



# Implementation Of The 2024 Women's Economic Empowerment Program in West Sumatra Province

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the 2024 Women's Economic Empowerment Program organized by the Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control, and Family Planning (DP3AP2KB) of West Sumatra Province in order to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 (poverty alleviation) and SDG 5 (gender equality). This study used a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The results indicate that the empowerment program is implemented through three main forms: the PEKKA Program, the Women's Economic Empowerment Program, and the Women's Leadership Strengthening Program. However, the program's implementation remains hampered by several significant issues, such as suboptimal communication between relevant parties, limited available resources, low program implementer capacity, and an inflexible bureaucratic structure. In addition, external factors also hinder women's participation, such as lack of family support, unfavorable geographic conditions, and prevailing socio-cultural values. To address these obstacles, the DP3AP2KB has implemented several strategies, including a community-based approach, collaboration with various sectors, and the provision of follow-up training and post-program support. The findings of this study indicate that although program implementation has not yet reached its optimal level, the improvement efforts that have been made demonstrate positive progress in promoting women's economic independence at the local level. This study recommends strengthening coordination between various parties, increasing human resource (HR) capacity, and developing an accurate data-based monitoring system to increase the program's effectiveness and sustainability in the future.

## 1. Introduction

Women's empowerment is a central issue in sustainable and inclusive development, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 (SDG 5), which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Bahardur et al., 2022; Lestari & Kurniawan, 2025). In various countries, including Indonesia, efforts to increase women's roles in the economic sector have become a key component of national strategies for poverty alleviation (SDG 1), job creation, and strengthening family social resilience. In the

context of West Sumatra Province, women's role in development still faces various structural and cultural challenges (Ang & Lai, 2023; Lubis et al., 2023; Widiastuti et al., 2024). Many women, particularly those in vulnerable situations such as female heads of households, survivors of violence, and women from poor and marginalized families, lack adequate access to skills education, capital, and entrepreneurial opportunities (Fitri et al., 2023; Tenri et al., 2024; Zumrotun & Muna, 2025). Therefore, the West Sumatra Province Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population Control, and Family Planning (DP3AP2KB) has

launched various economic empowerment programs as a concrete intervention to increase the capacity and economic independence of women in the region.

One concrete contribution to the sustainable development goals is through the implementation of the West Sumatra Province DP3AP2KB Program, which promotes women's economic independence, which aligns with SDG 1 (Eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere) and SDG 5 (Achieving gender equality and empowering women at all levels) (Indarti et al., 2019; Jannah & Mani, 2025). This program aims not only to improve individual well-being but also to empower women to become key actors in community economic development (Fitri et al., 2024; Panjinegara et al., 2024; Rahayu et al., 2023).

The programs implemented by DP3AP2KB are designed not only to provide technical skills training and economic access, but also to create spaces for women to participate in productive activities that can improve family well-being and boost their contribution to the local economy. However, in practice, the program has not always run ideally. Classic problems such as budget constraints, a lack of qualified human resources for implementing programs, inaccurate program targeting, and weak monitoring and evaluation often act as inhibiting factors. Furthermore, low participant participation, primarily due to dual workloads and minimal family support, is also a significant obstacle.

These issues indicate a gap between policy planning and implementation that requires deeper analysis. In this context, understanding the implementation process is crucial to identify weaknesses that hinder policy effectiveness and develop improvement strategies based on data and field experience.

To explore these issues, this study utilizes George C. Edward III's public policy implementation theory. This theory emphasizes that the success of policy implementation is significantly influenced by four main variables: communication, resources, implementer disposition or attitude, and bureaucratic structure. Communication concerns how policy information is conveyed and understood by

implementers and beneficiaries. Resources include financial aspects, manpower, and supporting infrastructure. Disposition refers to implementers' attitudes, commitment, and understanding of program objectives. Meanwhile, bureaucratic structure is closely related to work procedures, inter-unit coordination, and flexibility in responding to the dynamics of implementation in the field (Setyawan et al., 2021).

By referring to these four variables, this study aims to comprehensively evaluate how the women's economic empowerment program is implemented by the DP3AP2KB of West Sumatra Province as part of efforts to achieve SDGs 1 and 5. This study also examines the obstacles encountered during program implementation and the efforts made to overcome these obstacles. The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of policy implementation studies, while also offering useful practical recommendations for policymakers and program implementers in the field (Edwards, 1980).

