



## Analysis of the Effectiveness of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Reducing Poverty in Makassar City

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**Abstract.** Poverty in Makassar City is a multidimensional problem that not only covers economic, but also social and cultural aspects. The Family Hope Program (PKH) was initiated as a conditional social assistance intervention to ease the burden on poor families through increased access to education and health. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of PKH in improving the welfare of poor families in Makassar, identify socio-cultural factors that affect the success of the program, and explore the obstacles faced by beneficiaries and social companions. A descriptive qualitative approach was used with research subjects including 10 beneficiary families and 3 social companions. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document studies, then analyzed thematically using an inductive approach. The results of the study show that PKH contributes significantly to reducing the economic burden of families, especially in meeting children's educational and health needs. The success of the program is influenced by the role of social companions who are communicative and adaptive to the local cultural context. However, complicated bureaucracy, limited access to public services, inaccurate recipient data, and social stigma are the main obstacles that hinder the effectiveness of the program. Awareness and active participation of beneficiaries in carrying out program obligations are also the key to success. The research concludes that PKH needs to be supported by simplifying administrative procedures, strengthening the capacity of companions, and culturally sensitive approaches to increase the impact of programs in poverty alleviation in Makassar City.

**Keywords:** Family Hope Program, poverty, effectiveness, social companion, Makassar City

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a complex and multidimensional social problem, which is not only related to economic limitations but also includes social, cultural, and political aspects that affect the well-being of poor individuals and families. The city of Makassar as the capital of South Sulawesi Province faces serious challenges in poverty alleviation. In this context, the Family Hope Program (PKH) was initiated as a conditional social assistance program that aims to reduce poverty by providing financial assistance while increasing poor families' access to basic services such as education and health (Central Statistics Agency [BPS], 2020; Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020).

PKH is not just a fund transfer, but an instrument of social empowerment that requires the active involvement of beneficiary families in fulfilling various program obligations, such as ensuring that children receive adequate education and health care. The concept of social protection developed by Karl Polanyi (1944) underlines the important role of state intervention in protecting vulnerable groups from socio-economic risks in the midst of free market dynamics. In this case, PKH functions as a social protection mechanism that seeks to stabilize

the lives of poor families in Makassar City while empowering them to improve the quality of life.

Various studies show that PKH has a positive impact in easing the economic burden of poor families. For example, research by Adhayati, Budiman, and Noorrahman (2020) stated that PKH significantly helps reduce household expenses, especially for education and health needs. Similar findings were also put forward by Mulyadi and Sari (2021), which emphasized the role of PKH in expanding poor families' access to basic services. However, the complexity of family needs and limited funds are still obstacles that need to be considered in the implementation of the program.

Social companions play an important role in the success of PKH, not only as supervisors, but also as facilitators who build communication and trust with the recipient's families. Within the framework of social solidarity according to Emile Durkheim (1893), harmonious social interaction between the companion and the recipient's family can strengthen social cohesion, encourage compliance, and increase the effectiveness of the program (Setianingrum et al., 2025). Furthermore, Jurgen Habermas' (1984) theory of communicative action emphasizes the importance of inclusive dialogue between companions and beneficiaries as a means of building mutual understanding and social legitimacy of the program.

However, the implementation of PKH faces a number of significant obstacles. Complicated bureaucratic procedures and lengthy administrative processes often lead to delays in the disbursement of aid, which has an impact on dissatisfaction and the potential for decreased beneficiary participation (Susilo & Suyono, 2019). Limited access to health and education services in some areas is also a structural obstacle that reduces the ability of families to meet the requirements of the program (Putra, 2019). The inaccuracy of the beneficiary data used in the selection process causes injustice in the distribution of aid and social conflicts, as analyzed with Michel Foucault's *power/knowledge* theory (1980). In addition, social stigma related to the status of beneficiaries also hinders active participation and openness of families in programs (Goffman, 1963; Warman & Asrizon, 2021).

