverty line and highly vulnerable to economic shocks.

These structural conditions are explained in more detail in Table 1, which shows that 73.4% of households still experience income difficulties, 48% have low education (elementary school or less), 52.92% lack productive assets, and 42.65% work in the informal sector. Furthermore, approximately 65.4% of respondents assessed the effectiveness of social assistance as suboptimal, while regional fiscal dependence on central transfers reached approximately 82%. This table indicates that the main challenges lie in limited economic opportunities, weak human capital, and suboptimal integration of social assistance data. Overall, these conditions underscore the need to strengthen more inclusive policies to increase community economic capacity and improve social administration data systems.

Table 1. Structural Conditions in the Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Policies

Structural Aspects	Indicators	Empirical Findings	Implications for Strengthening Legal Governance
Economy	Work and income difficulties	73.4% of households experience income difficulties	Demonstrates the need to strengthen the creation of economic opportunities

Models of Community Engagement and Application in Strengthening Inclusive Governance in Indonesia, *Indonesian Journal of Legal Community Engagement*, Vol.8, no.1, 2025, page.133.

Structural Aspects	Indicators	Empirical Findings	Implications for Strengthening Legal Governance
			and decent work.
Social assistance	Effectiveness of aid	65.4% think that the assistance is not optimal	Indicates the need for increased targeting accuracy and effectiveness of redistribution.
Education	Level of education	48% only have elementary school education or less	Demonstrates the importance of strengthening capacity building policies (human capital development)
Economic assets	Ownership of productive assets	52.92% do not have productive assets	Describes the need for expanded access to assets and productive economic inclusion
Fiscal	Regional fiscal dependence	±82% depends on central transfer	Demonstrates the importance of strengthening fiscal autonomy and regional planning capacity.
Targeting data	Validity of social assistance data	There is still target inaccuracy	Demonstrates the need to strengthen the integration and accuracy of social administration data.

Regarding governance, Table 2 shows that transparency, accountability, and participation still need strengthening. Regarding transparency, 47.3% of respondents experienced difficulty accessing information, while 47.4% assessed that the decision-making process was not fully open. Furthermore, the quality of information was deemed inconsistent and inadequately updated. This indicates that transparency remains formal and does not fully guarantee substantive openness.

Regarding accountability, approximately 36.3% of respondents stated that program reports are rarely or unavailable, while access to audits remains limited and sanctions mechanisms are unclear. This situation indicates that the accountability system remains procedural and requires strengthening in terms of oversight and legal follow-up to be more effective. Meanwhile, participation showed low levels of engagement. 72.7% of respondents were never involved in programs, and 65.1% were not involved in decision-making. This indicates that participation remains symbolic and has not yet functioned as a substantive instrument in the public policy process.

Table 2. Current Conditions of Transparency, Accountability, and Participation in Governance

Dimensions	Key Indicators	Empirical Findings (Summary)	Implications for Strengthening Governance
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Transparency	Access to information	47.3% of respondents experienced difficulties accessing information	Demonstrates the need to strengthen a more inclusive public information disclosure system.
Transparency	Transparency of decisions	47.4% considered that the decision was not fully open	Indicates the need for increased transparency in the decision-making process.
Transparency	Information quality	The information is not yet completely complete and up to date.	Demonstrates the need to strengthen the quality and consistency of public data.
Accountability	Program report	36.3% of reports are rare or unavailable	Demonstrates the importance of strengthening a more consistent reporting system.
Accountability	Audit & supervision	Audit access is limited and sanctions are unclear.	Indicates the need to strengthen legal monitoring and follow-up mechanisms.
Participation	Community involvement	72.7% never involved in the program	Demonstrates the need to expand the space for substantive community participation.
Participation	Decision-making	65.1% were not involved in the decision	Indicates the need to strengthen participation in the public policy process.

More broadly, these findings also point to institutional fragmentation, weak beneficiary data integration, and limited regional fiscal autonomy. Inaccurate targeting of social assistance persists due to outdated and unsynchronized data. Meanwhile, high fiscal dependence on the central government limits regional policy innovation in responding to the specific characteristics of poverty. Overall, the research findings confirm that the primary challenge in alleviating extreme poverty lies not in the absence of legal norms, but rather in the weak implementation of legal governance principles. There is a clear gap between norms (*das sollen*) and practices (*das sein*), resulting in the law not fully functioning as an instrument of substantive justice. Therefore, strengthening data integration, increasing transparency, enhancing accountability, and expanding public participation are essential prerequisites for increasing the effectiveness of extreme poverty alleviation policies.

The findings of this study indicate that the effectiveness of extreme poverty alleviation policies in Pekalongan Regency cannot be understood solely through administrative or normative approaches, but must be interpreted within the framework of the interaction between structural vulnerability and governance quality. The literature indicates that successful poverty alleviation is largely determined by the principles of good governance, particularly accountability, transparency, bureaucratic effectiveness, and the rule of law.⁴⁸ In the Pekalongan

⁴⁸ Chamhuri Siwar., Good governance for poverty alleviation: The case of Malaysia, *Chinese Public Administration Review*, Vol.3, no.3, 2006, page.5. See too, Soumyadip Chattopadhyay, and

context, these principles are already legally established, but their implementation still faces a substantial gap between norms and practice.

