



## Direct cash assistance: is a solution or a new problem of poverty

**Willya Achmad**

Universitas Pasundan

[willyaachmad@unpas.ac.id](mailto:willyaachmad@unpas.ac.id)

---

**Info Artikel :**

Diterima :

8 Februari 2024

Disetujui :

16 Februari 2024

Dipublikasikan :

25 Maret 2024

---

**ABSTRAK**

*Although BLT has become one of the main instruments in social development policies in various countries, there is still ongoing debate regarding its effectiveness in reducing long-term poverty. This research aims to investigate the effectiveness and impact of direct cash assistance (BLT) as a strategy for overcoming poverty. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The research results show that Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) has an important role in helping meet the basic needs of vulnerable and needy communities. This program provides direct financial support to those who are economically marginalized, such as poor community groups. However, research also highlights several risks associated with implementing BLT, such as over-reliance, lack of oversight, and potential inflation risks. Therefore, research emphasizes the importance of continuous evaluation and improvement in the implementation of the BLT program so that it can provide a more sustainable impact in overcoming poverty and improving the welfare of society as a whole.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Direct Cash Assistance, Poverty, Community Welfare, Social Programs, Community Empowerment*



©2022 Penulis. Diterbitkan oleh Arka Institute. Ini adalah artikel akses terbuka di bawah lisensi Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial 4.0 International License.  
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

## INTRODUCTION

Poverty, which is still a serious problem in Indonesia, is often caused by low levels of education and a lack of work ethic in several regions (Ishatono & Raharjo, 2016). This condition is further exacerbated by the weakening of the economy, which has an impact on increasing the number of layoffs (PHK). As a result, poverty rates are increasing because many individuals have difficulty meeting their basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, education and health (Putri & Nurwati, 2021).

To overcome the problem of poverty, the government has implemented a program policy of providing cash assistance to poor people, especially those living in rural areas. This program aims to provide financial support to those in difficult economic conditions, so that they can better meet their basic needs (Ardiyanto & Prabawati, 2021). It is hoped that cash assistance can help ease the burden of life and provide opportunities for poor people to gradually improve their welfare. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of the program still needs to continue to be evaluated so that it can have a significant impact in reducing poverty levels in Indonesia (Taufan, 2022).

In many cases, direct cash assistance (BLT) has proven to be an effective instrument in providing social protection to vulnerable groups in society (Iping, 2020). By allocating resources directly to individuals or families in need, BLT allows them to meet their basic needs, such as food, health care, and education. Thus, BLT not only provides financial assistance, but also facilitates their access to important services that can improve their quality of life (Putra et al, 2023).

By prioritizing BLT, the government and related institutions have the opportunity to significantly reduce poverty levels in Indonesia. By providing direct assistance to vulnerable groups, such as informal workers, small farmers, or poor families, the government can help create a strong social protection network (Lubis et al, 2022). In addition, by increasing access to health and education services, BLT can contribute to improving the overall welfare of

society. This can also strengthen social ties in society, because of the sense of solidarity and care between residents that is built through these aid programs. Thus, BLT is not only a solution to overcome poverty, but also an instrument to strengthen the social and economic foundations of society (Pratama & Chandra, 2022).

Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) is a government program that aims to provide financial assistance to the poor and vulnerable, with the main aim of helping them meet their basic needs. The form of assistance provided can be in the form of cash, vouchers, or even basic necessities (Susantyo et al, 2020). As an important social net strategy, BLT has a significant role in improving community welfare. This is because many BLT recipients are unable to meet their basic and health needs without this assistance. With BLT, they can access health services, education and fulfill other basic needs that may not have been affordable before (Firmansyah & Fanida, 2022).

The importance of BLT in reducing poverty can also be seen from its impact in helping people get out of the cycle of poverty. By receiving this assistance, they have greater access to the resources needed to improve their economic and social conditions (Purwanto et al, 2013). BLT can provide the initial push needed for individuals or families to start a small business, access better education, or even improve their overall quality of life (Habibullah, 2011). Therefore, BLT is not just financial assistance, but is also an investment in improving welfare and reducing social disparities in society.

When the Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) program is implemented on target and managed efficiently, the positive impact is very significant in increasing the economic resilience of the community. By ensuring that aid is actually used to meet basic needs, such as food, education and health care, BLT can provide much-needed assistance to the vulnerable (Loho et al, 2023). Apart from that, with additional funds from BLT, people have better purchasing power, which in turn can spur local economic growth. Through higher consumption, especially in economic sectors related to basic goods, BLT can create a more dynamic economic circle, providing benefits not only to direct recipients of aid, but also to the wider community (Kharisma, 2023).