Social and cultural factors are another key in understanding the success of PKH in Makassar City. Local values and norms such as *siri'* (self-esteem and shame) influence people's attitudes towards programs, especially in terms of access to health services and education openly (Pramesti, Kadir, & Suriyani, 2024). A companion who is able to apply a family approach and empathic communication is able to open trust and increase the involvement of the recipient's family (Habermas, 1984). Social capital as a concept by Robert Putnam (1993)

also strengthens the role of social networks, norms, and beliefs in supporting program participation and success (Norlaili, Budiman, & Noorrahman, 2020).

Along with these dynamics, the awareness and active participation of beneficiaries in carrying out program obligations is an indicator of success that cannot be ignored. This awareness encourages families to make optimal use of assistance and are committed to improving the quality of life of their children. In order to comprehensively understand the dynamics of the implementation of PKH in Makassar City, this research is focused on a number of key questions that will serve as a guide in exploring the experiences and perceptions of program actors. The questions are formulated as follows: *What is the experience of the beneficiary families regarding the effectiveness of PKH in improving their welfare?, What social and cultural factors affect the success of the PKH program in Makassar City?, What are the main obstacles faced by beneficiaries and social companions in the implementation of PKH?*

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of PKH and its impact on the welfare of poor families in Makassar City (Sugiyono, 2013; Norlaili, Budiman, & Noorrahman, 2020). The research location was chosen in Makassar City with the research subjects consisting of 10 PKH beneficiary families and 3 social companions who played a direct role in the implementation of the program (Adhayati, Budiman, & Noorrahman, 2020; Pramesti, Kadir, & Suriyani, 2024).

Data was collected through in-depth interviews with beneficiary families and social companions using a semi-structured approach to explore their experiences and perceptions. In addition, participatory observations were carried out during the implementation of the program to obtain context and an overview of the process in the field. Document studies related to PKH policies and implementation from local and central governments were also analyzed as additional data sources (Susilo & Suyono, 2019; Pramesti et al., 2024).

Data analysis is carried out thematically with an inductive approach, including data reduction, data presentation, and systematic conclusion drawing to find key patterns and themes in the subject's experience (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Sugiyono, 2013).

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Beneficiary Families' Experiences Related to the Effectiveness of PKH in Improving Welfare

Many families of PKH beneficiaries in Makassar City stated that this program has provided real assistance in easing the economic burden of their families. SR's mother, a housewife with three children, described how the assistance was very helpful to her family: *"With the help from PKH, I felt calmer. Now children's school fees are not too burdensome. I can buy books, uniforms, and also take them to the posyandu for immunizations and health checks"*.

A similar experience was also expressed by Mr. AH, the head of the family who is facing the cost of giving birth to his wife: *"PKH assistance means a lot to us, especially for the medical expenses of a pregnant wife. Without that help, we had to borrow here and there and it made my mind increase"*.

The social companion, added that many families feel helped directly from the economic side and at the same time motivated to follow the program provisions: *"PKH is indeed designed to meet the basic needs of poor families, especially education and children's health. From the results of the mentoring, we see that many families feel helped and more motivated to comply with the program requirements."*

However, not all experiences go smoothly. There are also families who say that the assistance is not always enough to meet all needs, especially when the number of families is larger or urgent needs arise. Mrs. DW said:

*"Sometimes PKH assistance is not enough for all needs. I have to keep trying to find a side job so that my household needs are met"*.

The Family Hope Program (PKH) is a conditional social assistance program designed to ease the economic burden on poor families, especially through increased access to education and health services. The concept of social protection put forward by Karl Polanyi (1944) emphasizes that state intervention is essential in stabilizing the lives of vulnerable groups in the midst of unfair market dynamics. In the context of Makassar City, PKH serves as a social protection mechanism that helps poor families meet their basic needs, as revealed from various field studies and program evaluation reports (Adhayati, Budiman, & Noorrahman, 2020; Mulyadi & Sari, 2021).

The results of interviews with beneficiary families in Makassar show that most families feel the benefits of PKH directly in easing the burden of household expenses, especially for children's school fees and routine health care. For example, one of the respondents described that the PKH relief fund allows them to buy school supplies and ensure that their children get

immunized regularly. This indicates that PKH not only provides economic assistance, but also contributes to improving the quality of family life through better access to education and health, in accordance with the main goals of the program (Setianingrum et al., 2025).

