

The Responsibility Of Villages In Protecting Children's Rights In Accordance With The Regional Regulation On Child-Friendly Regency And The Sdgs In Jember

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Abstract: Protection of children's rights is an integral part of sustainable development and an important indicator in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs Village 16 on village institutions that are responsive to vulnerable groups. This research aims to analyze the legal responsibilities and roles of village officials in implementing Jember Regency Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2023 concerning Child Friendly Districts (KLA), with a case study in Ajung Village. The method used is a juridical-empirical approach, with data collection techniques through document studies, interviews with village officials, and field observations. The results show that although the KLA regulation has provided a strong legal framework, its implementation at the village level still faces structural and cultural challenges. Village officials act as policy implementers, facilitators of child protection programs, and liaisons between service agencies and the

community. However, limited human resources, village budgets and understanding of children's rights remain key barriers. On the other hand, the integration of local values and active community participation shows great potential in strengthening community-based child protection systems. This research makes a theoretical contribution to the development of village governance law in child protection, and offers policy recommendations for optimizing the role of villages in achieving SDGs. Strengthening technical regulations, continuous training for village officials, and inclusive monitoring mechanisms are needed so that the ideals of Child Friendly Villages can be realized effectively and sustainably.

Keywords: Child protection, village law, village apparatus, KLA regulation, Village SDGs, Jember

INTRODUCTION

Children are a vulnerable group who have basic rights that must be fulfilled, protected, and fulfilled by the state, including by the smallest government unit, namely the village. Children's rights include the right to live, grow and develop, receive education, protection from violence, and participation in social and cultural life. Within the framework of national law, protection of children is guaranteed by the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia which emphasizes that every child has the right to survive, grow and develop and has the right to protection from violence and discrimination. In addition, Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection comprehensively regulates the responsibilities of all elements of the state, including regional and village governments, in ensuring the fulfillment of these rights.

Child protection is not only a mandate of the constitution and national law, but also part of Indonesia's international commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which has been ratified through Presidential Decree Number 36 of 1990. This commitment emphasizes that child protection is a shared obligation between the state, society, family, and the smallest institutions such as villages, which have structural and cultural closeness to the children

in their environment. Therefore, villages are not only administrative entities, but also strategic actors in inclusive and sustainable development.

In the context of sustainable development, child protection is an important indicator in achieving global goals as stated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, and Goal 17 on partnerships. Village governments as direct implementers of public policies have a central role in ensuring that development programs implemented not only pay attention to economic growth, but also ensure that children's rights are fulfilled fairly and equitably. However, the extent to which village responsibilities in protecting children's rights are carried out and implemented in real terms is still an issue that has not been fully answered. Inequality in village capacity, limited human resources and budget, and suboptimal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are factors that often hinder the effectiveness of child protection at the grassroots level. In this case, it is important to conduct a critical study to assess the implementation of village responsibilities within the framework of regional policies, such as Jember Regency Regulation Number 1 of 2023 concerning Child-Friendly Districts, and its relevance to SDGs indicators, to ensure that child protection is not just a jargon, but is truly realized in participatory and equitable village development practices.

However, the extent to which the village's responsibility in protecting children's rights is carried out and implemented in real terms is still an issue that has not been fully answered. The imbalance in village capacity, limited human resources and budget, and the suboptimal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are factors that often hinder the effectiveness of child protection at the grassroots level. In this context, concrete efforts from local governments are important to bridge the gap between regulations and implementation in the field.

In Jember Regency, the local government has adopted a more responsive development approach to child protection by issuing Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2023 concerning Child-Friendly Regency (KLA). This regulation is present as a form of regional legal political affirmation to place the fulfillment and protection of children's rights as an integral part of the regional development agenda. One important aspect of this regulation is the emphasis on the importance of cross-sectoral and cross-level government collaboration, especially between district governments and village governments, as the leading units that are in direct contact with children's lives.

The Jember Regency KLA Regional Regulation regulates village obligations in ensuring the fulfillment of various basic children's rights, starting from the right to identity through population administration, the right to inclusive and quality education, the right to basic health services, to protection from all forms of violence, exploitation, and discrimination. Not only that, this Regional Regulation also encourages children's participation in village development and strengthening community-based institutions that care about children's issues. However, the success of implementing these norms cannot be realized simply by having regulations alone. The role of the village as the spearhead of public services will greatly determine the quality of the implementation of this Regional Regulation, both in terms of program planning, budgeting, to monitoring and evaluating achievements.

Thus, examining how villages in Jember Regency carry out their responsibilities within the framework of the KLA Regional Regulation is crucial. Moreover, it is important to assess the extent to which the steps taken by the villages are in line with the indicators and principles of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions and Goal 17 on partnerships. This approach is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of the policy, implementation challenges, and the potential for strengthening child protection at the village level in a sustainable manner.

