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# **The Implementation of Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT): A Case Study of Apela Satu Sub-District, Ranowulu District, Bitung City**

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**Abstract.** This research is motivated by the government program known as the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT) in Apela Satu sub-district, Ranowulu district, Bitung city. This assistance program has been implemented since 2017, initially known as the Family Welfare Program (RASTRA). The distribution process of BPNT is done in a non-cash manner with the aim of fulfilling the 6 Ts criteria: Targeted, Administrative Accuracy, Timeliness, Targeted Beneficiaries, Benefits Accuracy, and Quality Accuracy. However, it has been found in the field that some economically capable individuals are still registered as beneficiaries, while there are economically disadvantaged individuals who are not registered as recipients. This situation does not meet one of the 6 Ts criteria, which is targeting accuracy. The research methodology used in this study is qualitative, which formulates the discussion results using descriptive data. The data is obtained through field observations, directly observing the lives of the aid recipients, documentation, and interviews. The purpose of this research is to understand the implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT). The results of the discussion and analysis of this research indicate that the implementation of BPNT is structurally implemented and contributes to the economic well-being and food sufficiency of the beneficiary community.

**Keywords.** Implementation, Beneficiary Community, Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT)

## **1. Introduction**

There are several government programs in Indonesia that are provided to the community to address poverty. One of these programs is the Non-Cash Food Assistance Social Security Program (BPNT). The Non-Cash Food Assistance Program is a reform of the Prosperous Rice Subsidy Program (Rastra), introduced as an effort to enhance the effectiveness and targeting accuracy of the program, as well as to promote financial inclusion [1]. Since 2017, the government has gradually reformed social assistance from the Prosperous Family (Rastra) program to the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT). This was done due to shortcomings in the implementation of the Rastra assistance, such as inaccurate targeting of

beneficiaries, reduction in the amount of assistance, delays in receiving the assistance, and often inadequate quality of the aid (rice).

The BPNT program has been implemented since 2017 in accordance with Presidential Regulation Number 63 of 2017 on the Non-Cash Distribution of Social Assistance (BSNT) [2]. This program has been implemented in various regions in Indonesia with adequate access and facilities. In addition to providing food choices, the distribution of BPNT is also done through the banking system to support the improvement of the welfare and economic capacity of the beneficiaries through broader access to financial services. The distribution process of BPNT is done in a non-cash manner to fulfill six important aspects, namely Targeting Accuracy, Administrative Accuracy, Quantity Accuracy, Benefit Accuracy, Timeliness, and Quality (6T). The Ministry of Social Affairs transformed the Prosperous Rice for Poor Families (Rastra) assistance into the Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT), where the previous beneficiaries who received rice have now transitioned to BPNT. At the beginning of the distribution in 2017, the amount of money spent/used at BRILink agents was Rp 110,000 per beneficiary. However, in 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the government increased it to Rp 200,000 per beneficiary (Ministry of Social Affairs of Indonesia, 2020). Each registered beneficiary will receive a card, which is then used when purchasing staple needs such as rice, eggs, and meat, with a value of Rp 200,000 per month. The process of obtaining the basic needs is carried out at shops that cooperate or are appointed by the relevant agencies, in this case, Bank BRI (BRILink agents). The BPNT program is provided by the government in the form of staple food items, with the aim of improving the accuracy of the target group, providing more balanced nutrition and greater choice and control to the poor, promoting small-scale retail businesses, providing access to financial services for the poor, and optimizing the budget. In the long run, the non-cash distribution of food assistance is expected to have an impact on improving the welfare and economic capacity of the beneficiaries[3]. In accordance with the changing times, the government modifies existing regulations based on the current situation and conditions.