Despite the positive impact, some families say that the assistance received is not always enough to meet all of their household needs, especially in situations where families have large members or face emergency needs. This condition reveals the complexity of poverty which is not only related to financial shortcomings, but also various structural factors that limit the family's capacity to get out of poverty (Mulyadi & Sari, 2021). Therefore, PKH assistance needs to be equipped with more holistic support programs to overcome these various dimensions of poverty.

The role of social companions is very vital in supporting the success of PKH in the field. Communicative and responsive social companions can build a relationship of trust with beneficiary families, helping to clarify program obligations and encourage compliance with the conditions that must be met. Emile Durkheim's (1893) concept of social solidarity can be used to understand how social companionship functions to strengthen social cohesion between the government and the poor. This harmonious and empathetic relationship is the key for the program to run effectively and the family feels supported, not just supervised (Setianingrum et al., 2025).

Jurgen Habermas' (1984) theory of communicative action provides an important framework in explaining how communicative interactions between companions and recipient families can build mutual understanding. With open and inclusive dialogue, social companions can overcome communication barriers and increase the family's active participation in the program. This directly contributes to increasing the effectiveness of the program in helping poor families improve their socioeconomic conditions.

The results also indicate the need to pay attention to complex bureaucratic issues and administrative processes that often make it difficult for beneficiaries to access assistance in a timely manner. This obstacle often leads to dissatisfaction and can hinder the smooth running of the program (Susilo & Suyono, 2019). Social companions face challenges in explaining procedures and helping families through complex administrative processes. In the context of Max Weber's (1922) theory of bureaucracy, although the bureaucracy is a rational structure, its complexity can lead to social distancing and alienation, which is felt by the poor.

Limited access to public services, such as remote and inadequate health facilities, is also an obstacle for beneficiaries in fulfilling program obligations and utilizing assistance optimally. This phenomenon reflects structural inequalities in access to social and economic capital as

described by Pierre Bourdieu (1986). This inequality strengthens the cycle of poverty because it hinders the opportunity for families to thrive.

Inaccuracy of recipient data is also a serious problem that has implications for the unfair distribution of aid. In Michel Foucault's (1980) framework on the power/knowledge relationship, inaccurate administrative data and recipient labeling can be tools of power that cause social exclusion and stigma. This can disrupt the social legitimacy of the program and create conflicts at the community level.

In addition, socio-cultural dynamics in Makassar City also affect family attitudes and responses to PKH. Cultural norms and values such as *siri'* (self-esteem and shame) can hinder openness and active participation, especially in accessing health services and education openly. Therefore, a mentoring approach that is sensitive to the local cultural context is needed so that the recipient's family feels comfortable and motivated in running the program (Pramesti, Kadir, & Suriyani, 2024).

Active participation and awareness of beneficiaries in carrying out program obligations are important factors in the success of PKH. Robert Putnam (1993) emphasized that social capital and community involvement are important elements of sustainable social development. Increased participation through regular meetings and educational activities helps build social capital and increase the capacity of poor families to rise out of poverty.

The beneficiaries expressed their hope that administrative procedures could be simplified and the disbursement of aid would be accelerated. Social companions also want capacity building and support so that they can carry out mentoring more effectively (Setianingrum et al., 2025; Susilo & Suyono, 2019). This recommendation is an important basis for improving policies and implementing PKH so that its impact can be more optimal.

### **Social and Cultural Factors Affecting the Success of PKH in Makassar City**

Social and cultural aspects have a great influence on how families receive and run PKH programs. Some families emphasize the importance of their trust in the government and programs as a success factor. Mrs. WL, for example, stated: *"We believe in this program because the government has always tried to help. This makes us follow the rules well"*. However, there are also those who express doubts and distrust caused by unclear information or previous bad experiences. RN's mother revealed: *"At first I was hesitant, afraid that this was just a program that made it difficult for us. But after being guided by a companion, I began to trust and follow well"*.