From a structural perspective, the poverty conditions identified exhibit strong poverty trap characteristics. The dominance of household expenditure on subsistence needs indicates limited capacity for human and economic capital accumulation. This situation aligns with findings that, in the context of low-income countries, governance reform-based policies alone are insufficient without direct intervention to address structural inequalities.⁴⁹ This is further supported by literature emphasizing that unequal access to economic resources and basic services can reinforce systemic social exclusion.⁵⁰

Table 1 in this study shows that structural issues are not limited to the economic dimension, but also include low levels of education, weak asset ownership, and high levels of regional fiscal dependence. This is consistent with the finding that successful poverty alleviation relies heavily on the integration of policies across sectors, including education, employment, and social protection.⁵¹ However, in practice, policy fragmentation across levels of government remains a major obstacle, with weak inter-agency coordination in poverty alleviation programs in Indonesia further exacerbating implementation challenges.⁵²

Furthermore, the governance aspects shown in Table 2 demonstrate that transparency, accountability, and participation are still not functioning optimally. From a good governance perspective, transparency should not only be formal but also ensure the accessibility and quality of public information.⁵³ However, research results show that nearly half of respondents still experience difficulties accessing information, indicating information asymmetry in public policy implementation. This is consistent with the finding that weak coordination and limited institutional

Seemantini Chattopadhyay., *Contours of Governance Reforms in India: Constraints and Possibilities*, *South Asian Survey*, Vol.19, no.1, 2012, page.125; Adrino Mazenda., *The poverty implications of governance in South Africa*, *Journal Global Policy and Governance*, Vol.11, no.2, 2022, page.42.

⁴⁹ Christoph Jindra, and Ana Vaz., *Good governance and multidimensional poverty: A comparative analysis of 71 countries*, *Governance*, Vol.32, no.4, 2019, page.661. See too, Huck-ju Kwon, and Eunju Kim., *Poverty reduction and good governance: Examining the rationale of the Millennium Development Goals*, *Development and Change*, Vol.45, no.2, 2014, page.366.

⁵⁰ Bo Ma, Jin Zhu, and Shenjing He., *Towards precise rural governance: How cadre deployment strategies shape resource delivery and poverty alleviation outcomes in rural China*, *Habitat International*, Vol.174, no.2, 2026, page.103871. See too, Evi Noviawati, Hernadi Affandi, and Eman Suparman., *Public participation in lawmaking in the digital age: insights from Indonesia*, *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, Vol.11, no.1, 2025, page.13.

⁵¹ Junlong Li, Tiancheng Zhao, Zhiling Liu, Li Chen, Xiuli Wang, and Jay Pan., *Health poverty reduction policies and effectiveness evaluation in China since 2015: a narrative review*, *INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing*, Vol.62, no.3, 2025, page.00469580251337232.

⁵² Sangkala Widyawati, and Muhammad Rusdi., *Integrative governance for extreme poverty alleviation in Jeneponto Regency of Indonesia*, *Discover Sustainability*, Vol.14, no.5, 2026, page.323. See too, Muhammad Syukri., *Participatory environmental governance in Indonesia: assessing the limitations*, *South East Asia Research*, Vol.33, no.4, 2025, page.437.

⁵³ Dhimas Bayu Anindito, Saut AH Sagala, and Ari Krisna Mawira Tarigan., *E-musrenbang: a digital framework for local participatory planning at the community level*, *International development planning review*, Vol.44, no.2, 2022, page.198.

capacity can hamper the effectiveness of social protection systems.⁵⁴

In terms of accountability, conditions in Pekalongan demonstrate a pattern that remains procedural. The literature indicates that effective accountability must be accompanied by strong oversight mechanisms and clear legal consequences. However, in practice, accountability often stops at administrative reporting without adequate enforcement. This situation reflects what the literature calls weak enforcement governance, where formal rules are not followed by adequate implementation capacity.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, the low level of public participation in this study reflects a pattern of tokenistic participation, in which vulnerable groups are not provided with equal opportunities for deliberation and the majority of poor communities are excluded from the decision-making process. This finding reinforces the view that the success of community-based poverty alleviation is largely determined by the extent to which communities are involved throughout the policy cycle, rather than merely serving as beneficiaries.⁵⁶

Furthermore, high regional fiscal dependence on central transfers indicates limited fiscal autonomy in generating responsive policies. The literature shows that the effectiveness of poverty alleviation assistance and policies increases when supported by a governance system with fiscal flexibility and strong institutional capacity.⁵⁷ However, under conditions of high dependency, the space for regional policy innovation is limited, resulting in suboptimal adaptation to local poverty characteristics.

More broadly, various studies also emphasize the importance of an integrative and

⁵⁴ C. Gunhidzirai, and M. J. Rankopo., Governance of social protection programmes for poverty alleviation in Botswana, *Journal of Social Development in Africa*, Vol.40, no.1, 2025, page.146.

