



# Public service performance in the distribution of cash assistance for female heads of poor households in Semarang City

Rahadian Auliansyah<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> One Stop Service Department Semarang City, Jl. Sidomulyo 1 No. 29, Semarang City, Central Java 50197, Indonesia.

\*Correspondence: rahadianauliansyah.sstp@gmail.com

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** This paper discusses the performance of public services in the distribution of direct cash assistance/*Bantuan Langsung Tunai* (BLT) for female heads of poor households in Semarang City, focusing on the aspects of planning, implementation, and program impact. **Methods:** The research aims to analyze the effectiveness of the BLT program, evaluate solutions to challenges faced, and formulate recommendations for sustainable improvement. **Findings:** The research results show that thorough and responsive planning, transparent implementation, and innovative solutions can enhance public service performance. The BLT program has a positive impact on empowering female heads of households through economic strengthening and active participation. Semarang City has successfully created a model of successful public service, providing hope for a higher quality future for female heads of households. **Conclusion:** Recommendations include increasing digital literacy and evaluating gender-responsive policies to support inclusive and sustainable development. **Novelty/Originality of this Study:** The study uniquely highlights the specific challenges and successes in the distribution of BLT to female heads of poor households in Semarang City, emphasizing the importance of gender-responsive policies and the empowerment of women. Its originality lies in its detailed focus on planning, implementation, and impact analysis, providing a model for improving public service performance in similar urban settings.

**KEYWORDS:** public service; BLT; female head of household; Semarang City; empowerment.

## 1. Introduction

Indonesia, as a developing country, continues to be committed to overcoming the problem of poverty which is still a serious challenge. One of the policy instruments implemented by the government to respond to this problem is the Direct Cash Assistance/*Bantuan Langsung Tunai* (BLT) Program. This program is designed to provide direct financial assistance to poor families as a concrete step in reducing poverty levels. In this context, the role of women heads of families is very important to pay attention to. Women are often at the forefront of facing economic and social challenges, especially if they lead families. As heads of families, women not only have to carry out their traditional role as family caregivers, but are also faced with the responsibility of managing the assistance they receive from government programs, such as BLT. Therefore, an in-depth

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understanding of how public services perform in distributing BLT to women heads of poor families in Semarang City is very relevant (Umami, 2013).

The city of Semarang, as one of the urban centers in Indonesia, has unique characteristics that complicate the dynamics of poverty. With a high level of urbanization, Semarang City has become an arena for various social and economic challenges. Despite various assistance programs, women heads of poor families in this city are still faced with economic uncertainty, limited access to education and health, as well as a series of other problems that require holistic solutions (Noor, 2014). Women who lead families are a vulnerable group and are often faced with many obstacles. They have to face economic pressures without adequate financial assistance, as well as carrying out dual roles as breadwinners and family caregivers (Rees et al., 2023). Even though various women's empowerment policies and programs have been implemented, there are still significant gaps in women-headed households' access to resources and opportunities. The importance of special attention to women heads of poor families is increasingly evident in the implementation of the BLT Program. This program, although with good intentions, still has challenges in achieving its targets effectively, especially in empowering women (Valentine and Susilowati, 2013).

The involvement of women in decision making regarding the allocation of BLT funds and their understanding of the role of this program in improving family living conditions are critical aspects that need to be analyzed in depth. The COVID-19 pandemic adds complexity to the dynamics of poverty, especially for female heads of families (Tantriana, 2024). The social and economic restrictions implemented to contain the spread of the virus have directly affected their livelihoods. In this context, the distribution of BLT becomes more crucial, but it also raises questions about the extent to which this program can provide adequate economic and social protection for female heads of families in the midst of emergency conditions (Maun, 2020).

Considering that female heads of families have an important role in the sustainability of families and communities, the sustainability of programs such as BLT must be supported by concrete efforts to increase their involvement. This includes a better understanding of women's specific needs in receiving and managing aid, as well as concrete steps to empower them economically and socially (Hilmiana & Iskandar, 2024). Apart from that, the sustainability of the BLT program is also a concern. Administrative challenges in managing fund distribution, ensuring fairness and targeting, and maintaining program integrity are aspects that require ongoing evaluation. In this context, policies that are responsive to the needs of female heads of families need to be implemented to ensure that aid programs truly have a positive and sustainable impact. In line with Indonesia's commitment to gender equality, evaluation of BLT distribution also needs to pay attention to potential gender gaps.

