

## STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF BENEFICIARY FAMILIES OF THE FAMILY HOPE PROGRAM THROUGH FAMILY DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS IN SEMENDE DARAT TENGAH SUBDISTRICT, MUARA ENIM REGENCY

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**Abstract** This study aims to analyze the capacity building of Beneficiary Families (KPM) of the Family Hope Program (FHP) through the implementation of Family Development Sessions (FDS) in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict, Muara Enim Regency. The background of this research stems from the phenomenon of the high number of KPM who have not yet achieved independent graduation despite having participated in FDS for several years, indicating problems in the process of assistance and capacity building. This research uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. The results of the study show that the capacity building process through FDS takes place in several stages, namely preparation, activity planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and graduation. The implementation of FDS has been carried out in accordance with the guidelines but still faces obstacles, such as limited supporting facilities, the relevance of the material to the needs of KPM, and low participant motivation. The identified capacity building patterns include participatory, experience-based, and problem-based learning approaches that play a role in shaping positive KPM behavior, particularly in relation to education, health, economy, and parenting. However, the effectiveness of capacity building has not been optimal due to internal and external factors, both among facilitators and KPM. This study concludes that FDS contributes to increasing KPM knowledge and changing behavior, but has not been fully able to encourage independence and accelerate graduation. These findings are expected to form the basis for evaluating and improving the implementation of FDS so that it is more effective in empowering poor families towards independence.

**Keywords:** Capacity Building, Family Development Session (FDS), Family Hope Program, Beneficiary Families.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains an issue faced by many developing countries, including Indonesia. One of the Indonesian government's efforts to reduce the number of poor people is by providing cash assistance, better known as the Family Hope Program (FHP). This assistance program is provided directly by the government to the lower-middle class and poor communities. FHP is currently a top priority as the most effective program in the government's efforts to reduce poverty and promote economic equality in Indonesia. Several countries have also implemented a social assistance system for the poor known as Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT). Since 2007, the Indonesian government has been running the FHP social assistance program, and over time, FHP has been deemed effective in reducing poverty, particularly chronic poverty in Indonesia. (Sofianto, A. 2020).

Beneficiary Families (KPM) of the Family Hope Program (FHP) not only receive cash assistance, but as long as they are registered as beneficiary families, they are entitled to monthly assistance provided by social workers at the sub-district level. The assistance activities included in the family hope program are referred to as *Family Development Session* (FDS), In practice, there is learning material delivered by facilitators

covering aspects of education, health, economics, and child education. The main task of a facilitator during FDS activities is to motivate each beneficiary family to maintain their commitment and strive to improve the standard of living for every family receiving benefits from the Family Hope Program. (Triwahyuni, N. 2021).

The achievements of the Family Hope Program are divided into two categories, namely short-term and long-term achievements. In the short term, the cash assistance provided by the government to each Beneficiary Family (KPM) reduces the burden on households in terms of basic needs (direct consumption impact). In the long term, it serves as the main provision for each future generation to achieve a more decent life by providing access to education and health care. (Syahrial, S., & Desrina, T. 2021).

Assistance is provided to beneficiary families to facilitate and accelerate their progress toward independence. FHP membership rules require all beneficiary families to graduate from the program within six years. Graduation for beneficiary families is divided into two parts, namely natural graduation and independent prosperous graduation. Natural graduation is when FHP participants leave because there are no longer any family members who fall into the category of FHP beneficiaries.

Conversely, independent prosperous graduation is when the economic condition of families receiving FHP assistance has improved and they are independent without depending on social assistance, so they no longer meet the criteria as poor people. (Masannang, U. H. D. 2023).

However, the implementation of FHP and FDS in various regions still faces many challenges. One of them is the low level of KPM self-graduation despite having participated in assistance programs for a considerable period of time. This condition also occurs in the Semende Darat Tengah sub-district, Muara Enim district, where there are still many KPM who have not been able to achieve independence after more than six years of receiving FHP assistance. This phenomenon indicates problems in the implementation of the assistance process, the relevance of the material, the availability of facilities, and the participation and readiness of beneficiary families.