⁵⁵ Mohammad Hazyar Arumbinang, and Elida Rahajeng Puspitasari., Integrating Indigenous Legal Traditions into Indonesia's Environmental Governance: Advancing Pathways to Ecological Justice, In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, Bristol, IOP Publishing, 2025, page.012015. See too, Raden Heriyanto, Tatik Mariyanti, and Achani Rahmania Az Zahra., Microfinance management strategy using poverty reduction technology, In *2023 11th International Conference on Cyber and IT Service Management (CITSM)*, Piscataway, IEEE, 2023, page.3.

⁵⁶ Thomas Andrew Bryer., From collaborative responsiveness to collaborative empowerment. In *Handbook of Collaborative Public Management*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2021, page.246. See too, T. Nugrahani, R. I. Saptatiningsih, and M. N. A. Azman., The effects of community empowerment and participation in the reduction of poverty: A case study on potorono and Wonokromo Bantul Villages, *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, Vol.7, no.9, 2019, page.94.

⁵⁷ Edmore Mahembe, and Nicholas M. Odhiambo., Development aid and its impact on poverty reduction in developing countries: A dynamic panel data approach, *International Journal of Development Issues*, Vol.19, no.2, 2020, page.156. See too, Muhammad Yarif Arifin, S. Salle, Muhammad Rinaldy Bima, M. Azham Ilham, and Ar Rayhan Wiqra Ramadhan., The Role Of The Minangkabau Traditional Community's Culture Of Consensus Building As A Pillar Of Democracy In Supporting The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), *Jurnal Al-Dustur*, Vol.9, no.1, 2026, page.42.

multi-actor governance approach to poverty alleviation. However, its implementation is often hampered by sector fragmentation and weak institutional coordination. This is also evident in the context of Pekalongan, where various programs run parallel without adequate data and policy integration. Program success is largely determined by a robust, data-driven, integrated coordination system, as demonstrated in the context of health poverty alleviation in China.⁵⁸

From a legal and public policy perspective, these findings also indicate that the primary problem lies not in the absence of regulations, but in the weak implementation of the principle of substantive justice within the state administration system. This is consistent with the view that decentralization and the welfare legal framework must be accompanied by active public participation to prevent policy distortions at the local level. Otherwise, policies tend to remain top-down and unresponsive to the actual needs of the community.⁵⁹

Therefore, it can be concluded that alleviating extreme poverty requires a multi-layered governance approach that relies not only on regulations but also on data integration, institutional strengthening, expanding participation, and increasing regional fiscal capacity. The literature consistently shows that the success of poverty alleviation is largely determined by the quality of governance, not solely by budget size or the number of programs.⁶⁰ Therefore, strengthening legal governance based on structural integration and participatory governance is a key prerequisite for ensuring the effectiveness of extreme poverty alleviation policies at the local level.

3.3. Reconstruction of Legal Governance for Justice-Based and Participatory Poverty Reduction

The findings of this study demonstrate that extreme poverty alleviation can no longer be understood solely as an administrative policy issue, but rather as a legal governance issue based on substantive justice. In this context, field findings in Pekalongan Regency indicate that the implementation of poverty alleviation programs is still dominated by a technocratic approach focused on aid distribution, data validation, and administrative compliance, while community involvement in the planning and evaluation process remains limited to the consultative stage. This pattern reflects the gap between the normative design of the law and the reality of implementation at the local level, as also found in various studies on governance fragmentation and limited substantive participation in Indonesia.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Junlong Li, Tiancheng Zhao, Zhiling Liu, Li Chen, Xiuli Wang, and Jay Pan., Health poverty reduction policies and effectiveness evaluation in China since 2015: a narrative review, *INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing*, Vol.62, no.3, 2025, page.00469580251337235.

⁵⁹ Sri Kusriyah., Government policy in achieving community welfare through the effectiveness of management of Zakat in Indonesia, *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol.7, no.5, 2020, page.166. See too, Hans Antlöv., Village government and rural development in Indonesia: The new democratic framework, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, Vol.39, no.2, 2003, page.201.

⁶⁰ Sebastiano Sabato, Chiara Agostini, Marcello Natili, and Matteo Jessoula., Europe 2020 and the fight against poverty: from target to governance, In *Fighting Poverty and Social Exclusion in the EU*, Oxfordshire, Routledge, 2018, page.23.

⁶¹ Muhammad Syukri., Neglecting the poor and marginalized: Participatory village governance in Indonesia's New Developmentalist state, *Development Policy Review*, Vol.42, no.4, 2024,

Theoretically, the legal framework for poverty alleviation in Indonesia is firmly rooted in the principles of the welfare state enshrined in the 1945 Constitution, which affirms the state's responsibility to protect vulnerable groups and realize social justice.⁶² This principle is reinforced by various sectoral legal instruments, such as laws on development planning, decentralization, and central-regional financial relations.⁶³ However, various studies indicate that this legal framework remains administrative-instrumental in nature, with the law functioning more as a mechanism for regulating procedures and budgets than as an instrument of substantive justice.