With this background, the main focus of this study is directed at the extent to which the implementation of the 2024 Women's Economic Empowerment Program in West Sumatra Province is effective, and how factors such as communication, resources, implementer disposition, and bureaucratic structure influence its success in promoting women's economic independence as part of achieving the SDGs.

## 2. Literature Review

### Policy Implementation

In this study, the author analyzes the research findings by referring to the theoretical framework of public policy implementation proposed by George C. This theory was chosen because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the success or failure of policy implementation, particularly in the context of women's economic empowerment programs (Setyawan et al., 2021).

According to Edward III, there are four important variables that determine the effectiveness of policy implementation: communication, resources, disposition (attitude of implementers), and bureaucratic structure.

These four variables form the basis for analyzing the extent to which the studied policy can be implemented optimally in the field.

By using this approach, the author hopes to uncover the dynamics of policy implementation objectively and in-depth and contribute to the development of policy implementation studies in Indonesia.

Policy implementation is an activity that occurs after a legitimate directive is issued for a policy, encompassing efforts to manage inputs to produce outputs and outcomes for the community.

Therefore, all necessary information must be provided so that they can continue to play an active role in achieving goals.

### **1. Problem Characteristics**

Problem characteristics include the technical difficulty of the problem, the proportion of the target group to the total population, and the scope of the expected behavioral change. Therefore, the nature of the problem will influence the ease of implementing a program. This means that a program is relatively easy to implement if the target group is homogeneous. Conversely, if the target group is heterogeneous, program implementation will be relatively more difficult because the level of understanding of each member of the target group varies. A program will be relatively easy to implement if the target group is not too large. A program aimed at providing knowledge or cognitive support will be easier to implement than a program aimed at changing community attitudes and behavior.

### **2. Policy Characteristics**

Policy characteristics include the clarity of the policy's content, the extent to which the policy has theoretical support, the extent of linkages and support between implementing institutions, the clarity and consistency of the implementing agency, the level of commitment of officials to the policy's objectives, and the extent of access for external groups to participate in policy implementation.

This means that the clearer and more detailed the content of a policy, the easier it will be to implement because it is easier for

implementers to understand and translate into concrete actions.

### **3. The level of commitment of officials to policy objectives.**

### **4. The extent to which external groups have access to participate in policy implementation.**

A program that provides broad opportunities for community involvement receives relatively more support than a program that does not involve the community.

### **5. Policy Environment**

The policy environment consists of the socioeconomic conditions of the community and the level of technological advancement, public support for a policy, the attitudes of constituency groups, and the level of commitment and skills of officials and implementers.

### **6. Socioeconomic conditions of the community and the level of technological advancement.** An open and educated society is more receptive to reform programs than a society that is still closed and traditional. (Pramono, 2020)

Similarly, technological advances will assist in the successful process of program implementation because these programs can be socialized and implemented with the help of modern technology. Constituent groups within the community can influence policy implementation in various ways.

Ultimately, the commitment of implementing officials to realizing the objectives stated in the policy is the most crucial variable. Implementing agency officials must be skilled at prioritizing objectives and subsequently realizing those priorities.

Edward III identified four variables that play a crucial role in achieving successful implementation.

**1. Communication:** This implies that any good deed can be carried out effectively if there is effective communication between the policy program implementer and the target groups. The goals and objectives of the program/policy can be effectively socialized, thus avoiding distortion.

**2. Resources:** Even if the policy content has been communicated clearly and consistently, if the implementer lacks the resources to implement it, implementation will be ineffective. These resources can be human resources, such as

implementer competence and financial resources.

**3. Disposition:** This refers to the character and characteristics of the implementer, such as commitment, honesty, and democratic traits. If the implementer has a positive disposition, they can effectively implement the policy as intended by the policymaker. When the implementer has a different attitude or perspective from the policymaker, the policy implementation process becomes ineffective.

**4. Bureaucratic Structure:** The organizational structure tasked with implementing the policy has a significant influence on policy implementation. Aspects of organizational structure include Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and fragmentation. An organizational structure that is too long will tend to weaken supervision and give rise to red tape, namely complicated and complex bureaucratic procedures, which make organizational activities inflexible (GFallis, 2013).