Research related to the empowerment of poor communities in urban and rural areas has been conducted extensively. Among them are: Hamzah (2019), Mitang, B. B.(2020). Suwardi, S. (2020), Imran, M. (2022) which analyzes assistance for poor women's groups focused on entrepreneurship-based life skills education and household industry-based life skills training. Meanwhile Faisal, M (2020) Isa, M., (2023) Attempting to analyze the factors causing poverty in urban areas and develop a model for assisting poor communities. Similar research has also been conducted by Sururi (2019) which analyzes the development of creative economic empowerment models for rural communities through assistance for joint business groups (KUBE). Furthermore, research from Wahyudi, T. (2019). who seek to design strategies and develop models for reducing poverty based on social capital and oriented towards aspects of community welfare.

Most of the research conducted analyzes and identifies the factors causing poverty and develops assistance models for poor communities in urban and rural areas. Researchers have not found any studies related to the process of capacity building through *Family Development Session (FDS)* In addition to the beneficiary families of the Family Hope Program, the author also found no studies related to capacity building patterns through Family Development Sessions (FDS) in beneficiary families of the Family Hope Program (FHP). Therefore, the researcher sought to fill this gap and conducted research related to Family Development Sessions (FDS) in the Family Hope Program (FHP). This research is important considering that cash social assistance has been provided to beneficiary families of the Family Hope Program in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict since 2014 and they are still receiving this assistance today. Therefore, researchers need to analyze the capacity building of FHP beneficiary families through Family Development Sessions (FDS) that have been conducted during this period so that they do not create dependency within the community.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

The type of research used in this study is qualitative research. Bogdan dan Taylor (dalam Moleong, 2017:4)

Interpreting qualitative research is a method that can be used in a series of studies whose main objective is to produce data in the form of descriptions, either verbal or written, of the behavior and words of the people being observed.

The qualitative methodology used in this study is a qualitative descriptive research method, which is a scientific study that seeks to provide an overview of the capacity building of beneficiary families of the Family Hope Program through Family Development Sessions (FDS) in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict, Muara Enim Regency.

Data collection in this study was conducted through three main techniques as described by Creswell (2013), namely in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews are used to gather qualitative information intensively through prepared questions, where informants are given the freedom to express their views without pressure. Observation is carried out by going directly to the field to observe the implementation. *Family Development Session (FDS)* in 12 villages in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict, with researchers noting and recording every activity in detail as non-participant observers. Meanwhile, documentation was carried out by collecting written archives and relevant photographs, particularly documentation of beneficiary families' activities during the FDS process.

The data analysis technique in this study was carried out by organizing the data into categories, breaking it down into units, and selecting important information so that the conclusions drawn were easy to understand. Referring to Miles dan Huberman (dalam Saldana, 2014), Data analysis consists of three main stages, beginning with data condensation, which includes the processes of selection, focusing, abstraction, simplification, and transformation of data to ensure that only relevant information regarding the capacity building of beneficiary families of the Family Hope Program through Family Development Session (FDS) activities is analyzed. Next, the reduced data is presented in a concise and easy-to-understand narrative to describe the process and patterns of family capacity building in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict. The final stage is drawing conclusions, where the data from observations and interviews that have undergone reduction and presentation is re-verified with a focus on the research to produce valid and accountable findings.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Strengthening the capacity of Beneficiary Families (KPM) of the Family Hope Program (FHP) through Family Development Sessions (FDS) in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict shows that the program is being implemented with high community participation, but there are still several fundamental weaknesses that affect the effectiveness of empowering poor families. The high attendance rate and enthusiasm of KPM during the FDS indicate that the community has a strong desire to understand the material and improve their own and their families' capacities. However, this enthusiasm has not been fully matched by adequate mentoring, mainly due to the limited competence and structural support received by social workers.

The findings of the study show that FHP facilitators only receive training at the beginning of their assignment and do not

receive regular capacity building. The absence of a continuous training system has a significant impact on the ability of facilitators to master all FDS materials, which cover complex issues such as child education, health and nutrition, financial management, and social protection. This not only reduces the quality of learning, but also hinders the goal of capacity building, which should provide new knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis.

In terms of activity planning, researchers found that facilitators left the development of program ideas and concepts entirely to KPM, with facilitators only providing direction, facilitation, and substantive guidance. Facilitators acted as facilitators who ensured that the planning process was based on real needs, local potential, and appropriate problem analysis. However, in practice, several groups designed programs independently outside of official FDS meetings, so that program development did not go through an evaluation or validation process by facilitators. As a result, many programs are unsustainable or are discontinued midway, such as the rosella dodol program, vegetable gardening activities, and handicrafts made from recycled materials. The main factors contributing to these failures are the lack of potential analysis conducted from the outset and the weak mapping of local needs and resources.