In this context, programs such as the Family Hope Program (*Program Keluarga Harapan*/PKH), the National Health Insurance (*Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional*/JKN), non-cash food assistance, and the Smart Indonesia Program reflect the state's efforts to operationalize distributive justice through a basic needs-based social protection approach.⁶⁴ At the local level, the Village Fund and the Village SDGs policy provide space for community-based approaches to poverty alleviation.⁶⁵ However, this study found that in practice in Pekalongan, the effectiveness of the program is highly dependent on local institutional capacity and the quality of data integration, which still faces significant challenges in accuracy and synchronization.⁶⁶

Furthermore, field findings indicate that public participation remains limited and tends to be symbolic. Communities are generally involved in the implementation phase, not in policy formulation or budget prioritization. This situation aligns with

page.e12773. See too, Sangkala Widyawati, and Muhammad Rusdi., Integrative governance for extreme poverty alleviation in Jenepono Regency of Indonesia, *Discover Sustainability*, Vol.14, no.5, 2026, page.325.

⁶² Dedeng Yusuf Maolani, Fisher Zulkarnain, and Andre Ariesmansyah., Legal Framework And Governance Implications In The State Administrative Law System: A Study Of Policy Innovation In Poverty Alleviation In Developing Countries, *Corporate Law & Governance Review*, Vol.7, no.4, 2025, page.2625.

⁶³ Diego Fossati., Is Indonesian local government accountable to the poor? Evidence from health policy implementation, *Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol.16, no.3, 2016, page.319. See too, Engkus, Fadjar Tri Sakti, and Indra Kristian., Good governance: Implementation of the non-cash food assistance program in Bandung City of Indonesia, *Res Militaris*, Vol.13, no.1, 2022, page.304.

⁶⁴ Horas Djulius, Xiao Lixian, Arnanda Novia Lestari, and Septiawan Fajar Eryanto., The Impact of a Poor Family Assistance Program on Human Development in Indonesia, *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, Vol.11, no.4, 2022, page.68.

⁶⁵ Rifki Muhammad, Ach Apriyanto Romadhan, and Ali Roziqin., Creating Community Resilience Through Social Safety Nets for Poverty Alleviation in the Rural Areas, In *Community Climate Justice and Sustainable Development*, Hershey, IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025, page.116. See too, Kerkulah P. Nyeleker, and Suswanta., Zero-Poverty Villages? The Effectiveness of the Village Sustainable Development Goals Policy in Indonesia, In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, Bristol, IOP Publishing, 2025, page.012034.

⁶⁶ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.265.

findings that decentralization in Indonesia has not fully resulted in substantive participation due to the continued dominance of bureaucratic structures and local elites.⁶⁷ In many cases, deliberation mechanisms serve only as formal legitimacy for previously established decisions. From a governance law perspective, this situation indicates that the principle of justice has not been fully internalized within the legal system as a binding norm. Justice is still positioned as a policy outcome, rather than as a legally enforceable standard.⁶⁸ This is exacerbated by weak outcome-based accountability mechanisms, where program evaluations emphasize administrative aspects rather than substantive impacts on poverty reduction.

Furthermore, the ongoing misallocation of social assistance demonstrates weaknesses in the integrated data system and beneficiary verification.⁶⁹ This data inaccuracy not only impacts program efficiency but also creates distributive inequities that disadvantage the most vulnerable groups. In the Pekalongan context, this phenomenon is evident in the discrepancy between administrative poverty data and actual conditions on the ground, indicating simultaneous inclusion and exclusion errors. From a global perspective, international literature indicates that the quality of governance is a key determinant of the success of extreme poverty alleviation.⁷⁰ Countries with transparent, accountable, and effective institutions tend to be more successful in reducing poverty sustainably.⁷¹ There is even a threshold effect where the impact of governance on poverty only becomes significant after a certain level of institutional quality is reached.⁷²

Furthermore, global approaches also demonstrate that effective poverty alleviation policies integrate governance reforms with direct social policies such as social

⁶⁷ Saefudin Zuhri, Anisa Pramitasari, and Imam Rozikin., The Role of Actors in Accelerating Stunting Reduction in Indonesia: a Pentahelix Perspective, *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental*, Vol.18, no.4, 2024, page.5.

⁶⁸ Hans Antlöv., Village government and rural development in Indonesia: The new democratic framework, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, Vol.39, no.2, 2003, page.200. See too, Yanti Aneta, Asna Aneta, Rustam Tohopi, Pebriyanto A. Hulinggi, and Princess Alyssa D. Tee-Anastacio., Legal philosophy's role in human rights and fiscal governance: Indonesia and the Philippines comparative insights, *Jurnal Suara Hukum*, Vol.7, no.2, 2025, page.134.

⁶⁹ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.268. See too, Abu Huraerah, Adi Fahrudin, and Husmiati Yusuf., The Strategies of Social Protection to Reduce Poverty in Indonesia, In *Social Work in Asia: Education, Practice, and Service*, Cham, Springer Nature Switzerland, 2026, page.470.