### The Concept of Empowerment

Sulistiyani (Taufik Yahya, Sukamto Satoto, Usman et al., 2021) explains that, etymologically, empowerment comes from the root word "daya," meaning strength or ability. Based on this definition, empowerment is defined as the process of acquiring power, strength, or ability, and/or providing power, strength, or ability from those with power to those lacking or not yet empowered. Meanwhile, according to Priyono, S. Onny, and Pranarka, A.M.W., empowerment is the process of empowering communities, encouraging or motivating individuals to have the ability or power to determine their own life choices. Empowerment should be aimed at disadvantaged groups or segments of society. In the context of women's empowerment, Nursahbani Katjasungkana, in a discussion with the National Development Strategy Formulation Team (Juslaeni et al., 2024), proposed four indicators of empowerment:

1. Access, in the sense of equal rights to access productive resources within the environment.
2. Participation, namely participation in utilizing limited assets or resources.
3. Control, namely that men and women have equal opportunities to exercise control over the utilization of these resources.

4. Benefits, namely that men and women should both enjoy the results of resource utilization or development together and equally.

Professor Gunawan Sumodiningrat, as quoted by Riant Nugroho, explains that empowerment requires three continuous steps:

1. Participation, meaning that women as the empowered party must be favored over men.
2. Preparation, meaning that empowerment requires women's ability to access, participate, control, and benefit.
3. Protection, meaning providing protection until they can be released.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that empowerment is the process of gaining power, strength, or ability, and/or providing power, strength, or ability from those with power to those who lack or are not yet empowered. (Siti, 2013)

### Women's Empowerment

Women's empowerment is an effort to eliminate women's subordination, including economic rights, reproductive rights, and non-discriminatory legal rights. The Women's Economic Empowerment Framework (Kemitraan Australia-Indonesia untuk Kesetaraan Gender dan Pemberdayaan Perempuan, 2019). This framework divides women's economic empowerment into several types of assets that form the basis of women's power to improve the well-being of themselves, their families, and their communities. These assets include social assets, human assets, capacity/agency assets, financial assets and resources, and supporting assets.

#### 1. Social Assets (Power With)

Social assets emphasize the importance of collective power through women's social relationships, support, and networks. Through interactions with others, women can gain support, information, and new opportunities.

- a) Friends and social networks
- b) Mentors and group members
- c) Relationships with village and district governments/service providers
- d) Relationships with civil society

These social assets strengthen women's solidarity and expand their access to opportunities and social protection.

## 2. Human Assets (Power Within)

Human assets relate to women's individual capacities, including health, education, and self-confidence.

- a) Health (access to health services and information)
- b) Education, literacy, and numeracy
- c) Financial literacy
- d) Knowledge of human rights and the law
- e) Relevant work skills
- f) Self-esteem and self-confidence

By strengthening human assets, women have the ability to develop their potential, make decisions, and become empowered independently.

## 3. Capacity or Agency Assets (Power To)

These assets refer to women's ability to act, make decisions, and change their living conditions.

- a) Participating in family economic decisions
- b) Involvement in community decision-making
- c) Accessing social services and protection
- d) Accessing employment or creating income opportunities
- e) Interacting with markets (employers, institutions, and agencies)

Agencies enable women to become active actors, not just beneficiaries, in economic development.

## 4. Financial Assets and Resources (Control)

These assets relate to ownership, control, and access to tangible economic resources.

- a) Cash and income
- b) Savings and access to loans
- c) Equipment and production inputs (seeds, fertilizer, raw materials)
- d) Livestock and stock (inventory)
- e) Business and market information

With strong financial assets, women can increase their economic independence, expand their businesses, and improve the well-being of their families.

## 5. Supporting Assets

Supporting assets are external factors that enable women to utilize the previous four assets.

- a) Identity cards
- b) Legal frameworks, policies, and rights
- c) Transportation and safety aspects

- d) Time-saving infrastructure
- e) Childcare services

Without these supporting assets, women often face barriers in accessing services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Thus, women's economic empowerment is not only about financial access, but also includes strengthening social, human, and capacity building, as well as structural support to enable women to be empowered sustainably.