The involvement of women in the decision-making process, the level of participation in the program, and the impact felt specifically by women heads of families are critical indicators for assessing the success of this program in achieving its goals (Zing & Shishkina, 2024). The importance of a holistic approach to improving the welfare of women heads of families involves not only economic aspects, but as well as education, health and social support (Langer et al., 2015). Programs such as BLT must be able to provide an economic boost, but must also be accompanied by efforts to increase women's capacity and understanding of how best to manage the resources they receive.

Programs such as BLT must be able to provide an economic boost, but must also be accompanied by efforts to increase women's capacity and understanding of how best to manage the resources they receive. An in-depth understanding of the conditions of women heads of poor families in Semarang City, especially in the context of BLT distribution, will have significant implications for policy improvements. More efficient management, deeper gender understanding, and broader policy integration to empower female heads of families can be concrete steps in responding to the findings of this research. Although there has been research related to the distribution of BLT (Purnawan et al., 2022), the special focus on women heads of poor families in Semarang City makes this research

unique. Specific city dynamics, social and economic challenges faced by women, as well as in-depth evaluation of program involvement and impact at the local level are important characteristics to understand.

## 2. Methods

This research uses a type of library research with descriptive analysis methods. This approach was chosen because it aims to comprehensively explain the topic discussed, namely the performance of public services in the distribution of the BLT for women heads of poor families in Semarang City (Adlini et.al., 2022). The data collection technique, namely primary data in this research, comes from library sources such as books, journals and e-books which discuss in depth the performance of public services, BLT distribution and related aspects in the context of Semarang City. This primary data provides a strong theoretical basis for the analysis. Secondary data is used as a complement and support for information found in primary data sources. Secondary data sources involve various official documents, reports and statistical data related to the distribution of BLT in Semarang City.

Secondary data will provide quantitative and contextual dimensions that support analysis. Qualitative data analysis involves several steps, namely theme identification where the main themes will be identified from narratives and analysis in primary data sources. These themes cover aspects such as BLT distribution planning, budget allocation, and program impact. The information found will be categorized based on the themes that have been identified. Sorting this data will help determine emerging patterns and detail aspects related to BLT planning and distribution. Creating an analytical framework will help in organizing data. This framework will cover key variables such as planning policies, budget allocations, and socio-economic impacts. Qualitative data will be compared and contrasted to identify similarities, differences, and patterns that emerge in various data sources. This will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topics discussed.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Semarang and basic concepts of the topic

Semarang City is the capital of Central Java Province, Indonesia. Located on the north coast of Java Island, this city has a strategic position as a trade and transportation center. Surrounded by mountains and sea, Semarang offers stunning landscapes and rich cultural diversity. With a heterogeneous population, Semarang City is home to various ethnicities, religions and cultures (Sukmaraga and Hayati, 2011). The people of Semarang are famous for their hospitality and cultural traditions passed down from generation to generation. The economy of Semarang City is driven by the trade, industry and service sectors (Setiadi et.al., 2008). As a major trade center, this city has a busy port and is one of the distribution centers for goods to and from various regions in Indonesia.

The implementation of the BLT Program in Semarang City is based on careful planning. The local government collaborates with relevant institutions to design strategies that suit the needs of the community, especially female heads of families. Distribution of aid is carried out through a transparent and accountable mechanism. BLT beneficiaries are identified based on certain criteria, with a focus on female heads of families who are economically disadvantaged. Assistance is provided periodically in accordance with established provisions.

The Semarang City Government collaborates with the private sector and non-government organizations in implementing the BLT Program. The involvement of the private sector and community organizations increases distribution efficiency, while the participation of non-governmental organizations helps expand the program's reach to wider levels of society. Administrative and bureaucratic processes often become obstacles in distributing aid. Complex administrative steps can slow down the process and increase the risk of errors (Rosalina, 2018). Although efforts have been made to cover all levels of

society, there are still challenges in ensuring that aid actually reaches those in need, especially female heads of families in remote areas. Table 1 shows the population by gender in 2020 to 2022.