In the context of sustainable development, child protection is not only seen as a social aspect, but also as a crucial indicator of the success of a country and local government, including villages, in fulfilling the principle of inter-generational justice. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by Indonesia through Presidential Regulation Number 59 of 2017 emphasize that development cannot be called inclusive if vulnerable groups such as children still experience marginalization, violence, or lack of access to basic services. In particular, Goal 16 emphasizes the importance of creating a safe and inclusive environment for all children, including protection from violence, exploitation, and abuse. Meanwhile, Goal 17 underlines the urgency of cross-stakeholder collaboration between villages, between villages and districts, as well as with civil society and the private sector in supporting the achievement of development targets.

The village government, in this case, has a strategic position as a direct implementer of public policies that have social and administrative closeness to the community. This makes the village a very potential entity in ensuring that the development programs implemented are not only oriented towards economic growth or physical development alone, but are also sensitive to social issues, including child protection. When the principles of SDGs can be internalized in village development planning both in the RPJMDs, RKPDes, and APBDes, child protection can be realized systematically, sustainably, and measurably.

However, this normative idealism still faces various challenges in practice. The extent to which the village's responsibility in protecting children's rights is truly carried out and implemented in the field is still an issue that has not been fully answered. In many villages, especially in areas with limited institutional capacity, child protection has not been a priority in the development agenda. The imbalance in village capacity, both in terms of human resources, budget, and understanding of regulatory frameworks such as the KLA Regional Regulation, is a real obstacle that limits the effectiveness of implementing programs based on children's rights.

In addition, the suboptimal coordination mechanism between villages and related institutions such as the Social Welfare Center (Puskesmas), Community-Based Integrated Child Protection (PATBM) cadres, and the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Service (DP3AKB) at the district level is also a challenge in itself. The absence of a participatory and data-based monitoring and evaluation system often makes child protection efforts reactive and incidental, rather than preventive and sustainable.

In this context, it is important to conduct a critical study that not only assesses the extent to which the implementation of village responsibilities in child protection is in accordance with the spirit of Jember Regency Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2023 concerning Child-Friendly Districts, but also measures its alignment and contribution to achieving SDGs indicators at the village level. This study is needed so that child protection does not stop at the level of discourse or symbolism, but is truly realized in the practice of rights-based, participatory, inclusive, and equitable village development.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a literature study approach. Data collection was carried out through a review of various relevant literature, such as laws and regulations, policy documents, scientific journals, reports from official institutions, and trusted sources accessed through online searches, including government websites and publications from international organizations. The main focus of this study is to analyze village responsibilities in protecting children's rights based on Jember Regency Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2023 and its compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators, especially Goals 16 and 17. The data obtained were analyzed descriptively-

qualitatively to see the extent to which policies and practices at the village level reflect the principles of child protection in the context of sustainable development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Village Responsibilities in Fulfilling Children's Rights and Their Relation to SDGs in Jember Regency

Child protection is an absolute state responsibility and is a constitutional mandate as stated in Article 28B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that "every child has the right to survive, grow and develop, and has the right to protection from violence and discrimination." This provision shows that child protection is not only moral, but has the status of a constitutional right that must be fulfilled and protected by the state without exception. In order to carry out this mandate, the state through legislative and executive institutions has established various more operational and technical regulations, one of which is Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, which is an amendment to Law Number 23 of 2002. This law comprehensively regulates children's rights, the responsibilities of the state, local governments, communities, families, and other related institutions in creating a safe, healthy, and child-friendly environment.

In addition, the involvement of village governments in child protection has legal legitimacy through Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages. In this regulation, villages are recognized as government units that have authority based on original rights and local authority on a village scale. One of these authorities includes social and community affairs, including child protection, which can be developed independently by villages according to the needs and characteristics of their communities. The articles in the Village Law stipulate that villages have the right to design inclusive and participatory development plans, including formulating protection programs for vulnerable groups, such as children. In practice, villages can also allocate Village Funds to support social programs, such as the establishment of village children's forums, providing services for complaints of violence against children, training for child protection cadres, and cooperation with third parties for child assistance and advocacy.

Thus, both constitutionally and within the sectoral legal framework, the responsibility for child protection has been relegated to the national legal system, allowing villages as the leading government to take a significant role. This means that villages are not only passive implementers of central policies, but also have the potential to become the main agents in creating an environment that supports optimal, safe, and violence-free child development. Within the framework of village autonomy, the mandate for child protection must be viewed as an integral part of sustainable and equitable village development.