## 3. Methods

### 3.1 Study Design

This study adopts a qualitative, descriptive design to examine how the 2024 Women's Economic Empowerment programs in West Sumatra are implemented—specifically PEKKA (Female Heads of Households), the Women's Economic Empowerment program, and Women's Leadership Strengthening—under the provincial DP3AP2KB.

### 3.2 Analytical Lens

Implementation is analyzed using George C. Edwards III's framework—communication, resources, implementer disposition, and bureaucratic structure—which guides the coding of field evidence.

### 3.3 Setting and Participants

The research context is the DP3AP2KB of West Sumatra Province and beneficiary communities involved in the programs. Informants comprise agency officials and female program beneficiaries, selected through purposive sampling to ensure relevance to the implementation process.

### 3.4 Data Collection

Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis of official materials (e.g., guidelines, reports).

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The study employs the Miles & Huberman interactive model—(1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification. Analysis iteratively links field notes, transcripts, and documents to the four Edwards indicators.

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1. Program Implementation Based on George C. Edward III's Theory

To analyze the implementation of this policy, we use George C. Edward III's theory of public policy implementation, which consists of four indicators: communication, resources, implementer disposition, and bureaucratic structure.

#### a. Communication

Communication is a crucial initial element that determines the success of program implementation. In the context of the DP3AP2KB (Regional Development Planning Agency), the program's socialization process for target women has not been optimal. Information is often only conveyed to local government officials or partner institutions, without being effectively disseminated to the community level. This results in not all women being aware of the program's existence and benefits. The lack of communication media that reach remote areas is also a barrier.

#### b. Resources

Program implementation still faces serious resource constraints, both in terms of funding and human resources. Limited budgets prevent the program from reaching all districts/cities. Furthermore, the number and capacity of technical assistance staff are insufficient to provide intensive assistance. Some regions even have only one assistant for several women's groups.

#### c. Implementer Disposition

In general, program implementers demonstrate a strong commitment to implementing the program. However, this enthusiasm is not always accompanied by adequate technical capacity. Many implementers in the field have not received gender-based and sustainable implementation training. This means that the approach taken does not address the root of the problem, particularly those related to social norms and values that hinder women's advancement.

#### d. Bureaucratic Structure

The bureaucratic structure involved in program implementation is considered to still not fully support effective implementation.

Coordination across agencies, both at the provincial and district/city levels, is not yet optimal. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for program implementation tend to be rigid, and activity reporting is not yet integrated with a robust data-based monitoring system. This hinders the process of rapid and accurate program evaluation and improvement.

### 4.2. Obstacles to the Implementation of the Women's Economic Empowerment Program

Although the women's economic empowerment program run by the DP3AP2KB of West Sumatra Province has demonstrated various positive achievements, its implementation is not without significant obstacles. The three main obstacles identified, limited human resources, minimal family support, and geographical and socio-cultural challenges, have a significant impact on the effectiveness of program implementation.

#### 1. Limited Human Resources (HR)

The limited number of competent facilitators is a serious obstacle. Many field implementers lack specific training in gender-based economic empowerment, participatory approaches, or ongoing group capacity building. This results in the quality of mentoring for women's groups remaining technical and limited to short-term training, without in-depth monitoring and evaluation. The success of the program, however, depends heavily on the quality of facilitators who can act as catalysts and motivators for participants.

This situation is exacerbated by the disproportionate ratio of facilitators to the number of target groups. In some districts/cities, one facilitator must handle more than five women's groups, resulting in a lack of frequent visits and individual mentoring. These limitations not only hinder the empowerment process but also have the potential to undermine the enthusiasm and sustainability of program participants' businesses.

#### 2. Lack of Family Support

Family support, especially from partners or male family members, is a crucial factor in the success of women's economic empowerment. However, the reality on the ground shows that many women program participants experience obstacles at the domestic level. This lack of

support takes various forms, ranging from prohibitions on participating in training, restrictions on mobility, to not being given the space to make independent economic decisions.

This reflects the persistence of patriarchal values in some communities in West Sumatra, where women's roles are often constructed as limited to the domestic sphere. This lack of family support leaves women facing a double burden, managing the household and participating in economic activities, which ultimately impacts the consistency and effectiveness of their participation in the program.