The social companion, emphasized the importance of understanding the local cultural context in the implementation of the program: *"We must understand the character and culture*

*of the local. Family-based assistance and relaxed communication can open up trust and openness for the beneficiary families".*

Social norms and traditional values also influence people's attitudes towards the program. In some cases, the concept of "shame" or "shyness" can be an obstacle to active participation, especially in accessing health services or education openly. Mrs. LN explained: *"There are families who are reluctant to take their children to the posyandu because they are embarrassed or afraid of being considered incapable. This is what we must understand and serve with a gentle approach".*

The implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) as a conditional social assistance program in Makassar City cannot be separated from the influence of the local social and cultural context. A deep understanding of these factors is critical to ensure the program is accepted, followed, and positively impacted by the target community.

Clifford Geertz (1973) in the perspective of cultural sociology emphasized that culture is not just a collection of customs and traditions, but a symbolic system that shapes social meaning and behavior. As such, any social intervention must adopt an approach that is sensitive to the local cultural context in order to be successful. This is relevant in the implementation of PKH in Makassar, where the norms, values, and social practices of the community also determine how the program is responded.

Trust in the government and programs is the main factor that affects the active participation of the community in PKH. Research by Norlaili, Budiman, and Noorrahman (2020) confirms that the high trust and openness of poor families to their companions and the government significantly increase the success of program implementation. This trust allows families to more easily receive direction, meet program requirements, and make optimal use of assistance. Therefore, building trust is the main strategy in the social assistance process.

The dynamics of local culture also present its own challenges. In Makassar, the value of *siri'* which is the concept of self-esteem and shame is very thick in society. This value can be an obstacle to open participation in various PKH activities, especially in accessing public health and education services. Some families may be reluctant to talk about their needs openly or bring their children to posyandu for fear of social stigma. Pramesti, Kadir, and Suriyani (2024) revealed that sensitivity to *siri'* values must be considered in designing communication methods and social interventions so as not to cause cultural resistance.

Social companions have a central role in overcoming these cultural barriers. Companions who are able to adopt a family approach and casual communication successfully open trust and increase community involvement in the program. This approach reflects the communicative

action theory of Jurgen Habermas (1984) which emphasizes the importance of inclusive and rational dialogue as a means of achieving social legitimacy and consensus in society. In the context of PKH, companions who communicate in an egalitarian and empathetic manner are able to create a space for dialogue that minimizes dominance and inequality in social relationships.

Habermas considers public spaces to be a vital arena for democratic social interaction, where the rational participation and exchange of arguments allows for the birth of an inclusive social consensus. The application of this concept in PKH means that the beneficiary family is not only the object of the program, but also the subject who actively communicates and participates in the empowerment process. Therefore, a mentoring model that prioritizes two-way communication and a participatory approach can strengthen the effectiveness of the program.

In addition to communication and cultural aspects, other social factors such as social structures and social networks in the community also affect the success of PKH. Putnam (1993) in his theory of social capital reveals that social networks and interpersonal trust in the community are important capital that supports social development. In the context of PKH, families who have strong social networks and community support tend to have easier access to program assistance and information, and are more motivated to carry out program obligations.

However, social inequality and discrimination can also hinder access and participation of poor families. Some families may experience social stigma due to their status as aid recipients, which causes them to be reluctant to participate openly in PKH activities. The concept of stigma from Goffman (1963) explains how labeled social identities can give rise to feelings of shame and social exclusion. Therefore, social companions need to be sensitive to the issue of stigma and try to reduce its impact through an inclusive approach and psychosocial empowerment.

The diverse socio-cultural context in Makassar demands a flexible and adaptive mentoring model. Adjustments to local values, languages, and local norms are important so that the program can run smoothly and be accepted by the community. Research by Setianingrum et al. (2025) suggests that the implementation of PKH in areas with a distinctive culture such as Makassar involves community leaders and uses a community-based participatory approach to increase effectiveness.

## **The Main Obstacles Faced by Beneficiaries and Social Companions in the Implementation of PKH**

Although PKH provides benefits, its implementation is not without challenges. One of the main obstacles expressed by beneficiaries is the complicated bureaucracy and time-consuming administrative process. Mrs. DW recounts: *"Many times I have to go back and forth to the village office to take care of the administration, sometimes I have to wait for a long time and it makes me tired."* The same thing was conveyed by one of the social companions: *"Long bureaucracy makes the process of disbursing aid often late. We are trying to help, but the existing system has not made it easier for us or the beneficiaries"*.

