

## **ACTOR SYNERGY AND PROGRAM CONVERGENCE: A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION ANALYSIS IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN JAMBI PROVINCE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Poverty remains a strategic development issue in Indonesia, including in Jambi Province, which, despite a declining poverty and extreme poverty rate between 2020 and 2024, still faces spatial disparities and targeting inaccuracies. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the poverty reduction program convergence strategy in Jambi Province, emphasizing the role of multi-stakeholder collaboration. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed through a desk study based on data from Bappeda, BPS, and relevant academic literature. The analysis applies the theories of collaborative governance and policy networks to examine actor interactions in policy planning, implementation, and evaluation. The findings indicate that program convergence in Jambi involves various cross-sectoral interventions such as MSME assistance, education, health, and housing that contribute to poverty reduction. However, effectiveness remains constrained by data inaccuracies, institutional overlap, and weak coordination within policy networks. The established multi-stakeholder collaboration remains largely consultative and has not yet achieved genuine policy co-production. This study highlights the need to strengthen collaborative governance through integrated data management and equitable multi-stakeholder forums to enhance the effectiveness of regional poverty reduction policies.*

**Keywords:** *poverty, multi-stakeholder collaboration, collaborative governance, policy networks.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Poverty is one of the main indicators of development success as well as a fundamental challenge in public policy in Indonesia. The government places poverty alleviation as a national priority through various social protection programs and community economic empowerment with significant budget support from the State Budget and Regional Budget. However, the achievement of poverty alleviation in various regions has not shown even results. In Jambi Province, although the poverty rate has dropped from 7.58 percent in 2020 to 7.10 percent in 2024, there are still spatial inequality and problems with the accuracy of social assistance targets (Bappeda Jambi Province, 2024). This condition shows that the problem of poverty is not only caused by economic factors, but also by weak governance, inter-institutional coordination, and limited collaboration across actors in policy formulation and implementation.

In the context of public governance, the complexity of poverty requires a collaborative and cross-sectoral approach. The literature on *collaborative governance* asserts that successful resolution of public problems depends on the ability of various actors government, the private sector, civil society, and academia to interact in consensus-based collective decision-making (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2012). This approach assumes that no single institution has a single capacity to solve complex problems without cooperation between parties. In this case, poverty alleviation at the regional level requires a multi-stakeholder collaboration mechanism that is able to integrate resources, avoid overlapping programs, and strengthen the effectiveness of policy implementation (Purwanto & Pramusinto, 2018).

In addition, *policy network theory* also provides a relevant analytical framework in understanding the dynamics of relationships between actors in public policy. Rhodes (1997) states that modern public policy is the result of the interaction of a network of actors with different interests, where the success of implementation is determined by network strength, coordination, and trust among actors. Marsh and Smith (2000) added that relationships in policy networks are dialectical, meaning that network structure can influence the behavior of actors, and actors also influence policy direction through negotiation and alliance processes. In the context of Jambi, the fragmentation of poverty data between *the Integrated Social Welfare Data* (DTKS) and *P3KE* is evidence of weak coordination in the policy network, thus implicating the occurrence of *exclusion errors* and *inclusion errors* in social assistance programs.

Several empirical studies confirm the importance of multistakeholder synergy in poverty alleviation. Kurniawan, Purwanto, and Pramusinto (2021) found that cross-agency collaboration and policy data integration can increase the effectiveness of social assistance distribution at the regional level. Research by Bryson, Crosby, and Stone (2015) shows that the value of collaboration in public policy not only increases program efficiency, but also strengthens policy legitimacy through *shared accountability*. Meanwhile, research by Alkire et al. (2015) confirms that poverty is multidimensional, so interventions to overcome it must involve various sectors in a convergent manner. These findings strengthen the argument that *collaborative governance* and *policy networks* approaches need to be integrated in understanding poverty policies in Jambi.

However, studies that specifically examine the implementation of the convergence strategy of poverty alleviation programs in Jambi Province with a collaborative approach are still very limited. Most previous research has focused on aspects of program effectiveness or aid distribution, without further examining the dynamics of interactions between actors and institutional networks that influence policy success. Therefore, this research is important to fill the gap. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the convergence strategy of poverty alleviation programs in Jambi Province by emphasizing the role of multi-stakeholder collaboration. In particular, this study seeks to answer two main questions: (1) how local governments and other actors build synergy in poverty alleviation through program convergence strategies, and (2) the extent to which the established policy networks are able to overcome the problems of target accuracy and governance weaknesses.