This regulation is a concrete form of the seriousness of the regional government in making child protection a priority for sustainable and rights-based development. In it, it is explicitly regulated that the responsibility for fulfilling children's rights is not only the burden of the district government, but must also be distributed to government structures that are closer to the community, namely the village. This regulation emphasizes that villages have a strategic role in ensuring the fulfillment of children's basic rights, including the right to legal identity, decent education, optimal health services, a safe environment from violence and exploitation, and children's participation in social life and development.

As a form of operationalization, the KLA Regional Regulation encourages the active involvement of village officials, community leaders, and all local elements in forming a social environment that is responsive to children's needs. One of the strategic steps encouraged by this regulation is the formation of the Child-Friendly District Task Force (KLA Task Force) down to the village level. This task force is expected to be a forum for coordination between parties, including the government, community, business world, and media in preparing and implementing cross-sectoral child protection action plans. Villages are also encouraged to form Village Children's Forums, appoint Community-Based

Integrated Child Protection Cadres (PATBM), and integrate the KLA agenda into village development planning documents such as the RPJMDes, RKPDes, and allocate a special budget in the APBDes.

This policy is in line with the global development agenda outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 16 and Goal 17. Goal 16 underlines the importance of building peaceful, just, and inclusive societies and ensuring access to justice for all, including children. In this context, villages as the government units closest to citizens have a crucial position in preventing violence against children, building a resilient protection system, and ensuring that all children receive fair and equal treatment. Meanwhile, Goal 17 encourages strengthening strategic partnerships between the government, civil society, the private sector, and other institutions. In implementing KLA in villages, partnerships are an important key to closing the gap in resources and capacities owned by the village.

However, the implementation of village responsibilities in protecting children's rights in Jember Regency still faces various structural and technical challenges. Based on a review of KLA implementation documents at the village level and an interim evaluation report from the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Service (DP3AKB), it was found that most villages have indeed shown progress in appointing PATBM and establishing Children's Forums. However, many of these initiatives have not been implemented sustainably due to lack of training, weak cross-sector coordination, and the absence of a systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

Another crucial obstacle is the lack of understanding of village officials regarding the principles of rights-based child protection, as well as the lack of integration of SDGs indicators in village planning documents. Many villages still view child protection as an additional or secondary matter, not as a core part of development. This is reflected in the low proportion of the village budget allocated for promotive and preventive activities in child protection. In fact, Permendesa PDTT Number 7 of 2021 concerning Priority Use of Village Funds clearly places child protection as one of the activities that support the achievement of Village SDGs, especially in the social and humanitarian fields.

From the perspective of Goal 17 SDGs, collaboration between villages and civil society organizations, educational institutions, health services, and child protection institutions has actually begun to form in several regions. However, this partnership is still sporadic and not institutionalized in the village's medium-term strategic plan. This results in low program continuity and weak cross-sector support. In fact, strengthening partnerships is a fundamental aspect in creating a holistic and sustainable child protection system.

Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen institutions and increase capacity comprehensively at the village level. This effort includes regular training for village officials on the concept of children's rights, child-inclusive planning methods, and monitoring and evaluation techniques based on SDGs indicators. In addition, the district government also needs to provide regular assistance and supervision so that child protection programs are truly integrated into village governance. SDGs indicators must also be translated into relevant achievements at the local level, such as the number of children who receive birth certificates, the number of active children's forums, and cases of child violence that have been successfully handled through community-based protection systems.

Thus, the legal and policy framework that supports the role of villages in child protection in Jember Regency has been relatively complete, both from the national and regional sides. However, the realization of this responsibility still requires more systematic and sustainable support. Efforts to integrate the principles of SDGs, especially Goals 16 and 17, into village development policies and practices are strategic steps that must be immediately strengthened so that child protection is not only a normative commitment, but also a real manifestation in the daily lives of children in the village.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of village responsibilities in fulfilling children's rights in Jember Regency has a strong legal basis through the Village Law, the Child Protection Law, and Jember Regency Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2023 concerning Child-Friendly Districts (KLA). Normatively, villages are expected not only to carry out administrative functions, but also to be active in ensuring that children's basic rights are fulfilled, such as the right to identity, education, health, and protection from violence and discrimination. However, in practice, the alignment between the implementation of village responsibilities and the principles of the SDGs, especially Goal 16 (inclusive institutions and access to justice) and Goal 17 (partnerships), has not been fully optimal. Several villages have formed children's forums and appointed PATBM cadres, and established partnerships with external parties, but there are still serious challenges such as minimal human resource capacity, lack of integration of SDGs indicators in village planning, and low budget allocation for child protection programs. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen institutions, increase the capacity of village officials, integrate child protection principles in village planning and budgeting documents, and develop sustainable and structured partnerships. Only with these steps, villages as the spearhead of government can carry out their role effectively in realizing child-friendly and sustainable development, in line with the direction of national policy and the global goals of the SDGs.

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