⁷⁰ Adrino Mazenda., The poverty implications of governance in South Africa, *Journal Global Policy and Governance*, Vol.11, no.2, 2022, page.38.

⁷¹ C. Gunhidzirai, and M. J. Rankopo., Governance of social protection programmes for poverty alleviation in Botswana, *Journal of Social Development in Africa*, Vol.40, no.1, 2025, page.147.

⁷² Anis Ochi, Yosra Saidi, and Mohamed Ali Labidi., Nonlinear threshold effect of governance quality on poverty reduction in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa: A dynamic panel threshold specification, *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, Vol.15, no.1, 2024, page. 4250. See too, Yosra Saidi, Mohamed Ali Labidi, and Anis Ochi., Economic growth and extreme poverty in sub-Saharan African countries: Non-linearity and governance threshold effect, *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, Vol.15, no.2, 2024, page.7835.

protection, financial inclusion, and community-based economic empowerment.⁷³ The experience of countries like China with targeted poverty alleviation programs demonstrates the importance of strong institutional coordination and precise data systems.⁷⁴ However, the effectiveness of this model remains dependent on local capacity and the appropriateness of the social context. In the Indonesian context, including Pekalongan, the main challenges lie in institutional fragmentation and weak cross-sectoral integration. Poverty alleviation programs often operate sectorally without strong coordination, leading to inefficiencies and overlapping policies. Furthermore, limited community participation in decision-making reinforces top-down governance patterns that are not fully responsive to local needs.

Table 3. Reconstruction of the Normative Dimension of Legal Governance for Extreme Poverty Alleviation

Dimensions	Existing Conditions	Main Weaknesses	Direction of Legal Reconstruction	Literature Base
Justice (Justice as a Legal Principle)	Justice is primarily understood as a policy objective within the Family Hope Program (PKH), National Health Insurance (JKN), and social assistance programs.	There is no legally enforceable guarantee ensuring substantive justice.	Justice should be established as a binding legal principle throughout the entire policy cycle.	Kusriyah, 2020; Aneta et al., 2025 ⁷⁵
Accountability	Accountability primarily emphasizes budget absorption and administrative reporting.	Outcome-based accountability remains weak and insufficiently enforced.	Accountability should be reconstructed as an outcome-based legal obligation	Suteki et al., 2025; Hakim et al., 2025 ⁷⁶

⁷³ Theodore J. Davis, Good governance as a foundation for sustainable human development in sub-Saharan Africa, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.38, no.3, 2017, page.648. See too, Z. Yin, and Y. Li., Impact of mobile payments on relative poverty, *Mod. Econ. Sci*, Vol.5, no.1, 2023, page.13; Nuryanti Mustari, Rosdianti Razak, J. Junaedi, F. Fatmawati, Hardianto Hawing, and Tawakkal Baharuddin., Multipartner governance and the urgency of poverty alleviation policy: Zakat fundraising management, *Cogent Social Sciences*, Vol.10, no.1, 2024, page.2361529.

⁷⁴ Liuyang He, Xi Lu, and Chyen Yee Lee., Last mile in anti-poverty drive: Impact of cadres' appraisals on growth and poverty reduction, *World Development*, Vol.167, no.4, 2023, page.106257.

⁷⁵ Sri Kusriyah., Government policy in achieving community welfare through the effectiveness of management of Zakat in Indonesia, *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol.7, no.5, 2020, page.161. See too, Yanti Aneta, Asna Aneta, Rustam Tohopi, Pebriyanto A. Hulinggi, and Princess Alyssa D. Tee-Anastacio., Legal philosophy's role in human rights and fiscal governance: Indonesia and the Philippines comparative insights, *Jurnal Suara Hukum*, Vol.7, no.2, 2025, page.138.

⁷⁶ Suteki, Abdul Jalil, Aga Natalis, and Dewi Rembulan., Community Engagement in Eradicating Corruption: Evaluating the Effectiveness and Reward Models for Whistleblowers As a Regional Strategy, *Indonesian Journal of Legal Community Engagement*, Vol.8, no.1, 2025, page.59. See

Dimensions	Existing Conditions	Main Weaknesses	Direction of Legal Reconstruction	Literature Base
			supported by legal consequences.	
Transparency	Social welfare data have begun to be integrated but are not yet fully accessible to the public.	Information asymmetry and limited transparency in social assistance data persist.	Transparency should be recognized as a legal obligation through digital governance mechanisms.	Engkus et al., 2023; Huraerah et al., 2026 ⁷⁷
Participation	Community participation through village deliberations remains largely consultative.	Public participation is not legally binding and remains vulnerable to elite capture.	Participation should be guaranteed as a legal right of citizens in policymaking.	Antlöv, 2003; Rulinawaty et al., 2023 ⁷⁸
Institutional Coordination	Decentralization has resulted in multiple policy actors across different levels of government.	Policy fragmentation and weak cross-sectoral integration continue to hinder effective governance.	A legally mandated cross-institutional coordination system should be established to strengthen policy integration.	Widyawati et al., 2026; Syukri, 2025 ⁷⁹
Data System	The Integrated Social Welfare Database (DTKS) and other social welfare databases remain partially inaccurate.	Targeting errors, including exclusion and inclusion errors, continue to affect policy effectiveness.	Data should be reconstructed as a legal infrastructure for poverty alleviation, supported by integrated and reliable governance systems.	Hakim et al., 2025; Habibullah, 2024 ⁸⁰

too, Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.261.