Table 1. Population by gender (people) (2020-2022)

Subdistrict	Population by gender (people)					
	Man			Woman		
	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
Mijen	40,520	41,695	42,908	40,386	41,626	42,910
Gunungpati	49,023	49,179	49,341	49,000	49,164	49,333
Banyumanik	70,074	69,891	69,717	72,002	71,798	71,602
Gajahmungkur	27,592	27,396	27,204	28,640	28,461	28,286
Smg Selatan	30,168	29,954	29,744	31,862	31,662	31,468
Candisari	37,232	36,967	36,709	38,224	37,985	37,752
Tembalang	94,453	95,369	96,306	95,227	96,191	97,174
Pedurungan	95,791	95,725	95,667	97,360	97,403	97,458
Genuk	61,884	63,182	64,514	61,426	62,785	64,182
Gayamsari	34,912	34,664	34,421	35,349	35,128	34,913
Smg Timur	32,181	31,952	31,729	34,121	33,907	33,698
Smg Utara	58,051	57,692	57,341	59,554	59,128	58,713
Smg Tengah	26,373	26,186	26,002	28,691	28,510	28,336
Smg Barat	73,130	72,610	72,102	75,749	75,275	74,813
Tugu	16,457	16,515	16,575	16,365	16,433	16,504
Ngaliyan	70,600	70,808	71,025	71,127	71,323	71,528
Semarang City	818,441	819,785	821,305	835,083	836,779	838,670

(BPS Semarang City, 2023)

Challenges related to personal data management and information security are always a concern. Protection of beneficiary data and information security are priorities to prevent misuse. Implementing an integrated information system helps overcome administrative and bureaucratic obstacles. Automated processes increase efficiency in data collection, distribution and reporting. To address inequalities in access, education and training programs were introduced. This includes digital literacy training and skills development that helps beneficiaries better understand and access assistance. Collaboration with the private sector and non-governmental organizations opens up new opportunities. The private sector helps speed up distribution, while non-governmental organizations play an important role in understanding and overcoming local challenges.

Public services refer to a series of activities and services provided by government agencies to meet the needs and interests of society. This concept covers various activities ranging from providing infrastructure to providing social assistance. Public services must be effective, efficient and accessible to all levels of society. The principles of public service include openness, accountability, equality and community participation. Good public services must be transparent in their policies and procedures, responsible for the use of resources, provide equal treatment to all citizens, and involve the community in the decision-making process (Bazarah et al., 2021). Public service performance includes a number of indicators, such as responsiveness, reliability, speed, and ability to meet community needs. Evaluation of public service performance is key in identifying weaknesses and potential improvements so that services can be more effective and beneficial to society.

The BLT is a form of social assistance given directly to individuals or families in need in the form of cash. The BLT program aims to reduce poverty levels and provide direct support to those in difficult economic situations. Table 2 shows the number of poor people in Semarang City in 2021 to 2023. The BLT concept includes distributing funds evenly to beneficiaries. The main aim of the BLT program is to improve the welfare of economically disadvantaged people. The target of this program is generally poor families, including

women who lead families. BLT is expected to provide significant financial support and empower beneficiaries to overcome conditions of poverty.

Table 2. Number of poor population (2021-2023)

Semarang City	Number of poor population (Thousand people)		
	2021	2022	2023
	84.45	79.87	80.53

(BPS Semarang City, 2023)

The sustainability of the BLT program is highly dependent on effectiveness in planning, allocating budgets and managing the program as a whole. Factors such as transparency, community participation, and understanding the needs of beneficiaries are key to maintaining the sustainability and positive impact of this program. The implementation of BLT in Semarang City includes aspects such as planning, budget allocation and distribution processes. Evaluation of the implementation of BLT is important to understand the extent to which this program has succeeded in achieving its goals and providing benefits to women heads of poor families. Various challenges may be faced in distributing BLT in urban environments. Administrative challenges, such as validation of beneficiary data and selection of beneficiary criteria, are critical in maintaining program sustainability and accountability. The positive impact of the BLT program is expected to include increasing people's welfare and access to basic needs. Meanwhile, the implications of this program may involve social and economic changes in beneficiary families (Iping, 2020).

In BLT distribution, a gender approach is important to understand the role of women as beneficiaries and fund allocation managers. This approach emphasizes gender equality, women's participation, and the impact of programs on their lives. The BLT program can be an instrument to empower women heads of poor families. By providing control over the allocation of funds, women can have a more active role in managing resources and increasing their empowerment in the social and economic environment.