Limited access to public services such as health and education is also a significant obstacle. Mrs. LT explained: *"In my place, the health center is far away and the facilities are not complete. Sometimes I have trouble taking my children to routine check-ups."* The problem of inaccurate data is also a source of dissatisfaction and injustice. My mother complained: *"There is a neighbor of mine who is actually able but still gets help, while those of us who are really struggling have to wait for a long time"*.

The social companion also admitted: *"DTKS data is sometimes not up-to-date, this causes injustice and has the potential to cause conflict in society"*. In addition, there are other obstacles in the form of socio-cultural dynamics that affect active participation and trust in the program. Some families still feel a social stigma related to their status as recipients, which makes them reluctant to open up or participate fully. Mrs. WL stated: *"There are those who are ashamed to be called recipients of assistance, this makes them less active in program activities"*.

The social companion explains the need for a culturally sensitive approach to overcome these barriers: *"We use a familial approach and casual communication so that the recipient feels comfortable and not alienated"*.

The implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Makassar City is inseparable from various obstacles that affect its effectiveness as a conditional social assistance program. One of the main challenges faced by both beneficiary families and social companions is complicated bureaucracy and lengthy administrative procedures. Within the framework of sociological theory, an understanding of bureaucracy and the accompanying social dynamics is essential to analyze how these barriers arise and impact program implementation.

- **Bureaucracy as an Obstacle in the Implementation of PKH**

Max Weber (1922) explained that bureaucracy is the most rational and effective form of organization for managing complex administrations. However, highly formal and procedural bureaucracy often results in social distancing and alienation between program implementers

and the communities served. This is especially felt by poor families who are targeted by PKH, where they have to go through various administrative stages that take time and effort.

Complaints about this complicated bureaucracy appeared repeatedly in interviews with beneficiaries in Makassar City. Most families said they felt exhausted from having to go back and forth to the village office to take care of the administration of the disbursement of aid, while ignorance of the procedures made the experience worse. Social companions also stated that convoluted bureaucracy is one of the biggest obstacles they face when accompanying poor families. Delays in disbursement of funds due to a long administrative process have the potential to reduce public trust in the program.

These findings are in line with the research of Susilo and Suyono (2019) which revealed that rigid bureaucracy and an unresponsive administrative system hinder the smooth running of the PKH program in several regions in Indonesia. The study emphasized the need to simplify administrative procedures to improve access and speed of social assistance, so that the benefits of the program can be optimally felt by recipient families.

- **Limited Access to Public Services as a Structural Barrier**

In addition to bureaucratic constraints, limited access to public services, especially health and education services, is also a significant obstacle to the success of PKH. These limitations are not only physical, such as long distances and lack of facilities, but also inadequate quality of services, as well as a lack of adequate professionals in these service facilities.

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) in the context of sociology put forward the concept of social and economic capital as a determinant of access to opportunities and resources in society. Poor families with limited social and economic capital tend to face greater difficulties in accessing education and health services which are the main prerequisites for the implementation of PKH. Their inability to meet these obligations due to limited access led to a reduction in the benefits they could derive from the program.

The results of Putra's (2019) research also support this finding by showing that the limitations of facilities and service quality in certain areas affect the level of participation and success of PKH recipient families in carrying out program obligations. This condition underlines that improving infrastructure and the quality of public services are an integral aspect of poverty alleviation strategies through social assistance programs.

- **Data Inaccuracy and Its Social Consequences**

The problem of inaccuracy of PKH beneficiary data is a crucial issue found in this study and can be analyzed using Michel Foucault's (1980) *power/knowledge* theory . According to Foucault, data and administrative labeling systems are a form of power technology that not only organizes populations, but also produces and reproduces social identities. In the context of PKH, inaccurate data leads to injustice in the determination of aid recipients, which in turn leads to conflict and dissatisfaction in society.

Social companions and beneficiaries reveal that some families who don't actually meet the criteria still receive assistance, while families who really need it often have to wait or even be ignored. This condition creates a sense of injustice that can interfere with the social legitimacy of the program. The study of Setianingrum et al. (2025) highlights the importance of improving data systems and transparency in the management of beneficiaries to avoid social conflicts and increase public trust.