⁷⁷ Engkus, Fadjat Tri Sakti, and Indra Kristian., Good governance: Implementation of the non-cash food assistance program in Bandung City of Indonesia, *Res Militaris*, Vol.13, no.1, 2022, page.293. See too, Abu Huraerah, Adi Fahrudin, and Husmiati Yusuf., The Strategies of Social Protection to Reduce Poverty in Indonesia, In *Social Work in Asia: Education, Practice, and Service*, Cham, Springer Nature Switzerland, 2026, page.475.

⁷⁸ Hans Antlöv., Village government and rural development in Indonesia: The new democratic framework, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, Vol.39, no.2, 2003, page.191. See too, Sofjan Aripin Rulinawaty, Andriyansah, and Lukman Samboteng., Participatory governance capacity building: the missing link of poverty eradication in food diversification policies in Indonesia, *Electronic Government, an International Journal*, Vol.19, no.2, 2023, page.220.

⁷⁹ Sangkala Widyawati, and Muhammad Rusdi., Integrative governance for extreme poverty alleviation in Jeneponto Regency of Indonesia, *Discover Sustainability*, Vol.14, no.5, 2026, page.321. See too, Muhammad Syukri., Participatory environmental governance in Indonesia: assessing the limitations, *South East Asia Research*, Vol.33, no.4, 2025, page.443.

⁸⁰ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.264. See too, Habibullah., Homelessness in the context of extreme poverty: Social policy from Indonesia, *Homelessness to Hope*, Vol.12, no.1, 2024, page.375.

Table 4. Operational Reconstruction of Legal Governance and Empirical Implications

Implementation Level	Empirical Conditions	Main Weaknesses	Direction of Operational Reconstruction	Supporting Literature
National (Policy System)	The Family Hope Program (PKH), National Health Insurance (JKN), food assistance, and the Smart Indonesia Program (PIP) have been implemented on a broad scale.	Targeting remains insufficiently accurate, and coordination among programs is weak.	Integration of social protection policies through a unified legal governance system.	Djulius et al., 2022; Mahembe & Odhiambo, 2020 ⁸¹
Provincial/Regency Level	Decentralized governance and the Village Fund program have been implemented across regions.	Significant disparities in institutional and administrative capacity exist among local governments.	Standardization of legal governance frameworks across provinces and regencies.	Fossati, 2016; Antlöv, 2003 ⁸²
Local Level (Pekalongan Case)	Social assistance programs have been implemented, but community participation remains limited.	Welfare data often do not reflect actual field conditions, and participation is largely symbolic.	Development of a local governance system based on the principle of justice.	Nugrahani et al., 2019; Syukri, 2024 ⁸³
Community Level	Communities participate in	Communities are not	Establishment of substantive	Mukhlis et al., 2025;

⁸¹ Horas Djulius, Xiao Lixian, Arnanda Novia Lestari, and Septiawan Fajar Eryanto., The Impact of a Poor Family Assistance Program on Human Development in Indonesia, *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, Vol.11, no.4, 2022, page.60. See too, Edmore Mahembe, and Nicholas M. Odhiambo., Development aid and its impact on poverty reduction in developing countries: A dynamic panel data approach, *International Journal of Development Issues*, Vol.19, no.2, 2020, page.167.

⁸² Diego Fossati., Is Indonesian local government accountable to the poor? Evidence from health policy implementation, *Journal of East Asian Studies*, Vol.16, no.3, 2016, page.324. See too, Hans Antlöv., Village government and rural development in Indonesia: The new democratic framework, *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, Vol.39, no.2, 2003, page.190.

⁸³ T. Nugrahani, R. I. Saptatiningsih, and M. N. A. Azman., The effects of community empowerment and participation in the reduction of poverty: A case study on potorono and Wonokromo Bantul Villages, *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, Vol.7, no.9, 2019, page.89. See too, Muhammad Syukri., Neglecting the poor and marginalized: Participatory village governance in Indonesia's New Developmentalist state, *Development Policy Review*, Vol.42, no.4, 2024, page.e1279.