The public service performance evaluation model involves measuring responsiveness, efficiency and program impact. Using appropriate indicators will help identify areas that need improvement in the implementation of BLT distribution in Semarang City. Community participation in evaluating public service performance is a crucial element. Involving the community in the evaluation process can provide a more holistic and accurate view of the sustainability and success of the BLT program. Female heads of families often face multiple challenges in carrying out their roles (Ernawati, 2013). In addition to their responsibilities as family leaders, they can also experience difficulties in accessing economic resources, education, and health services. In the context of BLT distribution, understanding the special role of female heads of families is important to ensure that social assistance programs are effective and relevant.

The BLT program has the potential to empower female heads of families. By providing direct control over the allocation of funds, women can play a more active role in managing their family's financial resources. Women's empowerment is not only limited to the economic aspect, but can also spread to the social dimension and family welfare. In the context of public services, the participation of women heads of families in decision making regarding the BLT program is a determining factor for success. By actively involving them, public services can be more responsive to the needs and aspirations of the families concerned.

Public service responsiveness includes the ability to respond and meet community needs effectively and efficiently. In the distribution of BLT, service responsiveness can be seen from the extent to which the program can respond to the urgent and deep needs of women heads of families. The reliability of the BLT distribution process involves accuracy in verifying beneficiary data, as well as transparency in all stages of distribution. This reliability ensures that social assistance reaches those who need it appropriately. Efficiency in BLT budget allocation is an important performance indicator. An efficient

allocation process ensures that available funds are used optimally to provide maximum impact for beneficiary families. The positive impact of BLT distribution can be measured by increasing community welfare. This indicator includes positive changes in access to education, health and economic well-being of beneficiary families. Community participation is a performance indicator that reflects the extent to which the BLT program involves citizen participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation process. Good participation can increase accountability and program sustainability (Damanik and Marom, 2016).

### *3.2 BLT public service performance*

Implementation of the BLT program is a critical stage in ensuring effective public service performance and can have a positive impact on women heads of poor families in Semarang City. It is at this implementation stage that various policies, regulations and procedures are realized, and direct interaction between public service providers and beneficiaries occurs. Within the framework of BLT public service performance, the implementation of this program involves a number of crucial elements. Implementation of the BLT program begins with careful planning.

This planning includes determining program objectives, identifying beneficiaries, determining eligibility criteria, and determining fund distribution mechanisms (Tsania et al., 2023). The importance of good planning is so that the program can run according to the needs and goals that have been set. Planning must take into account the social and economic context in Semarang City, as well as consider the long-term sustainability of the program. An in-depth understanding of the challenges faced by female heads of families is the basis for designing effective implementation strategies. The performance of BLT public services can also be measured from the efficiency of budget and resource allocation. An efficient budget allocation process ensures that available funds actually reach those who need them. In this context, transparency and accountability in budget use are key. Human resources involved in implementing BLT must also be adequate and trained. A qualified workforce will increase effectiveness and efficiency in the distribution process, and can provide better support to beneficiaries.

The sustainability of the BLT program depends on the accuracy of beneficiary data. Therefore, program implementation must include a careful data verification and validation process. This process involves checking identity, economic conditions, and other predetermined eligibility factors. The sustainability and accountability of the BLT program is highly dependent on the accuracy of data verification. If beneficiary data is inaccurate, the risk of unequal distribution and the tendency for misuse of funds may increase (Panusunan, 2022). The distribution mechanism for BLT funds must be designed to suit the needs and characteristics of the beneficiary community. The distribution process must be clear, transparent, and ensure that funds actually reach those who need them.

The performance of BLT public services can also be measured by the extent to which the community is involved in the implementation process. Community involvement can increase transparency, accountability and program acceptability. Female heads of families must be empowered to participate in decision making related to BLT distribution. A participatory approach allows beneficiaries to have a voice in the implementation process, so that the program is better suited to the needs and realities of the community. In addition, involving the community in monitoring and evaluation can help detect potential problems and improve program performance. The performance of BLT public services can be assessed through an effective monitoring and evaluation system.