Bitung City, North Sulawesi Province, established in 1990, pays special attention to the welfare of its people, particularly through various poverty alleviation programs. With the implementation of these programs, it is expected that the poverty rate in Bitung City can be reduced. Data from the Social Welfare Data (DKTS) shows a decrease in the number of poor people from year to year. In 2020, the number of poor people in Bitung City was 156,278, while in 2021, it decreased to 130,901. This indicates that with the social assistance programs provided by the government, there has been a decrease in the poverty rate. The data of BPNT recipients also show a decrease from year to year. This demonstrates the success of this program in accordance with the government's expectations to reduce the poverty rate and improve the welfare of the Indonesian society. The number of BPNT recipients in Bitung City in 2021 was 10,134 beneficiary households (KPM), while in 2022, it decreased to 9,656 KPM.

Bitung City has 8 sub-districts and 69 urban villages that distribute Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT) in each village according to the existing schedule. The number of KPM in Apela Satu Urban Village, Ranowulu Sub-district, in 2021 was 41 KPM, while in 2022, it decreased to 33 KPM. However, in the data of KPM who will receive BPNT cards, there are some recipients who no longer meet the criteria set based on the standards of the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) for poverty. In the field, many households classified as Beneficiary Families (KPM) have already reached an economically decent level (considered capable), but they are still registered as recipients, while there are households with low economic levels (eligible for assistance), but have not been registered as beneficiaries. The process of proposing recipient names begins with the Pre-Village Deliberation (Pra Muskel) activities conducted

every year to evaluate and verify data of families who still meet the requirements for receiving assistance, as well as categorizing families that are considered eligible or no longer eligible to be registered.

This activity involves the Head of the Community and the Head of RT (neighborhood unit), as they have data and knowledge about the community in their respective areas. The next activity is the Village Deliberation involving the Village Consultative Body (LPM) members, TP PKK (Women's Welfare Development Organization) members, the Head of the Community, the Head of RT, Village Staff, the Village Chief, as well as assistants and related agencies, including the Bitung City Social Office. In this meeting, it is expected to provide data/suggested names that can be included in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS). After the data collection and name proposals, the team will directly go to the location to conduct on-site verification at the homes of residents proposed for inclusion in DTKS. The 2022 data shows that out of 33 Beneficiary Families, some are no longer eligible for assistance, while there are deserving households that have not been registered as KPM beneficiaries. This occurs due to the failure to meet one of the 6T elements, which is accurate targeting, causing issues within the community in Apela Satu Urban Village. Based on this initial observation, the researcher is interested in conducting a study with the title "Implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT): A Case Study of Apela Satu Urban Village, Ranowulu Sub-district, Bitung City." Based on the background of the problem, the research questions are formulated as follows:

- How is the implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT)?
- What determinant factors are found in the implementation of the non-cash food assistance program?

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Policy Implementation*

Mazmanian and Sabatias in Widodo [4] define implementation as follows: "To understand what actually happens after a program is enacted or formulated is the subject of policy authoritative policy directives, which included both the effort to administer and the substantives, which impact on the people and events." Therefore, Joko Widodo [4] concludes that implementation is "a process that involves various resources, including human resources, funding, and organizational capabilities, carried out by both the government and the private sector (individuals or groups). This process is conducted to achieve predetermined goals set by policy makers." Policy implementation is broadly seen as "a legal administration tool where various actors, organizations, procedures, and techniques work together to implement policies to achieve desired impacts or goals" (Lester and Stewart in Winarno[5]). Therefore, implementation refers to the actions taken by the government to achieve the goals set in a policy decision. However, the government also needs to assess whether the policy can have positive or negative impacts on society before making it. This is to ensure that a policy does not contradict the interests of the society, especially to the point of harming them.

### *2.2 Policy Implementation Model*

According to George Edward III in Widodo [4], to achieve effective policy implementation, there are four aspects that need to be considered, namely:

- Communication is the process of conveying information from the communicator to the recipient. In this context, communication relates to how public policies

can be effectively conveyed to policy implementers so that they understand what preparations and actions they need to take to execute the policy. Transmission dimension ensures that public policies are communicated not only to policy implementers but also to the target groups and other stakeholders, both directly and indirectly. Clarity dimension requires that policies transmitted to implementers, target groups, and other stakeholders are clearly understood, so that everyone knows the purpose, objectives, targets, and substance of the public policy. This enables each party to prepare and implement the policy effectively and efficiently. Consistency dimension is important to ensure that the policies taken are not inconsistent or contradictory, avoiding confusion among policy implementers, target groups, and stakeholders.