Implementation Level	Empirical Conditions	Main Weaknesses	Direction of Operational Reconstruction	Supporting Literature
	village deliberations and program implementation.	meaningfully involved in policy formulation and design.	participation as a legally protected right.	Rulinawaty et al., 2023 ⁸⁴
Data and Targeting System	The Integrated Social Welfare Database (DTKS) serves as the primary basis for determining social assistance beneficiaries.	Data inaccuracies, including exclusion and inclusion errors, continue to undermine targeting effectiveness.	Establishment of a legally mandated single integrated social welfare registry.	Hakim et al., 2025; Engkus et al., 2023 ⁸⁵
Monitoring and Evaluation	Monitoring and evaluation primarily rely on administrative reporting.	Existing evaluation mechanisms do not adequately measure actual poverty reduction outcomes.	Development of an outcome-based legal evaluation system.	Suteki et al., 2025; Mahembe & Odhiambo, 2020 ⁸⁶

Based on these findings, legal governance reconstruction is necessary to transform the poverty alleviation system from an administrative model to a justice-based one. This reconstruction requires strengthening four key principles: justice, accountability, transparency, and participation, which are no longer positioned merely as administrative values but as binding legal norms in the implementation of public policy. In this context, the reconstruction of legal governance for extreme

⁸⁴ Muhammad Mutawalli Mukhlis, Maskun, Ahmad Masum, Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin, Wa Ode Intan Kurniawati, Yusuf Ibrahim Arowosaiye, and Naswar., Examining the Implementation of Participatory Village Autonomy: Models of Community Engagement and Application in Strengthening Inclusive Governance in Indonesia, *Indonesian Journal of Legal Community Engagement*, Vol.8, no.1, 2025, page.137. See too, Sofjan Aripin Rulinawaty, Andriyansah, and Lukman Samboteng., Participatory governance capacity building: the missing link of poverty eradication in food diversification policies in Indonesia, *Electronic Government, an International Journal*, Vol.19, no.2, 2023, page.215.

⁸⁵ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.279. See too, Engkus, Fadjar Tri Sakti, and Indra Kristian., Good governance: Implementation of the non-cash food assistance program in Bandung City of Indonesia, *Res Militaris*, Vol.13, no.1, 2022, page.294.

⁸⁶ Suteki, Abdul Jalil, Aga Natalis, and Dewi Rembulan., Community Engagement in Eradicating Corruption: Evaluating the Effectiveness and Reward Models for Whistleblowers As a Regional Strategy, *Indonesian Journal of Legal Community Engagement*, Vol.8, no.1, 2025, page.62. See too, Edmore Mahembe, and Nicholas M. Odhiambo., Development aid and its impact on poverty reduction in developing countries: A dynamic panel data approach, *International Journal of Development Issues*, Vol.19, no.2, 2020, page.157.

poverty alleviation in Indonesia needs to be carried out simultaneously at two levels: the normative level (Table 3) and the operational level (Table 4). This two-tiered approach is crucial for bridging the gap between national legal design and implementation practices on the ground.

At the normative level, the main problem lies in the lack of internalization of the principles of justice, accountability, transparency, and participation as binding legal norms. Currently, as various studies have shown, these four principles still function primarily as administrative values in public policy, rather than as legally enforceable legal standards.⁸⁷ As a result, these principles lack sufficient coercive power in the formulation and implementation of poverty alleviation policies. Meanwhile, at the operational level, a case study in Pekalongan Regency shows that policy implementation still faces a number of classic problems, such as inaccurate beneficiary data, institutional fragmentation, and limited public participation in the decision-making process. This situation demonstrates a significant gap between legal design at the national level and the reality of implementation at the local level.⁸⁸

Furthermore, these four main principles need to be reconstructed in a more substantive manner. First, the principle of justice must be positioned as a substantive legal principle that binds the entire policy process, so that protecting the most vulnerable groups becomes a legal obligation that cannot be freely disregarded by the bureaucracy.⁸⁹ Second, accountability needs to shift from merely an administrative reporting mechanism to a form of outcome-based responsibility that can be evaluated and enforced through legal mechanisms.⁹⁰ Third, transparency must be strengthened through a data openness system and digital integration that allows real-time public access to information, thereby reducing information asymmetry and increasing social oversight of policies.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Yanti Aneta, Asna Aneta, Rustam Tohopi, Pebriyanto A. Hulinggi, and Princess Alyssa D. Tee-Anastacio., Legal philosophy's role in human rights and fiscal governance: Indonesia and the Philippines comparative insights, *Jurnal Suara Hukum*, Vol.7, no.2, 2025, page.133. See too, Muhammad Syukri., Neglecting the poor and marginalized: Participatory village governance in Indonesia's New Developmentalist state, *Development Policy Review*, Vol.42, no.4, 2024, page.e12777.

⁸⁸ Sangkala Widyawati, and Muhammad Rusdi., Integrative governance for extreme poverty alleviation in Jeneponto Regency of Indonesia, *Discover Sustainability*, Vol.14, no.5, 2026, page.322.

⁸⁹ Ridwan Arifin, A. Masyhar, Benny Sumardiana, Diandra Preludio Ramada, Ubaidillah Kamal, and Sulton Fikri., Indonesian sustainable development policy: How the government ensures the environment for future generations, In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, Bristol, IOP Publishing, 2024, page.012009.

⁹⁰ Januardo Sulung Partogi Sihombing, Retno Saraswati, Yunanto, and Arida Turymshayeva., The regulation of legal protection for poor communities toward justice in Indonesia and the Netherlands, *Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System*, Vol.4, no.2, 2024, page.344.