This research aims to examine whether direct cash assistance (BLT) is an effective solution in overcoming poverty or instead becomes a new problem that deepens economic inequality. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of BLT as an instrument in poverty eradication policies. Thus, the results of this research can provide valuable guidance for the government and related institutions in designing and implementing BLT programs that are more effective and able to reduce economic inequality. Apart from that, it is also hoped that this research can increase public awareness of the importance of social support in fighting poverty and stimulate further discussion about alternative strategies that can be implemented to improve the welfare of society at large.

## **METHOD**

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive method with the aim of providing an overview, analyzing and understanding the phenomenon being investigated. A qualitative approach allows researchers to explore and understand phenomena in real life contexts, with a focus on understanding what happens, why it happens, and how the process occurs (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). Descriptive methods are used to provide a comprehensive picture of the subject or object of research, such as individuals, institutions, groups, or society, based on observed facts. Descriptive research aims to create a systematic, factual and accurate description of the phenomenon under study, including facts, properties and relationships between these phenomena. In collecting data, this research uses library research by utilizing various literary sources such as books, journals, magazines and previous research reports (Yulianah, 2022). Through literature studies, researchers can obtain the information needed to

develop appropriate research techniques, so that it is hoped that this research can provide an original and meaningful contribution to the understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) has a very vital role in the context of modern social policy, which is reflected in its diversity of objectives. One of its main goals is to eradicate poverty. By providing additional resources in the form of cash to recipients, it is hoped that they will have greater access to their basic needs. BLT is also often used as a means to increase access to education, especially for children from low-income families. This assistance can be used to pay educational costs, buy school supplies, or reduce the financial burden on families in supporting their children's education (Akib & Risafaizal, 2015).

Apart from that, BLT can also support recipients' access to health services. This includes paying for medical care, purchasing medications, or providing incentives for routine health check-ups. With BLT, it is hoped that recipient communities can gain easier access to the health services needed to maintain the health of themselves and their families (Rosfadhila et al, 2011). Lastly, BLT also acts as a social protection tool for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, or refugees. This assistance helps them overcome their vulnerabilities and improve their quality of life. In addition, in the context of an economic crisis or emergency situation, BLT can function as an economic stimulus that stimulates local economic growth. By providing additional purchasing power to the public, BLT can drive greater economic activity and provide encouragement for rapid economic recovery (Lendriyono, 2022).

Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) can be seen as one of the government's initiatives in providing assistance to groups of people who are classified as disadvantaged or poor. By providing cash assistance directly to recipients, BLT aims to provide financial support that can help meet their basic needs. Implementation was carried out quickly, where cash assistance was directly distributed to the communities targeted by the program. BLT is designed to help prevent possible declines in welfare due to economic problems, as well as provide temporary financial protection to those who need it. Even though it is temporary, BLT is implemented in certain situations where direct intervention is needed to respond to economic conditions or crisis situations that affect community welfare (Surianti et al, 2023).

In addition, it is important to note that the implementation of BLT does not only focus on providing monetary assistance, but also considers other aspects that affect the welfare of the recipient community. These programs are often designed to take into account diverse basic needs, such as education and health, thereby having a broader impact in improving the social and economic conditions of recipients. Even though it is temporary, BLT has a significant role in providing direct assistance to people in need, as well as the government's efforts to maintain social and economic stability in difficult times (Kewo & Kodoatie, 2022).

Along with changing times, the government's BLT program is experiencing development with the emergence of various types, especially starting in 2022, such as

1. Wage Subsidy BLT, intended for workers with salaries below IDR 3.5 million/month or adjusted to the value of the Provincial Minimum Wage (UMP)
2. Village Fund BLT is prioritized for underprivileged families in villages.
3. BLT UMKM, intended for 12 million Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The amount of BLT UMKM that will be disbursed is IDR 600 thousand.
4. Pre-Employment Card Program, the Pre-Employment Card Program is a training assistance program provided to job seekers, workers/laborers affected by layoffs, or small entrepreneurs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. Basic Non-Cash Assistance (BPNT), Pre-Employment Card Program is a training assistance program provided to job seekers, workers/laborers affected by layoffs, or small entrepreneurs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. BLT Covid-19, is aimed at helping workers in the informal sector who are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
7. BLT for natural disasters is intended to help victims of natural disasters meet their living needs.

Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) must be given priority in social networks because of its vital role in helping vulnerable and needy people. As an effective policy instrument, BLT provides direct financial support to economically marginalized groups, helping them meet basic needs such as food, health care and education. Prioritization of BLT also ensures that the government can provide a quick response to crisis situations or economic instability that affect people's welfare. By providing direct access to financial resources, BLT can be a powerful safety net for individuals and families threatened by poverty or economic hardship, providing hope and the possibility of improving their living conditions.

As for why BLT must be a priority in social networks because it has an important role in helping vulnerable and needy people, this is because, firstly, Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) offers direct financial assistance to groups of people who are classified as disadvantaged or poor, with the main aim of helping them fulfill basic needs. By distributing funds directly to recipients, BLT provides an opportunity for individuals and families in difficult economic conditions to access necessary resources such as food, education, and health services. This program is important because it provides much-needed assistance to those who may not have adequate access to financial resources to meet their basic needs. Apart from that, BLT also functions as a preventive measure to prevent the possibility of a decline in welfare due to economic problems, which can affect social stability and the welfare of society as a whole.

Thus, BLT has an important role in maintaining a decent life for vulnerable groups in society. By providing direct assistance, this program has the potential to reduce poverty levels and improve overall welfare. Apart from that, BLT can also help strengthen social ties in society by providing a sense of protection and support to those in need. Thus, BLT not only provides financial assistance, but also provides hope and opportunities for those who are struggling to escape the cycle of poverty and improve their quality of life.

Second, Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) has a very significant role in preventing a decline in people's welfare due to economic pressure. In situations where economic factors such as inflation, unemployment, or a financial crisis can threaten the financial condition of individuals and families, BLT exists as a form of direct response to provide urgent financial assistance. With BLT, vulnerable and needy people can get easier access to the financial resources they need to meet basic needs such as food, education and health services. Thus, BLT not only provides direct financial assistance, but also plays a role as the front guard in maintaining community welfare from negative impacts caused by unexpected economic factors.

Apart from that, BLT is also an effective instrument in strengthening social networks to support and protect vulnerable and needy communities. By providing direct assistance to those in need, this program not only provides financial support, but also provides a sense of protection and security to marginalized individuals and families. BLT strengthens solidarity and care in society, and encourages social inclusion for those struggling to overcome poverty and economic hardship. Therefore, BLT is a priority in efforts to empower and social protect, because of its very important role in helping vulnerable communities to remain firm in facing economic and social challenges.

In ensuring the success of the Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) program, an empowerment-based community development approach plays a key role. This approach recognizes that communities are not just beneficiaries, but also partners in program planning, implementation and evaluation. By actively involving the community, the BLT program can be more effective in responding to diverse local needs and conditions. Through active participation in decision

making regarding the program, the community can have a greater sense of ownership and responsibility for the sustainability and success of the program.

An empowerment-based approach also allows communities to develop the capacity and skills needed to manage the BLT program independently. By empowering communities to take a role in program implementation, this not only increases program efficiency and effectiveness, but also builds long-term sustainability. Communities who are actively involved in the BLT program will experience the benefits directly and feel they own the program as part of their efforts to improve the welfare of their community. Therefore, an empowerment-based community development approach is the main key in ensuring the success and sustainable positive impact of the Direct Cash Assistance program.

However, although Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) has the potential to reduce poverty levels and improve community welfare, there is also a risk that this program could become a new trap in the problem of poverty. One of the problems that arises is firstly, excessive dependence on BLT assistance can become a trap that hinders recipients' efforts to find long-term solutions to improve their economic conditions. When people become too dependent on such assistance, they tend to lose motivation and initiative to develop skills or seek better job opportunities. Rather than trying to become self-sufficient and address the root causes of poverty, BLT recipients may become passive and dependent on the aid as their main source of income. This can hinder their sustainable economic development and create a cycle of dependency that is difficult to break.

To overcome this problem, a holistic and integrated approach is needed in implementing the BLT program. In addition to providing financial assistance, this program must also be supported by skills training, education, and local economic development programs. In this way, BLT recipients can get more comprehensive support to improve their abilities and competitiveness in the job market. In addition, there needs to be strict supervision and management of the implementation of the BLT program to ensure that the assistance really provides the necessary encouragement without creating detrimental dependency. With an approach that focuses on empowerment and economic development, it is hoped that the BLT program can be an effective tool in overcoming long-term poverty and improving the welfare of society as a whole.