This process must be carried out periodically to assess the extent to which the program achieves the stated objectives. Monitoring involves ongoing monitoring of program implementation, including evaluation of service quality, speed of distribution, and program impact on beneficiary welfare. Evaluations provide a more in-depth picture of program effectiveness and can form the basis for necessary improvements. Implementation of the BLT Program is the core of public service performance in the

context of distribution of social assistance to women heads of poor families in Semarang City. Careful planning, efficient budget and resource allocation, accurate data verification, appropriate fund distribution mechanisms, community involvement, and a good monitoring and evaluation system are key elements that determine the success of this program. The involvement and empowerment of women heads of families in every stage of implementation is also important so that the program can have a sustainable positive impact. Through good implementation, the BLT program can be an effective instrument in improving welfare and empowering women heads of poor families in Semarang City. By considering these aspects, the performance of BLT public services can be measured by the real impact produced in improving the social and economic conditions of beneficiary families.

The speed of distribution of the BLT is a very important indicator of public service performance. In the context of BLT distribution for women heads of poor families in Semarang City, the speed of distribution can be measured from a number of aspects which include response to urgent needs, efficiency of the distribution process, and speed in reaching target beneficiaries. The performance of BLT public services must be responsive to the urgent needs of women heads of families. A responsive system is able to identify and respond to emergency or urgent situations quickly.

This involves the ability to provide assistance in the shortest possible time after the need is detected. Timeliness in responding to emergency situations such as natural disasters or economic crises is an indicator of success in improving the welfare of beneficiary communities. For example, in an emergency, the speed of BLT distribution can mean the difference between a quick recovery and a greater impact on vulnerable families. Efficiency in the BLT distribution process is very important to ensure that social assistance reaches beneficiaries in an optimal time. An efficient distribution process includes stages of data verification, budget management, and fund distribution mechanisms. Each stage must be organized in such a way that it does not hinder the speed of distribution. The role of information technology, such as integrated database systems and digital payment applications, can increase the efficiency of the distribution process. With this technology, data verification can be done quickly, and fund transfers can be made directly to beneficiaries. Sustainability of the technology and systems used in BLT distribution will help increase speed and accuracy (Mizanullah et al., 2023).

The speed of BLT distribution can also be measured by how quickly this program can reach the target beneficiaries. The process of identifying and validating beneficiaries must be carried out quickly without sacrificing accuracy. Any delay in reaching targets can mean delays in providing assistance to families who need it. This aspect of speed is crucial, especially in emergency situations or unstable economic conditions. A BLT program that is responsive and fast in reaching targets can provide better support for female heads of families to overcome economic and social challenges.

The affordability of BLT services includes the extent to which this program can be accessed by women heads of poor families in Semarang City. Affordability involves geographic, economic, and social aspects that can influence women's accessibility and participation in the BLT program. Geographic affordability includes the extent to which female heads of households can access BLT services based on their geographic location. In an urban context, this aspect may involve the presence of easily accessible distribution centers, efficient public transportation, and the selection of locations that minimize access barriers.

In rural areas, geographic affordability can be an additional challenge. Long distances from distribution centers, poor road conditions, and limited transportation infrastructure can hinder women-headed families' access to the BLT program. Therefore, a distribution strategy that takes into account the diversity of geographic conditions needs to be designed. The economic affordability aspect is related to the extent to which the BLT program is accessible to female heads of families from a financial perspective. Although this program is aimed at poor communities, the costs associated with participation, such

as transportation costs or administrative costs, can be a barrier. Economic affordability is also related to fair and equal distribution policies.

The BLT program must ensure that all female heads of families who meet the eligibility criteria can access social assistance without discrimination or financial barriers. Social and cultural affordability includes the extent to which the BLT program is accessible to female heads of families from various levels of society and cultural backgrounds. This aspect involves understanding social norms, cultural values, and social structures that can influence women's participation in the BLT program. This program must be designed taking into account the cultural and social diversity in Semarang City (Pramanik, 2020).

Effective communication efforts, including the use of local languages and culturally sensitive approaches, can improve program affordability and increase participation of female heads of household. The quality of BLT services covers various aspects that determine the extent to which this program can provide real benefits for women heads of poor families in Semarang City. Service quality involves a number of factors, including data accuracy, transparency, responsiveness, and program sustainability. Data accuracy is the foundation of BLT service quality. Accurate beneficiary data is the basis for ensuring that social assistance reaches those who need it (Iqbal, 2008).