- **Resources:** According to Edward III in Widodo [4], resources play a significant role in policy implementation. These resources include human resources, budgetary resources, equipment resources, and authority resources.

- **Disposition:** Disposition, according to George Edward III in Widodo [4], refers to the "willingness, desire, and tendency of policy behavior to genuinely carry out the policy, so that the policy objectives can be achieved." George Edward III in Widodo (2010) states that for policy implementation to be successful effectively and efficiently, policy implementers need not only to know what needs to be done and possess the skills to carry out the policy but also to have the willingness to implement it.

- **Bureaucratic Structure:** George Edward III in Widodo [4] states that "policy implementation may still be ineffective due to bureaucratic structural inefficiencies." This bureaucratic structure includes aspects such as organizational structure, division of authority, and relationships between organizational units, as stated by George Edward III in Widodo [4]. According to George Edward III in Winarno [5] bureaucracy has two main characteristics, namely "Standard Operational Procedures (SOP)" and fragmentation.

### **3. Methods**

This research adopts a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research methods are based on the philosophy of positivism and are utilized to examine the conditions of natural phenomena (as opposed to experiments). In qualitative research, the researcher plays a crucial role, data collection techniques involve triangulation (combination), analysis is conducted through an inductive/qualitative approach, and the findings of qualitative research yield deeper meanings compared to other methods Sugiyono in [6].

The objective of this qualitative research is to provide a systematic, factual description or depiction of the facts, characteristics, and relationships among the phenomena under investigation. Therefore, this research focuses on actual issues, specifically the description of the "Implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT) (A Case Study in Apela Satu Urban Village, Ranowulu Sub-district, Bitung City). Arikunto in [7] explains that the data source is the subject from which data can be obtained. In this research, there are two data sources: primary data and secondary data. According to Arikunto in [8], primary data is in the form of verbal or spoken words, gestures, or behaviors performed by reliable subjects, namely the research subjects or informants related to the variables under investigation. In this study, the head of the social department serves as the primary data source. The interviews were conducted by establishing a strong rapport and continuously following what Benny and Hughes suggested in order to value the interview as a data collection tool. The researcher built close emotional relationships and familiarity with all stakeholders encountered during the study, which allowed for positive responses and the gathering of more in-depth and accurate information[9].

According to Arikunto [8], secondary data is obtained from graphical documents (tables, meeting minutes, text messages, photos, and other objects) that can enrich the primary data. In this research, documentary studies and the responses from the interview questionnaires serve as secondary data sources. There are three methods in the data collection technique of this research, namely:

- Observation method: Observation is a way of collecting data through the systematic recording of the behavior of subjects (people), objects, or events without questioning or communicating with the objects and subjects being studied, according to Sanusi in [10].
- Interview method: The interview technique involves collecting data orally from research subjects, conducted through face-to-face or indirect interactions, according to Sanusi in [10]. In this study, the interview method is used to gather data about the general overview of the research object.
- Documentation method: In this research, the documentation or written materials method is used as additional information and to broaden the writer's understanding regarding the implementation of the non-cash food assistance program (BPNT) in a case study of Apela Satu Village, Ranowulu Sub-district, Bitung City.

The data analysis technique in this research uses an approach developed by Miles and Huberman, which includes data collection, data reduction (separating irrelevant or overly detailed data to reveal patterns or themes), and data presentation for analysis of information or events, according to Miles, Huberman, & Saldana in [11]. To examine the validity of the data in this research, the researcher uses triangulation technique. According to Sugiyono[12], triangulation is a technique that combines data from various data collection methods and sources. In this study, the researcher uses two types of triangulation:

- Technique triangulation: According to Sugiyono[12], technique triangulation means using different data collection techniques to obtain data from the same data source. The researcher employs participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation simultaneously for the same data source.
- Source triangulation: According to Sugiyono[13], source triangulation means obtaining data from different sources using the same technique.