Second, the lack of strict supervision and evaluation in the implementation of the Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) program can open up opportunities for misuse and distribution of aid to those who do not actually need it. Without an effective monitoring system, the risk of corruption, nepotism and collusion in aid distribution increases. This can result in the budget allocated for the BLT program not being utilized effectively, thereby wasting resources that should be used to help people in need. Apart from that, unequal distribution of aid can also arise due to a lack of adequate supervision. It is possible that BLT assistance is not distributed fairly, so that some groups of people who actually need the assistance do not get it, while others may receive too much assistance.

To overcome this problem, it is necessary to increase strict supervision and evaluation in the implementation of the BLT program. The government needs to ensure that an effective monitoring mechanism is implemented to monitor the distribution and use of funds in a transparent and accountable manner. Apart from that, regular evaluation of the BLT program is also important to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the program and identify potential problems that may arise. In this way, the government can take the necessary steps to improve the performance of the BLT program and ensure that the assistance is truly targeted to those who need it, so that it can have a positive impact in reducing poverty levels and improving the overall welfare of society.

Third, receiving direct cash assistance (BLT) can have an unexpected impact on the local economy, including the risk of increasing the inflation rate. People's lack of independence

in earning money due to dependence on aid can lead to an increase in aggregate demand, which in turn can push up prices of goods and services. With more money circulating in the market without a commensurate increase in the production of goods and services, lower supply compared to demand can cause overall prices to rise, known as inflation. This phenomenon is a major concern because it can be detrimental to the wider community, especially for those who do not receive BLT and must face higher living costs without a commensurate increase in income.

To overcome the risk of inflation caused by BLT receipts, strict control and supervision measures are needed from the government. Establishing clear limits and regulations regarding the use of BLT as well as restrictions on the use of these funds for the purchase of certain goods and services can help control aggregate demand. In addition, education and training for BLT recipients about wise financial management and the importance of finding additional sources of income can also help reduce dependence on such assistance and control its potential negative impact on inflation. With a wise and sustainable approach, BLT receipts can be an effective tool in reducing poverty without risking detrimental inflation for the economy as a whole.

Therefore, although Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) has significant benefits in responding to the urgent needs of vulnerable communities, it is important for the government to continue to evaluate and improve its implementation. By considering the criticisms that have emerged, the government can identify areas where the BLT program can be improved to provide a more sustainable impact in overcoming poverty. Ongoing evaluation can help find ways to reduce the risks of dependency and inflation, as well as ensure that the assistance provided truly supports recipients in achieving long-term economic independence. These corrective measures must focus on community empowerment, increasing access to education and skills training, and strengthening social infrastructure that supports local economic development. Thus, BLT can be an effective tool in reducing long-term poverty while ensuring sustainability and equality in economic development.

## CONCLUSION

Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) is a program that has significant benefits in responding to the urgent needs of vulnerable communities. BLT provides direct financial support to economically marginalized groups, helping them meet basic needs such as food, education and health services. However, the BLT program also poses several risks that need to be considered. Excessive dependence on this assistance, lack of strict monitoring and evaluation, and the potential risk of inflation are challenges that must be overcome so that this program can have a more sustainable impact in overcoming poverty. Therefore, it is important for the government to continue to evaluate and improve the implementation of the BLT program. Ongoing evaluation will help identify areas where the BLT program can be improved, while ensuring that the assistance provided truly supports recipients to achieve long-term economic independence. With appropriate corrective measures, BLT can be an effective tool in reducing long-term poverty while ensuring sustainability and equality in economic development.

## REFERENCES

- Akib, I., & Risfaisal, R. (2015). Bantuan langsung tunai. *Equilibrium: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 3(2).
- Anggito, A., & Setiawan, J. (2018). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif*. CV Jejak (Jejak Publisher).
- Ardiyanto, A. F., & Prabawati, I. (2021). Implementasi Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) di Desa Waung Kecamatan Baron Kabupaten Nganjuk (Studi Pada Bidang Pendidikan). *Publika*, 13-24.