Data verification and validation processes must be carried out carefully and continuously updated to reflect changes in the economic and social conditions of beneficiaries. Service quality is also related to the level of transparency in the entire BLT distribution process. Transparency includes openness to budget allocation mechanisms, eligibility criteria, and fund distribution procedures. The community, including female heads of families, must have easy access to information regarding programs, objectives and benefits that can be obtained. Responsive BLT service is an important indicator in measuring its quality.

Responsiveness includes the extent to which the program can respond to changing needs and challenges faced by female heads of families. A system that can respond quickly to input, questions or complaints will increase public satisfaction and trust in the program. Service quality is also reflected in program sustainability. The BLT program must be designed by considering aspects of financial sustainability, policy and community support. The sustainability of the program ensures that the benefits provided can last in the long term, providing a sustainable positive impact for female heads of families and society in general. The performance of public services in the distribution of the BLT for women heads of poor families in Semarang City can be measured from various aspects, including speed of distribution, affordability of services, and quality of services. Speed of distribution includes response to urgent needs, efficiency of the distribution process, and speed of reaching target beneficiaries. Affordability of services involves geographic, economic, social and cultural accessibility. Meanwhile, service quality includes data accuracy, transparency, responsiveness and program sustainability. The BLT program can be designed and implemented more effectively, so that it has a positive impact on women heads of poor families and the people of Semarang City as a whole. The combination of speed of distribution, affordability of services, and quality of service will form optimal public service performance, creating a solid basis for sustainable development of community welfare.

### *3.3 Challenges in public service of the BLT*

The main challenge in the administration and bureaucracy of BLT public services is its administrative complexity. The process of planning, budget management, and distribution of funds involves many stages and rules. Complicated administration can slow down distribution speeds and increase the risk of data errors or inaccuracies. Institutional efficiency is also a key factor in administrative challenges. Inefficient bureaucracy can hinder rapid response to urgent needs and increase administrative costs. Simplifying administrative processes and cutting unnecessary bureaucracy are important steps to



improve the performance of BLT public services (Jannah, 2023). A serious challenge in public service administration is the risk of corruption and abuse of authority.

In the distribution of BLT, interactions between administrative parties and beneficiaries can create opportunities for corrupt practices. Strict supervision and transparency mechanisms need to be implemented to address this risk. Women heads of poor families often experience unequal access to BLT public services. Several factors such as lack of formal education, limited access to information, and discriminatory social norms can be obstacles to women's participation in the program.

This challenge requires an inclusive approach to ensure that all women can access and benefit from the BLT program. A data verification process that is not gender sensitive can result in discrimination against female heads of families. Eligibility criteria that do not consider women's roles and responsibilities in the family may ignore their special needs. This challenge requires a gender-oriented approach in planning and implementing BLT programs. Inequality is also reflected in women's participation in decision making regarding the BLT program. Limited access for women in decision-making spaces can reduce program effectiveness. This challenge needs to be addressed through women's empowerment, active involvement in decision processes, and ensuring balanced gender representation.

The main challenge in terms of social factors is the stigma associated with receiving BLT. Some female heads of families may be reluctant to receive assistance for fear of being shunned or considered a burden by the local community. Outreach and education efforts need to be undertaken to overcome this stigma and ensure that beneficiaries feel respected and integrated into society. Social factors also include limitations in the social networks of female heads of families. Those who do not have access to a strong social network may face difficulties in getting information about the BLT program or in getting support from the surrounding community.

Increasing social network access and support can help overcome these challenges. Cultural norms that inhibit women's participation in BLT public services are also a challenge. Some cultures may place women in traditional roles that limit their access to social assistance programs. Efforts to change norms that inhibit women need to be implemented through a culturally sensitive approach (MacArthur et al., 2022). The main economic challenge is the economic instability of beneficiary families. Although BLT aims to help poor families, economic factors such as fluctuating prices of basic necessities and precarious work can prevent families from achieving economic sustainability. The BLT program needs to be integrated with sustainable economic policies.

Economic challenges are also related to unequal access of female heads of households to education and training. Limited skills and knowledge can be an obstacle in increasing women's economic capacity. Education and training programs integrated with BLT can help overcome these challenges and provide better economic opportunities. Economic inequality also includes the risk of dependence on social assistance (Rosfadhila et al., 2011). If the BLT program is not integrated with a broader poverty alleviation strategy, there is a risk that beneficiaries become too dependent on social assistance in the absence of long-term economic development efforts. This challenge highlights the importance of supporting initiatives that promote economic independence.