## **4. Result and Discussion**

### *4.1 Implementation of Non-Cash Food Assistance*

The BPNT program has been implemented since 2017 in accordance with Presidential Regulation No. 63 of 2017 regarding the Non-Cash Social Assistance Distribution (BSNT). This program has been carried out in several regions in Indonesia with adequate access and facilities. In addition to providing food options, the distribution of BPNT is also done through the banking system to support behavior that enhances the welfare and economic capacity of the beneficiaries through wider access to financial services. This government program is provided to the community with the hope of reducing the poverty rate and improving the well-being of the people. The process of BPNT distribution is conducted in a non-cash manner to fulfill the 6Ts: Targeting, Administration, Quantity, Benefit, Timeliness, and Quality. To achieve the 6Ts, the Ministry of Social Affairs transformed the Rice Prosperity Assistance (RASTRA) into Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT), where the previous beneficiaries of rice now switch to BPNT. Initially, in 2017, the amount of money spent/swiped at BRILink Agents was Rp 110,000 per beneficiary. However, in 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the government increased it to Rp 200,000 per beneficiary [14]. Each beneficiary whose name is listed in the recipient list will receive a card that will be used when purchasing essential food items such as rice, eggs, and

meat, with a monthly value of Rp 200,000. The process of obtaining these items is done at designated shops in collaboration with the government agency, in this case, Bank BRI (BRILink Agent). The BPNT program is provided by the government in the form of staple food items, so that the beneficiaries can truly utilize them to meet their living needs and provide balanced and nutritious food for their health and well-being.

**Table 1.** The Number of Poor People in Bitung City

No	Year	The Poor Population (in Individuals)
1	2020	156.278
2	2021	130.901

**Table 2.** The Number of BPNT Recipients in Bitung City

No	Year	BPNT Recipients (Households)
1	2021	10.134
2	2022	9.656

**Table 3.** The Number of BPNT Recipients in Apela Satu Sub-district

No	Year	BPNT Recipients (Households)
1	2021	41
2	2022	33
3	2023	33

In its implementation, the Non-Cash Food Assistance was previously known as the Rice Prosperity Assistance. The change in name was primarily motivated by the fact that many people complained about the Rastra program because they only received rice, while they also needed other groceries to meet their daily needs. The name change was carried out in April 2018 and was already stipulated in Minister of Social Affairs Regulation No. 11 of 2018. In the implementation of the policy [15], there are four factors that serve as benchmarks for implementation, including:

#### *4.1.1 Communication*

In line with the advancement of communication technology, where people can access information about government activities and policy decisions concerning their citizens through social media and the internet, the Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT) program was introduced. Previously known as the Rice Prosperity Assistance (Rastra), which only provided rice to the recipients, the program faced challenges due to the declining economic conditions and

difficulties in finding employment. Hence, the BPNT program was established to address these issues. Unlike its predecessor, the BPNT program includes various essential groceries such as eggs, cooking oil, meat, and others. Effective communication is crucial in implementing policies, both with subordinates and policy recipients, to ensure that the established policies are implemented according to their intended objectives and needs. This applies to the implementation of the BPNT program in the Apela Satu sub-district of Ranowulu, Bitung City. Communication plays a vital role in conveying information to the recipients. Without proper communication, a policy may remain as a written document without effective implementation.