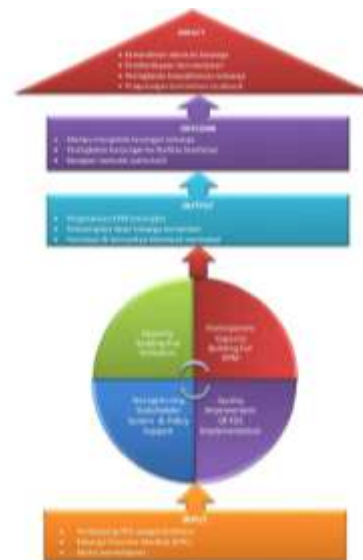
In the context of FDS implementation, the delivery of material went quite well in terms of communication, mainly because the facilitators were local residents who understood the culture and language of the local community. However, the learning atmosphere was not entirely conducive because the number of participants in one FDS session far exceeded the ideal standard. The ratio of facilitators to KPM reached 60-80 people per session, whereas the ideal ratio is around 20-25 people. This imbalance resulted in suboptimal interaction, limited discussion space, and minimal opportunities for facilitators to identify problems individually. In addition, the limited teaching aids, which relied solely on modules and banners, made the delivery of material less varied and less adaptive for participants with visual or practical learning styles.

In terms of economic empowerment, one program was found to have been running well, namely coffee powder production. This program showed great potential in supporting the economic independence of KPM because it was able to go through the planning, production, and marketing stages relatively better than other programs. However, this success could not be sustained due to a lack of follow-up assistance. This situation reflects that KPM's internal motivation is quite high, but it is not matched by adequate external support. KPM even showed interest in learning digital marketing so that their products could reach a wider market, but they did not have access to training to develop these skills.

Overall, the conclusion of this study confirms that capacity building through FDS FHP in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict has not been optimally implemented and does not yet meet the principles of comprehensive capacity building as outlined by UNDP and Morgan. Weaknesses are evident in three main aspects, namely the limited capacity of individual facilitators due to the lack of continuous training, the capacity of the facilitator organization, which is not yet equipped with

strong monitoring and supervision mechanisms, and the weak program support environment due to the lack of stakeholder involvement and the absence of a specific budget allocation for the program and the welfare of facilitators. The lack of structural support has the potential to create unethical practices, including illegal fees, so it is important to provide adequate welfare support for facilitators so that they can work more professionally.

Therefore, a comprehensive reformulation of FHP assistance is needed, starting from the implementation of regular training, strengthening coordination across stakeholders, providing adequate learning facilities, adjusting the ratio of KPM assistants, to involving health, economic, and education experts to support the delivery of FDS material. Only through this kind of integrated approach can FDS activities truly become a tool for sustainable capacity building and promote the socioeconomic independence of FHP beneficiary families. The following is the design of the FHP KPM capacity building model in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict, Muara Enim Regency.



#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based Based on the results of research conducted on Strengthening the Capacity of Beneficiary Families of the Family Hope Program (FHP) Through Family Development Sessions (FDS) in Semende Darat Tengah Subdistrict, it can be concluded that the implementation of the program has shown a fairly high level of participation from beneficiary families (KPM). However, the program's effectiveness has not been optimally achieved due to various limitations in the assistance process. FHP assistants only receive training at the beginning of their assignment without any follow-up guidance, so their technical skills and analytical capacity do not develop continuously. This condition has an impact on the weakness of the assistants in analyzing potential, facilitating program planning, and ensuring the sustainability of empowerment activities. In addition, the program planning process tends to lack adequate guidance,

resulting in many programs not being structured based on clear local needs and resources. Several capacity building programs that have been implemented have even failed. The unfavorable ratio of facilitators to KPM, as well as limited learning media, also hampered the effectiveness of material delivery. Stakeholder involvement in supporting FDS implementation was also very limited, and the lack of welfare funding for facilitators further weakened the long-term effectiveness of facilitation. Overall, capacity building for KPM through FDS has not been implemented holistically and requires institutional strengthening and capacity building for facilitators.

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