The challenges in the BLT public services for women heads of poor families in Semarang City are very complex and involve administrative, gender, socio-cultural and economic aspects. Solutions to these challenges require a holistic approach involving cross-sector coordination, active community participation, and deep policy reform. By understanding and addressing these challenges, service.

### *3.4 Impact of the BLT program*

The BLT program has had a significant impact on female heads of families in Semarang City, not only in the economic aspect but also in the fields of education, health and social change (Akib and Risfaisal, 2015). One of the most striking positive impacts of the BLT

program is increasing access for female heads of families to economic resources. By receiving direct assistance, these women can have greater access to additional income that can be used to meet basic family needs, such as food, clothing and shelter.

The BLT program can provide encouragement for income diversification. Some female heads of households may use this assistance to start small businesses or to improve their skills through training and education. In this way, the BLT program can be a catalyst for increasing the economic competitiveness of women in society. By providing direct assistance to female heads of families, the BLT program can play a role in reducing gender economic inequality. Providing women with access to economic resources helps overcome economic disparities that women may experience compared to men. Thus, this program not only has an impact at the household level but also at the wider community level.

A positive impact on education is increasing access for children of female heads of families to education. With direct assistance, families have more resources to finance educational costs, such as school fees, books and other supplies. This has the potential to increase children's participation and completion rates in formal education. The BLT program can also increase access of female heads of families to health services. With more resources available, these women can afford health costs, afford medications, and access necessary health services. This has a positive impact on the overall well-being and health of the family. The impact of the BLT program on health knowledge cannot be ignored either. Through this program, female heads of families can receive information and training related to health, such as nutrition, sanitation and healthy lifestyles. This increase in knowledge has the potential to change health behavior in families, establishing healthier lifestyles.

The BLT program can be a driver of social change by empowering women's roles in the family. By providing direct assistance to female heads of families, society can see women as agents who are able to manage and support their families. This can bring changes in society's perception of women and their role in the social context. The impact of social change can also be seen in changes in gender norms. The BLT program can help overcome norms that inhibit women's active participation in economic and social life. By providing opportunities and resources to women, this program can pave the way for changes to more inclusive gender norms. The most profound impact may lie in increasing women's self-confidence and empowerment. Through the BLT program, female heads of families can feel more confident in managing family finances, making decisions, and contributing to society. This empowerment not only creates individual change but also change at the societal level.

The BLT program has had a very positive impact on female heads of families in Semarang City. By increasing access to economic, educational, and health resources, as well as creating positive social change, this program makes a significant contribution to improving the well-being of women and their families. A deeper understanding of these impacts is important in developing more effective and sustainable policies to improve the overall well-being of society.

### *3.5 Improving service performance*

Improving service performance in the distribution of the BLT for women heads of poor families in Semarang City requires a series of holistic efforts. In this context, technological innovation, community involvement, training and capacity strengthening, as well as the formulation of gender-responsive policies are the main pillars for achieving optimal service performance. Technological innovation can be implemented through the use of applications and information systems in distributing BLT. Mobile apps can make it easier for beneficiaries to register, access information, and report problems.

Integrated information systems can help monitor and manage data more efficiently, reduce the risk of administrative errors, and increase transparency. The introduction of digital payment technology can speed up the BLT distribution process. Direct payments via e-wallet applications or bank transfers can reduce the risk of losing funds and ensure that

aid reaches beneficiaries on time. This also minimizes physical involvement and reduces the potential for data leaks or inaccuracies.

To ensure the successful implementation of technological innovation, training is needed for administrative staff, beneficiaries and the general public. This training should include the use of applications, information systems and digital payment technologies. Community empowerment through digital literacy will increase the effectiveness and acceptance of this technology (Astheria and Kaja, 2021). Community involvement can be increased through the establishment of community involvement forums. This forum can be a forum for female heads of families and community members to convey ideas, input and problems related to the BLT program.

Organizers can use this forum to explain program procedures, listen to community aspirations, and design solutions together. A participatory approach is the key to improving service performance. In program planning, female heads of families must be actively involved in determining their needs. This approach will ensure that the program is designed according to the actual context and needs from the perspective of the community concerned (Ratu, 2022). Establishing women's consultative groups can increase engagement and empowerment. This group can provide a platform for female heads of families to share experiences, learn from each other, and provide direct input to program organizers. Empowerment through consultative groups can create an inclusive and supportive environment.