- **Social Stigma and Psychosocial Barriers**

In addition to structural and administrative barriers, social stigma is also an obstacle that affects the active participation of beneficiaries in PKH. Erving Goffman's (1963) theory of social stigma describes how labeled social identities can inhibit social engagement and give rise to feelings of shame or alienation in affected individuals or groups.

In this study, stigma related to status as a recipient of social assistance caused some families to be reluctant to fully participate in PKH activities, such as educational meetings or health surveillance. They are worried about negative perceptions of the social environment that put them in an inferior position. Social companions are aware of this issue and seek to adopt an empathetic and communication approach that builds trust and comfort for the beneficiary. This approach is in line with the findings of Warman and Asrizon (2021), which emphasize the importance of psychosocial-based mentoring in reducing the impact of stigma and increasing participation.

### **Awareness and Active Participation of Beneficiaries in the Program**

One of the important aspects that supports the success of PKH is the active participation and awareness of beneficiaries in carrying out program obligations. Many families realize the importance of children's education and health as capital for a better future. SR's mother stated: *"We were invited to attend regular meetings and learned a lot about health and education, this made us more aware of taking care of the children"*.

The social companion adds that the family's motivation and active participation are the main keys to the success of the program: *"We always encourage families not only to receive assistance, but also to actively carry out their obligations and make optimal use of the program."*

Active participation and awareness of beneficiaries in carrying out program obligations are crucial aspects that determine the success of the Family Hope Program (PKH). A sociological perspective places social participation as an important capital in building community capacity and strengthening social cohesion. Robert Putnam (1993) in his theory of social capital posits that social networks, beliefs, and shared norms among community members are the foundation for sustainable social development and the effectiveness of social programs.

Social capital in the context of PKH is realized through the active participation of poor families in health education and education activities which are part of the program requirements. The beneficiary families are not only the object of assistance, but also play the role of active subjects who carry out their obligations according to the program rules. Awareness of the importance of education and health as future investments is the main trigger for this participation.

The results of interviews with beneficiaries strengthen the role of this social capital. Many families claim to regularly attend meetings and education organized in the program, which not only increases their knowledge of health and education, but also strengthens social ties between members of the beneficiary community. This is in accordance with the findings of Adhayati, Budiman, and Noorrahman (2020), which show that active involvement in program activities increases family sense of responsibility and motivation to make good use of assistance.

This active participation also marked an important shift in social consciousness. Awareness of rights and obligations in the program, as well as an understanding of the positive impact on families and children, triggers behaviors that are appropriate to the program's objectives. In this case, Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) theory of cultural capital is relevant, because education and information obtained through the PKH program can be cultural capital that increases the capacity and opportunities of families to get out of poverty.

The role of social companions is very significant in encouraging participation and building such awareness. A communicative and supportive companion creates a space for dialogue that allows the beneficiary to feel heard and cared for. Within the framework of the communicative action theory of Jürgen Habermas (1984), this inclusive and rational dialogue is an important means in building consensus and social legitimacy of the program. Companions are not only

the presenters of rules, but also facilitators who help families understand and internalize the values of the program.

In addition, social capital also plays a role in forming a social support network between beneficiary families, which can strengthen solidarity and help each other in facing the challenges of daily life. The study of Norlaili, Budiman, and Noorrahman (2020) revealed that a strong social network in PKH beneficiary communities increases the effectiveness of the program through information exchange and moral support.

However, not all families have the same level of participation and awareness. Socio-cultural factors, education level, and economic conditions of families affect the extent to which they can actively participate. Some families who face economic pressures and heavy workloads tend to find it difficult to keep up with all program obligations consistently. This is a challenge in realizing the program's goals as a whole.

The importance of social capital and participation also emphasizes that the success of PKH is not only measured by the amount of financial assistance provided, but also by the extent to which the program is able to empower families socially and culturally. Strong social capital can strengthen family resilience to poverty and increase opportunities to improve living conditions in a sustainable manner (Putnam, 1993; Adhayati et al., 2020).

Therefore, the strategy of strengthening social capital in the implementation of PKH needs to be the main focus, for example through increasing the role of social companions, empowering communities, and facilitating collective activities that strengthen social relationships among beneficiaries. This approach not only increases the effectiveness of the program, but also builds a solid social base for long-term poverty alleviation.