Conceptually, this study develops the hypothesis that the stronger the multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination in the policy network, the higher the effectiveness of the implementation of the convergence strategy of poverty alleviation programs in the regions. On the other hand, data fragmentation and weak inter-agency coordination capacity will reduce policy effectiveness. Thus, this research not only contributes to the enrichment of *collaborative governance* theory and *policy networks*, but also offers empirical recommendations for local governments in strengthening data-based collaborative governance and equitable multistakeholder participation.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a *desk study strategy*. This approach was chosen because the purpose of the research is to analyze the implementation of the convergence strategy of poverty alleviation programs in Jambi Province through the perspective of *collaborative governance* and *policy networks*. The main data of the research is sourced from the Jambi Province Poverty Alleviation Policy Exposure 2024 compiled by Bappeda, complemented by 35BPS health data and related academic literature. With this approach, the research does not aim to generalize 35health, but to understand in depth the dynamics of 35poverty, policies, and challenges in the implementation of poverty alleviation in the region (Creswell, 2018).

The research data source consists of official documents from Bappeda Jambi, BPS data on poverty trends 2020–2024, and P3KE data describing the conditions of extreme poor households. Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation, literature studies, and indirect observation of local government reports and exposure results. The main focus of the research is directed at the analysis of poverty and extreme poverty conditions, cross-program convergence strategies (MSME assistance, scholarships, internet access, health subsidies, house surgery, and others), as well as the role of multi-stakeholder collaboration involving local governments, the business world, civil society, and academia.

Data analysis was carried out in a descriptive qualitative manner by following the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The validity of the data was strengthened through triangulation of sources (Patton, 2002) by comparing the results of Bappeda exposure, BPS data, and academic literature. Through this framework, the research is expected to be able to explain the extent to which the convergence strategy of poverty programs in Jambi is carried out through multi-stakeholder collaboration, as well as identify policy implementation challenges, especially data accuracy issues (DTKS and P3KE) and the accuracy of social assistance targets.

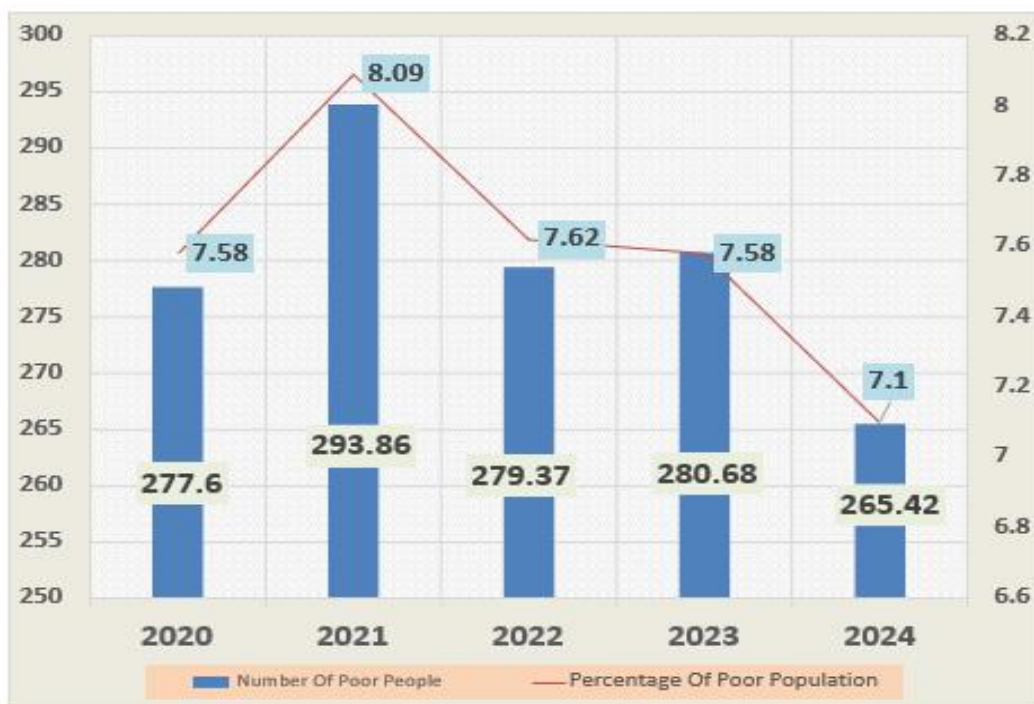
## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **a. Poverty Conditions in Jambi 2020–2024**

The poverty rate in Jambi Province shows fluctuations in the period 2020–2024. Based on data from Bappeda Jambi, the number of poor people in 2020 was recorded at 277.6 thousand people with a percentage of 7.58 percent. This figure had increased in 2021 to 293.86 thousand people (8.09 percent), which was

influenced by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the local economy. However, since 2022 this trend has declined again, until in 2024 the number of poor people will decrease to 265.42 thousand people with a percentage of 7.10 percent.