### **3. Geographical and Sociocultural Challenges**

West Sumatra's geographical characteristics, consisting of hilly and rural areas, pose a particular challenge to program implementation. Many women's groups live in hard-to-reach areas, with limited road infrastructure and inadequate transportation access. As a result, participants' mobility to training locations or group meetings is limited, often delaying or suboptimal implementation.

Furthermore, sociocultural challenges also play a role. Some communities still uphold traditional values that limit women's participation in public activities, including training or economic endeavors. Women are often considered unsuitable for entrepreneurship or public participation, as this conflicts with their "ideal" role as housewives. These norms discourage some women from actively participating, despite their potential and desire to develop.

#### **4.3 Efforts to Overcome Program Implementation Obstacles**

Facing various obstacles in the implementation of the women's economic empowerment program, the DP3AP2KB of West Sumatra Province did not remain idle. A number of strategies and approaches were implemented to improve the quality of program implementation, increase women's participation, and ensure that economic empowerment goals could be achieved sustainably. Some key efforts that stood out included community approaches, institutional collaboration, and follow-up training and post-program support.

#### **1. Community Approach**

One strategy implemented was the adoption of a community-based approach. Through this approach, program implementation was carried out in a participatory manner in the participants' residential neighborhoods, involving community leaders, women cadres, and local group leaders. The goal was to create an inclusive and comfortable environment for women so they felt connected to the program.

The community approach was considered effective in increasing participant engagement, as they felt they were not working alone but rather part of a collective movement. Furthermore, this approach made the program more adaptable to local social and cultural conditions, thereby minimizing resistance from the community or family.

#### **2. Collaboration with Other Institutions**

DP3AP2KB also expands the scope and quality of its programs through cross-sector collaborations with various institutions, such as other technical agencies (the Cooperatives and SMEs Office, the Industry and Trade Office), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and universities. This collaboration provides added value in terms of resources, networks, and implementation innovation.

Through these partnerships, the training provided is more diverse and tailored to market needs, including training on digital technology, business financial management, and online marketing. Furthermore, universities are involved in program monitoring and evaluation, providing academic-based input to improve the quality of future interventions.

#### **3. Advanced Training and Post-Program Support**

To ensure the sustainability of program outcomes, DP3AP2KB focuses on the post-program phase. Several women's groups are facilitated to participate in advanced training, such as product development, halal certification, and digital literacy training. Furthermore, participants are provided with access to information regarding market opportunities, distribution networks, and capital sources through collaborations with microfinance institutions and cooperatives.

Post-program support is crucial because one of the challenges in economic empowerment is maintaining the sustainability of established businesses. Without continued mentoring, many participants return to their original situation due to limited capital, marketing, or the confidence needed to develop their businesses.

These three efforts demonstrate DP3AP2KB's commitment not only to the initial implementation of the program but also to the process of adaptation, evaluation, and strengthening its long-term impact. This approach aligns with sustainable development principles that emphasize participation, collaboration, and the sustainability of intervention outcomes.

## 5. Conclusion

This research shows that the implementation of the Economic Program for Women by the DP3AP2KB of West Sumatra Province is a strategic step in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 1 (poverty eradication) and SDG 5 (gender equality). This program includes various interventions such as entrepreneurship training, business mentoring, strengthening women's leadership, and access to capital.

However, the program's implementation in the field still faces various challenges. Based on analysis using George C. Edward III's theory, it was found that the program's success was hampered by suboptimal communication aspects, limited resources, constraints on implementer disposition, and an inflexible bureaucratic structure. Furthermore, external factors such as limited human resources, minimal family support for participants, and geographical and socio-cultural barriers exacerbated the complexity of the issues on the ground.

To overcome these obstacles, DP3AP2KB has undertaken various efforts, including community approaches, cross-sector collaboration, and follow-up training and post-program support. These efforts demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that women's economic empowerment does not stop with training, but continues to achieve business independence and sustainability.

Thus, despite implementation shortcomings, this program has made a significant contribution to increasing economic capacity and women's roles in local development. Going forward, institutional strengthening, improving the quality of implementing human resources, and integrating a data-based monitoring and evaluation system are needed to enhance the program's effectiveness and sustainability.

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