Strengthening the capacity of administrative staff involved in BLT distribution is very important. Administrative and technical training will increase efficiency in program management, data processing and reporting. Improved technical expertise will also minimize the risk of errors in aid delivery. Financial management skills training needs to be given to female heads of families. Improving their understanding of financial management can help them manage aid more effectively, allocate funds wisely, and build family financial resilience. Strengthening the capacity of program supervisors can be a key step in increasing accountability and transparency.

Training program supervisors in monitoring, evaluating and handling community input can improve the quality and integrity of BLT program implementation. Developing gender-responsive policies requires in-depth analysis of the impact of policies on female heads of families. Policy design must take into account women's special vulnerabilities and needs. This includes recognition of women's dual role as household managers and program beneficiaries. Preparing gender responsive policies must also include handling cases of gender discrimination.

Mechanisms must be created to handle complaints or problems related to discrimination that female heads of households may experience during program implementation. This could include the creation of an independent agency to respond to and resolve these cases. Policies must promote equal access and participation of female heads of families in various aspects of life. This includes equal access to education, employment, and health services. Policies should also support women's participation in decision-making processes that affect them.

Efforts to improve service performance in the distribution of the BLT for women heads of poor families in Semarang City require the integration of technological innovation, community involvement, training and capacity strengthening, as well as the preparation of gender-responsive policies. Through this holistic approach, it is hoped that the BLT program can become more effective, efficient and inclusive, so that it can have a significant impact on the welfare of female heads of families and society as a whole.

#### **4. Conclusions**

In an effort to improve the welfare of women heads of poor families, the BLT Program in Semarang City has become an important milestone. This research comprehensively analyzes public service performance in BLT distribution, highlighting several key aspects involving planning, implementation, and impact on female heads of households at the local

level. Careful plans and planning are the main foundation for program success. By understanding the local context and characteristics of female heads of families, the Semarang City government has been able to design a BLT program that is responsive to the needs and challenges faced by the target group.

This effort is in line with the concept of public services that focus on beneficiaries. The implementation of the BLT program in Semarang City reflects transparency and inclusiveness. Through clear distribution mechanisms and participation from the private sector and non-governmental organizations, aid distribution reaches targets more effectively. The use of technology, such as applications and information systems, has made a significant contribution to efficiency and accuracy in distribution. Despite challenges such as administrative obstacles, unequal access and data security, the Semarang City government has succeeded in finding innovative solutions. The use of integrated information systems, education and training programs, and strategic partnerships are key steps in overcoming obstacles that arise during implementation. The positive impact of the BLT program can be seen in empowering female heads of families.

They not only receive financial assistance but are also empowered through training and involvement in decision making. This creates an environment where women can manage family finances more wisely and contribute to the development of society as a whole. Despite positive achievements, there is potential for further improvement. Increasing digital literacy, strengthening participatory mechanisms, and regular evaluation of gender-responsive policies can be a focus for increasing program effectiveness.

This recommendation can help the Semarang City government in maintaining and improving the performance of public services in BLT distribution. By combining these elements, the City of Semarang succeeded in creating a successful public service model in the distribution of BLT to women heads of poor families. This success is not only reflected in the achievement of distribution targets, but also in the positive changes seen in the level of welfare of women and their families. Optimal public service performance in the distribution of BLT in Semarang City gives hope for a better quality future for female heads of families. Through a continuous commitment to improving programs, and by utilizing learning from existing challenges and solutions, the City of Semarang can become a pioneer in inclusive and sustainable development.

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### **Author Contribution**

R.A was responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data curation, and formal analysis of this study. Additionally, R.A wrote the original draft and performed all subsequent review and editing of the manuscript.

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Not available.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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### Biographies of Author

**Rahadian Auliansyah**, One Stop Service Department Semarang City, Jl. Sidomulyo 1 No.29, Semarang City, Central Java 50197, Indonesia.

- Email: [rahadianauliansyah.sstp@gmail.com](mailto:rahadianauliansyah.sstp@gmail.com)
- ORCID: N/A
- Web of Science ResearcherID: N/A
- Scopus Author ID: N/A
- Homepage: N/A