⁹¹ Lukman Hakim, Lala M. Kolopaking, Sofyan Sjaf, and Rilus A. Kinseng., Understanding Poverty and Social Assistance Distribution: A Multidimensional Approach to Rural Poverty in Indonesia, *AGRARIS: Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development Research*, Vol.11, no.2, 2025, page.272.

Fourth, participation must be reconstituted as a legal right of citizens, not simply a consultative mechanism in the policy process, so that communities have a stronger position in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of poverty alleviation programs.⁹²

Therefore, this reconstruction of legal governance is not only technical-administrative but also normative-institutional, aiming to strengthen the function of law as an instrument of social justice in alleviating extreme poverty. This reconstruction must also include strengthening cross-sectoral institutional integration and the development of an integrated data system as part of the state's administrative legal infrastructure.⁹³ At the local level, such as Pekalongan, governance reform needs to be directed at harmonizing institutional capacity, legal compliance, and community participation within a unified legal framework. International literature supports these findings by emphasizing that the effectiveness of poverty alleviation is largely determined by the quality of governance and institutional capacity. Countries with better governance have been shown to have a higher capacity to reduce poverty sustainably, especially when data systems, transparency, and accountability are effective.⁹⁴

Therefore, the reconstruction of legal governance is not merely a technical reform, but a paradigmatic transformation from administrative governance to justice-based governance, where the law not only regulates procedures but also guarantees substantive and enforceable social justice. Overall, it can be concluded that the reconstruction of legal governance is an urgent need to bridge the gap between legal norms and the reality of implementation. Without this transformation, the law will remain an administrative instrument, rather than an effective instrument of social justice in alleviating extreme poverty.⁹⁵ On the contrary, by strengthening the principles of justice, participation, accountability, and transparency as binding legal norms, the poverty alleviation system can move towards more inclusive, responsive, and sustainable justice-based governance.

4. Conclusion

This research identified three key findings. First, the legal framework for extreme poverty alleviation in Indonesia is normatively strong, grounded in the constitutional mandate of the welfare state and operationalized through various sectoral legal instruments and social protection programs such as the Family Hope Program (*Program Keluarga Harapan*/PKH), the National Health Insurance

⁹² T. Nugrahani, R. I. Saptatiningsih, and M. N. A. Azman., The effects of community empowerment and participation in the reduction of poverty: A case study on potorono and Wonokromo Bantul Villages, *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, Vol.7, no.9, 2019, page.98.

⁹³ Abu Huraerah, Adi Fahrudin, and Husmiati Yusuf., The Strategies of Social Protection to Reduce Poverty in Indonesia, In *Social Work in Asia: Education, Practice, and Service*, Cham, Springer Nature Switzerland, 2026, page.471.

⁹⁴ C. Gunhidzirai, and M. J. Rankopo., Governance of social protection programmes for poverty alleviation in Botswana, *Journal of Social Development in Africa*, Vol.40, no.1, 2025, page.149. See too, Anis Ochi, Yosra Saidi, and Mohamed Ali Labidi., Nonlinear threshold effect of governance quality on poverty reduction in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa: A dynamic panel threshold specification, *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, Vol.15, no.1, 2024, page. 4243.

⁹⁵ Muhammad Syukri., Participatory environmental governance in Indonesia: assessing the limitations, *South East Asia Research*, Vol.33, no.4, 2025, page.438.

Program (*Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional*/JKN), the Community Empowerment Program (*Program Indonesia Pintar*/PIP), food assistance, and the Village Fund. Second, although policy design reflects a multidimensional approach to poverty, its implementation is still dominated by an administrative-instrumental logic that positions justice, accountability, transparency, and participation more as procedural principles than as binding legal norms. Third, the case study in Pekalongan Regency reveals significant implementation gaps, characterized by data inaccuracy, institutional fragmentation, low information transparency, and limited public participation.

These findings have important theoretical implications. Conceptually, this research strengthens the argument that poverty alleviation governance in Indonesia is still in a transition phase from rule-based governance to justice-based governance. From this perspective, law cannot be understood simply as a procedural instrument but must be reconstructed as an instrument of substantive justice that ensures the distribution of welfare in a fair, accountable, and participatory manner. Furthermore, this study confirms the relevance of a governance quality approach in explaining the effectiveness of poverty alleviation, where institutional quality, data integration, and institutional coordination are crucial determinants.

Practically, this study indicates the need to strengthen a more accurate and interoperable welfare data integration system to reduce errors in targeting social assistance. Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen outcome-based accountability mechanisms with clear legal consequences, as well as expand transparency based on digital systems that are publicly accessible in real time. Public participation also needs to be restructured from merely a consultative mechanism to a substantive legal right throughout the poverty alleviation policy cycle.

As a recommendation, the government needs to encourage more integrative legal governance reforms through the harmonization of cross-sectoral regulations, strengthening regional institutional capacity, and developing a data- and law-based coordination system. At the same time, a community-based approach needs to be strengthened to make policies more responsive to local contexts. With these steps, extreme poverty alleviation will not simply become an administrative agenda but will truly transform into a sustainable social justice agenda.

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