### **Expectations and Suggestions from Beneficiaries and Companions**

The beneficiaries hope that the administrative process and disbursement of aid can be simplified and accelerated, reducing their already heavy burden. Mrs. DW hopes: *"Hopefully the arrangement of assistance will be faster and easier, so that we don't wait too long and worry"*.

Social companions also expect capacity building and support from the government in order to provide more effective assistance. Pak Joko stated:

*"We need adequate training and facilities to be able to accompany the family better."*

The implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) as conditional social assistance in Indonesia, especially in Makassar City, has had a positive impact on poverty alleviation efforts. However, the success of this program is inseparable from the various challenges and needs faced by the beneficiaries and social companions. Through various research and

evaluations conducted from 2015 to 2025, various important expectations were revealed that became strategic foundations for increasing the effectiveness of PKH implementation in the field.

- **Beneficiaries' Expectations: Simplification of Procedures and Acceleration of Aid Disbursement**

One of the main hopes that is often voiced by PKH beneficiary families is the simplification of administrative procedures which have been considered complicated and time-consuming. The complex administrative process not only becomes an additional burden for poor families who already face economic limitations, but also creates frustration and dissatisfaction that can affect their active participation in the program.

Susilo and Suyono (2019) in an evaluation of the implementation of PKH in Brebes Regency found that convoluted bureaucracy and unclear procedures are significant obstacles in the distribution of social assistance, which causes delays and uncertainty for beneficiaries. A similar situation was also found in Makassar, where beneficiaries hoped that the procedure would be simpler, easier to understand, and less likely to require repeated visits to government offices.

Accelerating the disbursement of aid is also an urgent demand. Timely assistance is essential to meet the family's urgent needs, such as children's education, medical care, and other basic needs. Delays in disbursement often cause liquidity problems that impact family welfare. Research by Pramesti, Kadir, and Suriyani (2024) confirms that the timeliness of aid distribution is an important indicator in assessing the performance of the PKH program and is an aspect that must be continuously improved to ensure the sustainability and positive impact of the program.

- **The Need for Social Companions: Training and Support for Effective Mentoring**

On the other hand, social companions who spearhead the implementation of PKH in the field also express needs and expectations that are no less important. They want ongoing training and adequate technical support in order to carry out mentoring tasks more effectively and professionally.

As the frontline of the relationship between the government and the beneficiary families, social companions face complex social communication, coordination, and problem-solving challenges. Intensive and local needs-based training is needed to increase the capacity of assistants in dealing with various social and economic dynamics in the community. This is in line with the findings of Setianingrum et al. (2025) which emphasized the importance of

improving the quality of human resources of social companions as the key to the success of the PKH program.

Support in the form of adequate work facilities, integrated information systems, and proper incentives are also the expectations of social companions to maintain motivation and professionalism in carrying out their duties. This condition is very important so that the companion can be more focused and optimal in educating, monitoring, and facilitating poor families.

- **Simplifying Procedures as a Strategic Step**

Various PKH evaluations in Indonesia show that simplifying administrative procedures is a strategic step that must be taken to increase the effectiveness and speed of aid distribution. With simpler and more transparent procedures, the administrative burden for beneficiaries and companions can be reduced, so that time and energy can be more focused on meeting family needs and strengthening social capacity.

Susilo and Suyono (2019) suggested that the PKH administration system implement a digitalization and automation mechanism to facilitate data verification and disbursement processes. Adequate information technology can also improve the accuracy of beneficiary data, reduce inequality and the potential for social conflicts arising from data errors.

- **Strengthening Companion Capacity and System Improvement**

Strengthening the capacity of social companions is a key element in improving the implementation of PKH. In addition to technical training, facilitators need to be equipped with effective communication skills, an understanding of the local socio-cultural context, and skills in conflict management and social mediation. This is important so that the companion is able to carry out the role of a facilitator of social change, not just an administrative supervisor.

Setianingrum et al. (2025) emphasized that a sustainable and competency-based training program will improve the performance of companions, so that the PKH program can be more responsive to the needs of the poor. In addition, the improvement of an integrated information and monitoring system will help the facilitator in collecting data and evaluating in real time, accelerating response and follow-up.