- Firmansyah, W. I., & Fanida, E. H. (2022). Efektivitas Penyaluran Bantuan Langsung Tunai Dana Desa (Blt-Dd) Kepada Masyarakat Terdampak Covid-19 Di Desa Kepatihan Kabupaten Jombang. *Publika*, 261-272.
- Habibullah, H. (2011). Peran Pendamping Pada Program Keluarga Harapan Kabupaten Karawang. *Sosio Informa: Kajian Permasalahan Sosial dan Usaha Kesejahteraan Sosial*, 16(2).
- Iping, B. (2020). Perlindungan sosial melalui kebijakan program Bantuan Langsung Tunai (BLT) di Era Pandemi Covid-19: Tinjauan perspektif ekonomi dan sosial. *Jurnal manajemen pendidikan dan ilmu sosial*, 1(2), 516-526.
- Ishatono, I., & Raharjo, S. T. (2016). Sustainable development goals (SDGs) dan pengentasan kemiskinan. *Share: Social Work Journal*, 6(2), 159.
- Kewo, S. T., & Kodoatie, V. S. (2022). Efektivitas Bantuan Langsung Tunai (Blt) Dana Desa Dalam Upaya Membantu Perekonomian Masyarakat Akibat Covid-19 Di Desa Kokoleh Satu Kecamatan Likupang Selatan. *Journal Social Welfare*, 10(1), 1-8.
- Kharisma, B. (2013). Evaluasi Program-Program Strategis Pemerintah Kota Bandung Di Bidang Ekonomi dalam Upaya Penguatan dan Peningkatan Kemampuan Daya Beli Masyarakat: Suatu Tinjauan Analisis Kebijakan Publik. *Jurnal Manajemen Teori Dan Terapan*, 6(3), 94-128.
- Lendriyono, F. (2022). *Manajemen Organisasi Layanan Masyarakat* (Vol. 1). UMMPress.
- Loho, G. F., Engka, D. S., & Rorong, I. P. F. (2023). Analisis Pengaruh Modal dan Dana Bantuan Langsung Tunai terhadap Pendapatan UMKM di Kecamatan Langowan Barat Kabupaten Minahasa pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Jurnal Berkala Ilmiah Efisiensi*, 23(1), 73-84.
- Lubis, H., Salkiawati, R., & Hala, S. (2022). Penerapan Metode Simple Additive Weighting Untuk Penerimaan Bantuan Langsung Tunai Dana Desa. *JSI (Jurnal sistem Informasi) Universitas Suryadarma*, 9(1), 53-60.
- Pratama, F. F., & Chandra, D. (2022). Dampak Strategis Upaya Penanggulangan Kemiskinan Masyarakat Perkotaan pada Masa Pandemi COVID-19 melalui Program PKH di Kota Tasikmalaya. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Sosial*, 8(1), 63-76.
- Purwanto, S. A., Sumartono, S., & Makmur, M. (2013). Implementasi Kebijakan Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) Dalam Memutus Rantai Kemiskinan (Kajian di Kecamatan Mojosari Kabupaten Mojokerto). *Wacana Journal of Social and Humanity Studies*, 16(2), 79-96.
- Putra, M. A. P., Dirli, A. A., Andriani, W., & MauldyRaharja, R. (2023). Menggali Efektivitas Bantuan Langsung Tunai dalam Membantu Masyarakat. *Concept: Journal of Social Humanities and Education*, 2(4), 189-205.
- Putri, N. C., & Nurwati, N. (2021). Pengaruh Laju Pertumbuhan Penduduk Berdampak pada Tingginya Angka Kemiskinan yang Menyebabkan Banyak Eksploitasi Anak di Indonesia. *Jurnal Ilmu Kesejahteraan Sosial HUMANITAS*, 3(1), 1-15.
- Rosfadhila, M., Toyamah, N., Sulaksono, B., Devina, S., Sodo, R. J., & Syukri, M. (2011). Kajian cepat pelaksanaan program bantuan langsung tunai (BLT) 2008 dan evaluasi penerima program BLT 2005 di Indonesia. *SMERU Research Institute*, 1-107.
- Surianti, S., Rahmah, P., Minarti, A., Fitriadi, F., & Furwanindi, F. (2023). Pengaruh Bantuan Langsung Tunai (Blt) Dalam Meningkatkan Daya Beli Masyarakat Di Masa Pandemi Covid 19 Di Kelurahan Appanang Kabupaten Soppeng. *Jurnal Mirai Management*, 8(2), 267-274.
- Susantyo, B., Nainggolan, T., Rahman, A., Erwinsyah, R. G., Irmayani, N. R., Habibullah, H., ... & Arifin, J. (2020). *Bantuan Sosial Tunai Kementerian Sosial Bagi Keluarga Terdampak Covid-19*. Pusat Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kesejahteraan Sosial.

- Taufan, A. (2022). Peran Bantuan Langsung Tunai (Blt) Dalam Membantu Perekonomian Masyarakat Desa Tanjung Pauh Mudik Pada Masa Pandemi Tahun 2022. *Jurnal Cakrawala Ilmiah*, 1(10), 2575-2584.
- Yulianah, S. E. (2022). *Metodelogi Penelitian Sosial*. CV Rey Media Grafika.