**Graph 1.**  
**Poverty Trends in Jambi Province 2020-2024**



***Poverty in Jambi Province 2020–2024 Bappeda Jambi***

This decrease is equivalent to a reduction of 12.18 thousand poor people during the 2020-2024 period. This data shows that there is a post-pandemic economic recovery that is starting to have an impact on people's welfare. However, when viewed spatially, this decline is uneven across districts/cities. There are still several areas with relatively high poverty rates, especially in the western and eastern regions of Jambi such as Kerinci, Sarolangun, East Tanjung Jabung, and West Tanjung Jabung.

In addition to general poverty, indicators of extreme poverty also showed significant improvements. In the 2020–2024 period, the extreme poverty rate in Jambi decreased by 2.16 points, with the number of extreme poor people decreasing to 79.01 thousand people. (Bappeda, 2024) In 2024, the percentage of extreme poverty in Jambi will be recorded at 0.41 percent, lower than the national figure of 0.83 percent. This indicates that although there are still pockets of poverty in several regions, in aggregate Jambi has succeeded in reducing the extreme poverty rate to below the national average.

Despite positive achievements, structural problems remain a major challenge. One of the crucial issues is the accuracy of the social assistance program's targets. More than half of the poor in Jambi do not receive the benefits of regular programs such as PKH and basic food assistance, while some of the

more prosperous groups still receive assistance. (Bappeda, 2024) This condition reflects the weak integration of poverty data between DTKS and P3KE which has implications for *exclusion* and *inclusion errors*.

Thus, the general picture of Jambi's poverty conditions in 2020–2024 shows a positive trend in reducing poverty and extreme poverty. However, these achievements do not fully reflect policy effectiveness as they are still faced with spatial challenges, data weaknesses, and limitations in multi-stakeholder coordination. This underscores the need for a more integrated program convergence strategy and stronger multi-stakeholder collaboration mechanisms to ensure that poverty alleviation policies can achieve target groups appropriately and sustainably.

#### **b). Implementation of Program Convergence Strategy**

Poverty alleviation efforts in Jambi Province are not only carried out through one type of intervention, but through a convergence approach of cross-sector programs that combine the support of the State Budget and the Regional Budget. Based on data from Bappeda Jambi, the budget realization for poverty alleviation programs reached IDR 326.03 billion in 2022 and IDR 310.26 billion in 2023. Meanwhile, in 2024, a ceiling of IDR 302.23 billion is allocated. (Bappeda, 2024) This budget allocation is directed to support various social, educational, health, and economic empowerment programs targeting the poor and vulnerable groups.

The convergence of these programs includes a wide range of interventions distributed into several key sectors. In the economic sector, the local government distributed assistance for livestock, seeds, seeds, and agricultural equipment with a total budget of IDR 41.76 billion. In addition, there is working capital assistance for MSMEs, household industries, startups, and millennial business actors which reached 7,043 recipients with a total of IDR 47.95 billion. This intervention shows that poverty alleviation strategies are not only *charity-based*, but also lead to an *empowerment-based approach* with an emphasis on the empowerment of productive groups.

In the field of education, scholarship assistance programs were given to 15,367 students with a budget allocation of IDR 36.52 billion. In addition, support for religious institutions is also distributed through the student operational assistance program with a total of more than 75 thousand students and a budget of IDR 42.45 billion. The provincial government also encourages innovation through the provision of internet access in 289 villages/sub-districts with a budget of Rp14.50 billion, which not only supports access to information, but also expands opportunities for rural economic digitalization.

The integration of social protection programs can be seen from the efforts of local governments to harmonize health insurance participation. Until 2024, the JAMKESDA program covers 219,618 people with a budget of IDR 87.99 billion, while the subsidy for participation in Contribution Assistance Recipients (PBI) has reached more than 3.08 million people with a budget of IDR 69.26 billion. (Bappeda, 2024) On the other hand, the housing program was also intervened through home renovation assistance for 1,697 units with a budget of IDR 33.37 billion. This variety of programs illustrates that convergence includes not only increasing the income of the poor, but also reducing their spending burden.