In the distribution process of the BPNT program in Apela Satu, the distribution is carried out by the designated bank, such as Bank BRI, without any charges or deductions. Therefore, the recipients (KPM) receive the full value of Rp. 200,000. To be eligible for BPNT, individuals must be registered in advance with the Social Affairs Office of Bitung City. Eligible recipients are listed in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS). The government carries out the BPNT distribution process through social media, followed by notifications to the sub-districts and neighborhoods. The process of selecting potential BPNT beneficiaries starts with data collection by the respective neighborhood chiefs (RT). Since they have first-hand knowledge of the community's conditions, this process ensures accurate data for the KPM recipients in the respective areas. There have been cases where beneficiaries were unknown to the local neighborhood chief or had moved away from the area, and even cases where deceased individuals were still registered as beneficiaries. Therefore, annual verification and validation of the data are essential to ensure that the proposed data represents families living in the area who genuinely deserve the assistance. After each neighborhood chief completes the data collection, the list is brought to the neighborhood for further discussions involving the neighborhood chiefs, the Head of the Community, the Community Empowerment Agency (LPM), and community leaders. During these meetings, participants provide input, information, and feedback on the eligibility of the proposed families to be included in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS), as one of the requirements for receiving assistance is being registered in the Ministry of Social Affairs' DTKS. The proposed beneficiaries are families that meet the criteria. Once the eligible beneficiaries are agreed upon, a neighborhood meeting (MUSKEL) is conducted, involving a team from the Social Affairs Office and the Special Staff of the Mayor for social and community affairs. During the MUSKEL, the data of the proposed beneficiaries is further verified and validated through field visits, interviews, and surveys of their residential locations, ensuring that only deserving candidates who are included in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) receive the assistance according to the set criteria.

The eligibility criteria for BPNT recipients, according to Minister of Social Affairs Regulation No. 5 of 2021 regarding the implementation of the basic needs program, Article 3, paragraph 1, are as follows: KPM refers to families listed in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS). Priority is given to families registered in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) who are also participants in the Family Hope Program. Once the verified and validated data is approved in the MUSKEL, it is determined as the data of potential beneficiaries or the group of beneficiaries (KPM), and it is proposed through the Social Affairs Office of Bitung City.

Several steps are taken during the registration of potential beneficiaries:

Data collection of BPNT recipients. Data of potential beneficiaries in Apela Satu are collected based on the neighborhood meeting attended by the neighborhood chief, the Head of the Community, and the LPM officials. The Social Affairs Office conducts surveys to verify the completeness of the required documents, conducts field visits, and provides face-to-face information to the potential beneficiaries. The data obtained from the neighborhood meetings,

with input from the neighborhood chiefs and the Head of the Community who are familiar with the local conditions, are then handed over to the assigned facilitators for verification and survey by the Social Affairs Office.

#### 4.1.2 *Resources*

The Non-Cash Food Assistance Program is a reform of the Prosperous Rice Subsidy Program (Rastra) implemented based on the direction of the President of the Republic of Indonesia to improve the effectiveness and target accuracy of the program, as well as to promote financial inclusion. Since 2017, the government has gradually reformed social assistance from the Prosperous Family (Rastra) to the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT). This is due to shortcomings in the implementation of Rastra assistance, such as inaccurate targeting, reduced assistance amount, delayed distribution, and poor quality of the assistance (rice).

The distribution process of BPNT is carried out in a non-cash manner to fulfill the 6 Ts: Targeted, Administrative Accuracy, Appropriate Quantity, Beneficial, Timely, and Quality. To achieve these 6 Ts, the Ministry of Social Affairs has transformed the Prosperous Rice Subsidy (Rastra) into the Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT), where eligible households previously received rice but have now transitioned to BPNT. At the start of the distribution in 2017, the amount spent/swiped at BRILink Agents was Rp 110,000 per eligible household. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the government increased it to Rp 200,000 per eligible household. Each eligible household's name in the recipient list will receive a card that will be used when obtaining essential food items such as rice, eggs, and meat, with a total value of Rp 200,000 per month. The process of obtaining the necessities is done at appointed stores in collaboration with the relevant department, in this case, Bank BRI (BRILink Agent). This BPNT program provides essential food assistance to households, ensuring that they can truly utilize it to meet their livelihood needs and receive a balanced and nutritious diet for their health and well-being. As times progress, the government adjusts the regulations based on the situation and conditions. The technical objectives of the Non-Cash Food Assistance distribution mechanism are aimed at implementing the distribution of Non-Cash Food Assistance at the central, provincial, and district/city levels.

These objectives are as follows:

Provide information and understanding of the mechanism for implementing Non-Cash Food Assistance distribution. Provide solutions to obstacles or issues encountered in the implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance program. Present standardized reporting in the implementation of Non-Cash Food Assistance. The data of the Beneficiary Families (KPM) for BPNT, which have been determined by the director responsible for BPNT implementation within the working area as the budget user authority, are handed over to the regional coordination team for social food assistance in the provinces and districts/cities, as well as the distributing bank, through the social welfare information system.