- **Policy Implications and Recommendations**

These findings underline that the success of PKH is highly dependent on the synergy between simplifying administrative procedures, strengthening the capacity of social companions, and utilizing information technology to support program transparency and accountability. The local and central governments need to adopt policies that prioritize

improving the administrative system and improving human resources in the implementation of PKH.

This policy is in line with the recommendations of the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (2020) which emphasizes the importance of service innovation and strengthening the capacity of program implementers to expand the scope and impact of PKH. In addition, cross-sectoral collaboration is also needed to improve access to health services and education as a vital component of the program.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The Family Hope Program (PKH) in Makassar City makes a significant contribution to alleviating the economic burden of poor families, especially through improving access to education and children's health. The financial assistance provided, while sometimes insufficient to meet all the needs of the family, has helped reduce routine expenses and provide more space for the recipient families. The role of a communicative and responsive social companion is essential in building trust, clarifying obligations, and encouraging beneficiaries' compliance with program requirements.

The success of the program depends not only on financial assistance, but also on local social and cultural factors that influence the attitudes and participation of beneficiary families. Cultural values such as *siri'* (self-esteem and shyness) and social norms are important factors that can motivate or even inhibit active involvement in the program. Companions who use a family approach and inclusive communication are able to overcome these cultural barriers so as to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of PKH.

However, a number of obstacles remain major challenges, including complex bureaucracy, limited access to public services such as health and education, and inaccurate beneficiary data that create inequities in aid distribution. In addition, the social stigma attached to the status of aid recipients hinders family participation and openness in various program activities. These barriers indicate the need for a more holistic and sensitive approach to socio-cultural contexts and capacity building of program implementers.

Awareness and active participation of beneficiaries in carrying out program obligations are key indicators of PKH's success. Social capital in the form of social networks, trust, and shared norms among community members has been proven to strengthen social cohesion and increase program effectiveness. Thus, the program serves not only as a transfer of economic assistance, but also as an instrument of social empowerment that builds the capacity and collective consciousness of poor families to get out of poverty.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. **Simplification of Administrative Procedures**

Complicated administrative procedures and lengthy bureaucracy need to be simplified through digitization mechanisms and automation of the verification and disbursement of aid processes. This will speed up the distribution of funds and reduce the administrative burden for beneficiaries and social companions (Susilo & Suyono, 2019).

### 2. **Strengthening the Capacity of Social Companions**

Social companions need to receive ongoing training that focuses on effective communication skills, understanding the local socio-cultural context, and conflict management and social mediation. This capacity building will improve the quality of assistance and program responsiveness to community needs (Setianingrum et al., 2025).

### 3. **Data System Improvement and Transparency**

The management of beneficiary data must be improved to be accurate and transparent to avoid injustice and social conflict. The implementation of an integrated information system and updates in real-time will help ensure the distribution of aid on target (Setianingrum et al., 2025).

### 4. **Culturally Sensitive Approach in Mentoring**

Companions should adopt an approach that respects local values and norms, such as *siri'*, using inclusive and empathetic communication. This approach is important to address cultural barriers and social stigmas that hinder family participation (Pramesti, Kadir, & Suriyani, 2024; Habermas, 1984).

### 5. **Strengthening Social Capital and Community Participation**

The program needs to prioritize community empowerment by strengthening social networks, common norms, and trust between members of the poor. This empowerment can be done through the facilitation of regular meetings, education, and collective activities that build social solidarity (Putnam, 1993; Adhayati et al., 2020).

### 6. **Cross-Sector Collaboration for Access to Public Services**

Closer cooperation between local governments, the education sector, and health services is needed to improve the quality and access to services that are a requirement for PKH. Improving infrastructure and professionals in remote areas will support the fulfillment of the obligations of beneficiary families (Putra, 2019).

### 7. **Acceleration of Aid Disbursement and Continuous Monitoring**

The distribution of aid must be timely to avoid liquidity disruption for poor families. In addition, monitoring and evaluation of the program needs to be carried out regularly and

participatively to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of PKH (Pramesti, Kadir, & Suriyani, 2024).

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