However, Bappeda Jambi admitted that program convergence still faces serious challenges. *First*, there is an *exclusion error*, namely many poor groups who are not touched by regular programs such as PKH or basic food assistance. *Second*, there is an *inclusion error*, namely groups that are already relatively prosperous still receive program benefits. (Program Data) *Third*, institutional problems where program implementing agencies and target-setting institutions have not been fully managed professionally and separately from policy-making institutions. This challenge underscores the need to strengthen accurate and valid data-based governance.

From the perspective of *collaborative governance*, the convergence strategy in Jambi reflects efforts to integrate various resources through collaboration between actors. Local governments act as coordinators, while civil society, the business world, and academia have complementary roles in strengthening the program's reach. With the integration of the APBD and APBN, as well as program innovations in various sectors, Jambi Province seeks to encourage the transformation of poverty alleviation from just providing assistance to inclusive and sustainable development. However, to be more effective, this convergence must be followed by a policy network-based evaluation mechanism that ensures coordination between agencies runs synergistically and on target.

### **c). Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration in Poverty Alleviation in Jambi**

The role of local governments, both at the provincial and district/city levels, is central in coordinating poverty alleviation. The Jambi Provincial Government through Bappeda and the Regional Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team (TKPKD) has allocated a budget of more than IDR 300 billion per year for various programs, such as MSME assistance, scholarships, house surgery, health subsidies, and strengthening village digital access. The district/city government complements this policy with region-based interventions, especially in pockets of extreme poverty such as Kerinci, Sarolangun, and East Tanjung Jabung. The role of local governments is in accordance with the theory of *collaborative governance* which places the government as a facilitator as well as a liaison between actors (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

In addition to the government, civil society and local communities have an important role as a bridge between policies and the real needs of the community. Data from Bappeda Jambi shows that most poor groups in districts such as Tebo and Merangin still face limited access to sanitation and education. In this context, civil society organizations play a role in assisting poor households to access social assistance and empowerment programs. The Purwanto & Pramusinto study (2018) emphasized that community participation increases the effectiveness of policies because it is able to minimize *exclusion errors* and accelerate program distribution. Thus, the involvement of local communities is not only as a beneficiary, but also as an active partner in policy implementation.

The business world also plays a strategic role through the contribution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and economic partnerships. In Jambi, the private sector supports strengthening the community's economy through MSME training, the provision of working capital, and supply chain integration in the plantation and agricultural sectors. The working capital assistance program for 7,043 MSME actors with a value of IDR 47.95 billion is tangible evidence of

collaboration involving non-government resources. The literature shows that private sector involvement in social policy not only drives inclusive economic growth, but also strengthens the legitimacy of public policy (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2015; Kurniawan et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, academics play a role through research, policy mentoring, and program evaluation. Collaboration between universities in Jambi and local governments has supported the strengthening of social databases, including DTKS validation and harmonization with P3KE. Academics also contribute to formulating *evidence-based policy* recommendations so that poverty alleviation programs are more targeted. Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh (2012) emphasized that the existence of epistemic actors such as academics is important in *collaborative governance* because it is able to bridge the information gap between actors and increase public accountability.

Overall, multi-stakeholder collaboration in Jambi illustrates a pattern of *policy networks* that involve intensive interaction between the government, civil society, the business world, and academia. However, the effectiveness of this network is still affected by weak coordination and limited data. This is in line with Rhodes' (1997) view that the success of a policy network is determined by the extent to which the actors within it are able to share resources, build trust, and reach consensus. In the context of Jambi, despite efforts to converge budgets and program innovations, multi-stakeholder synergy still needs to be strengthened so that poverty alleviation goals can be achieved in an inclusive and sustainable manner.

#### **d). Implementation Challenges & Theoretical Analysis**

Although Jambi Province shows a positive trend in reducing poverty and extreme poverty rates throughout 2020–2024, the implementation of poverty reduction strategies still faces a number of structural challenges. The first challenge is the issue of data accuracy. Bappeda Jambi noted that more than 5,900 heads of families in Tebo Regency were not matched with the Population Identification Number in the DTKS. (Bappeda, 2024) This condition has direct implications for the occurrence of *exclusion errors*, where poor groups do not receive the benefits of regular programs, and *inclusion errors*, where prosperous groups still receive assistance. From the perspective of *collaborative governance*, weak data integration shows that the prerequisites for collaboration effectiveness—namely trust and transparency between actors—have not been fully met (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

The second challenge has to do with institutional coordination. Bappeda emphasized that the institution implementing the program and the target setting institution often overlap and has not been managed professionally. This indicates that there is fragmentation in the policy network that should be synergistic. In the framework of *policy networks* (Rhodes, 1997; Marsh & Smith, 2000), such fragmentation reflects the weak capacity of the network to produce consistent collective decisions. In other words, despite efforts to converge programs across sectors, the policy network in Jambi still faces the problem of "coordination without integration".