#### 4.1.3 *Implementers' Attitude*

Based on the data received from the respondents, there are 20 individuals who receive BPNT (Non-Cash Food Assistance) and 15 individuals who receive PKH (Family Hope Program) assistance. However, there are still some deserving individuals who do not receive these benefits because they are not registered in the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS). The implementers have carried out their duties and responsibilities, resulting in a monthly achievement rate of 100% in the distribution process of BPNT. This can be seen from the reports provided by the BRILink agents to the Social Welfare Assistance Team and the reports given

to the local authorities. Out of the 33 eligible households each month, all of them consistently utilize the card to make purchases according to the available balance. Although sometimes the purchases may not align with the schedule, they are always successfully distributed each month. The distribution process of the BPNT program occurs when the eligible households come and present their cards, which are then swiped on the provided device, displaying a balance of Rp 200,000. With this balance, the eligible households have the right to purchase food items such as rice and eggs, and the full amount is received without any deductions.

Every program provided by the government to the community is expected to be used properly and contribute to improving the welfare of families. This can be achieved effectively through good cooperation between the government and the community. The social assistance provided to the community serves as motivation for utilizing and managing all the assistance received, with the hope that in the future, it will raise awareness among individuals whose economic status has improved to extend support to those who are still below the poverty line and in need of assistance.

#### *4.1.4 Bureaucratic Structure*

Every government policy, especially social assistance programs, is bound to create issues. It has been repeatedly emphasized that we, as the sub-district apparatus, only receive data provided by the Social Welfare Office regarding the beneficiaries of social assistance, especially BPNT (Non-Cash Food Assistance) program. Since this assistance is in the form of food items and not cash, some members of the community have protested, questioning why they did not receive it while others did. We have tried to explain the mechanism and have also reported this issue to the Social Welfare Office, but ultimately, the process and procedures have been determined by the central government. Based on the interviews conducted, the structure of bureaucracy for this program has caused problems due to unclear distribution mechanisms and non-compliance with standard operating procedures (SOP). Additionally, the organizational structure of the implementing agency is rigid and does not align with the SOP.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the data from the research and discussions presented regarding the Implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT) in Apela Satu Sub-district, Ranowulu District, Bitung City, the researcher concludes the following:

- The implementation of the BPNT program in Apela Satu Sub-district, Ranowulu District, Bitung City, has not been able to meet the 6T indicators set for BPNT, which greatly influence the success of the program. Out of the 6T indicators, only 5 indicators have been implemented effectively in the field, namely timeliness, administrative accuracy, quality assurance, pricing accuracy, and quantity accuracy. However, the 6th indicator, which is target accuracy, has not been fulfilled.

- The mechanisms for screening and determining the eligible recipients of the Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT) program comply with the regulations.

- The distribution of the Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT) program has been running smoothly and providing benefits to the beneficiaries.

The factors that hinder the implementation of the BPNT program are as follows:

- Some eligible recipients listed in the Unified Social Welfare Data (DTKS) are not included in the BPNT recipient data.

- The selection of eligible recipients (KPM) is determined by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Based on the research findings and discussions on the Implementation of the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT) in Apela Satu Sub-district, Ranowulu District, Bitung City, the following suggestions are proposed:

- Verify and validate the recipient data annually to ensure that the families receiving assistance are truly deserving and that economically stable families are no longer included in the recipient data.

- Provide education and understanding to both current and potential beneficiaries that government programs are aimed at reducing poverty levels and providing welfare to the community.

- The relevant department, in this case, the Social Welfare Office, should create a prioritization scale based on the Unified Social Welfare Data (DTKS) to be sent to the ministry. This ensures that the data of eligible recipient families (KPM) is based on the recommended data from each sub-district.

- There is a need for resource support, cooperation from implementers, inter-organizational communication, and support and involvement from all stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of all programs.

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