The third challenge is the sustainability aspect of the program. Although various assistance such as MSME working capital, scholarships, health subsidies,

and house surgery have succeeded in reducing the burden of public expenditure, there is a risk of dependency if it is not followed by a long-term empowerment strategy. The literature confirms that multi-stakeholder collaboration can only be effective if it results *in sustainable value creation*, not just *short-term outputs* (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2015). In the context of Jambi, this means that poverty alleviation programs need to be directed at structural transformation, for example through the diversification of the local economy and the upskilling of the poor.

In terms of *collaborative governance* theory, Jambi's experience shows that there is a gap between ideal principles and field practice. Normatively, *collaborative governance* requires a deliberative forum that unites the government, civil society, the business world, and academia in policy formulation (Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2012). However, field data shows that most program decisions are still top-down, while community and academic participation tends to be placed as complementary. This indicates that the collaboration that has been built is still at the *consultative stage*, not yet achieving *co-production of policy*.

From the perspective of *policy networks*, the Jambi case confirms that the success of poverty alleviation is greatly influenced by the dynamics of interaction between actors in policy networks. The existing network has been able to integrate APBD and APBN resources, but has not fully succeeded in overcoming differences in interests between institutions. This phenomenon supports the argument of Marsh & Smith (2000) that the policy network is a dialectical arena, where structure influences the behavior of actors, but actors also seek to influence the structure through negotiation and alliances. In the case of Jambi, the weakness of data and institutional coordination is clear evidence that relations between actors are still colored by inequality of access and capacity.

Thus, the challenges of implementing poverty alleviation policies in Jambi show that positive achievements in the form of reducing poverty and extreme poverty rates have not fully guaranteed the effectiveness of governance. Theoretical analysis shows that multi-stakeholder collaboration in Jambi is only partially running, with the dominance of the local government as the main actor. In order for the program convergence strategy to be more effective, it is necessary to strengthen equal collaboration forums, integrate data across sectors, and develop a policy network-based evaluation mechanism that is able to balance the interests of inter-actors.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study shows that the implementation of the convergence strategy of poverty alleviation programs in Jambi Province has made a real contribution to reducing poverty and extreme poverty rates in the 2020–2024 period. Efforts to converge across sectors through interventions in the fields of economy, education, health, and housing reflect the commitment of local governments to integrate various resources in strengthening community welfare. However, the effectiveness of these policies still faces serious challenges, especially related to data inaccuracies, institutional overlap, and weak coordination between actors in the policy network. The phenomenon of exclusion error and inclusion error that still occurs shows that the social database system is not fully synchronized between the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) and P3KE, thus having an impact on the inaccuracy of the social assistance program targets.

From the perspective of collaborative governance, multi-stakeholder collaboration in Jambi has been formed but is still at the consultative stage, not yet reaching a form of substantive collaboration that results in co-production of policy. Local governments are still the dominant actors in the process of program formulation and implementation, while the participation of the private sector, academia, and civil society is more supportive. In fact, the effectiveness of public policies in the context of poverty depends heavily on the extent to which these actors can share responsibilities, build trust, and agree on common goals. Meanwhile, from the perspective of policy networks, inter-agency relations in poverty policy in Jambi show a high dependency on resources, but they have not been balanced with adequate coordination and communication mechanisms. This causes the policy network to not fully function as a collaborative arena that is adaptive and responsive to the socio-economic dynamics of the poor.

Based on these findings, this study emphasizes that strengthening collaborative governance is the main key to the sustainability of poverty alleviation policies in the regions. Local governments need to strengthen cross-sectoral data integration, clarify the roles and responsibilities of each actor in the policy network, and build inclusive and evidence-based multistakeholder forums. Equal collaboration between the government, business, academia, and civil society will drive policy transformation from a charity-based approach to empowerment-based, so that poverty alleviation is not only oriented towards reducing poverty rates, but also on increasing community capacity and independence. Thus, the results of this study make a theoretical contribution to the development of the concept of collaborative governance and policy networks in the context of social policy, as well as offer practical implications for strengthening inclusive, integrated, and sustainable poverty alleviation governance in Jambi Province.

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