

Responsibilities of Local Governments in Creating a Child-Friendly City in Gorontalo City

Ramli Pinoi¹ Marwan² Apriyanto Nusa³

Universitas Ichsan Gorontalo

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Abstract

The government, through Regional Regulation (Perda) of Gorontalo City Number 7 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities, has promoted the establishment of Child-Friendly Cities (KLA) in Gorontalo City. This study aims to determine the implementation of the Gorontalo City government's responsibilities in realizing child-friendly cities. And what obstacles are faced in implementing the Gorontalo City government's responsibilities in realizing child-friendly cities. Using the Normative-Empirical Legal research method (applied law research), which is a research that uses normative-empirical legal case studies in the form of legal behavior products, with the research results Implementation of the responsibility of the Gorontalo City Regional Government in realizing a Child-Friendly City in terms of policy. The regional government has developed a number of policies that regulate the protection, fulfillment of children's rights to education, health, and participation, as well as empowering institutions related to children such as the Children's Forum and Integrated Posyandu and Implementation of the responsibility of the Gorontalo City Regional Government in realizing a Child-Friendly City in terms of activity programs in fulfilling children's rights. The Gorontalo City Regional Government has implemented various activities aimed at fulfilling children's basic rights, such as education, health, protection, and participation.

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Corresponding Author:

Ramli Pinoi

Universitas Ichsan Gorontalo

Email : ramlipinoi4@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Child protection is all activities to guarantee and protect children and their rights so that they can grow, develop and participate optimally in accordance with human dignity and honor, and receive protection from violence and discrimination. Child protection can also be defined as all efforts aimed at preventing, rehabilitating and empowering children who experience acts of mistreatment, exploitation and neglect, in order to ensure their survival and normal growth and development, both physically, mentally and socially.

In line with this thinking, the government's efforts to continuously reform and perfect the legal system are being carried out, including in efforts to protect children, requiring a separate set of laws that regulate child protection. Children are a mandate and a gift from God Almighty, which we must always protect because they are inherent in their dignity, honor, and rights as human beings that must be upheld. Children's human rights are part of the human rights contained in the 1945 Constitution, namely in Article 28 B paragraph (2) that every child has the right to survival, growth and development and the right to protection from violence and discrimination.

In Indonesia, child protection issues are currently a widely discussed topic. Various problems and cases involving children have occurred frequently in recent years. These problems include discrimination, violence, exploitation, and neglect.

Child protection can be divided into two parts, namely legal child protection which includes protection in the field of public law and in the field of civil law and non-legal child protection, which includes protection in the social, health and education fields.

Children are the first link in the chain that determines the future of a nation. Therefore, preparing the next generation to become quality heirs to the nation means building and ensuring the well-being of children from an early age, and children must receive protection from everyone. The government already has a program to realize sustainable child protection in every region. To protect children, the government has actually implemented the Child-Friendly Regency/City program. This program specifically protects children from the recent surge in violence. Child-Friendly Regency/City is a government program aimed at reducing violence against children and ensuring a brighter future for children.

KLA is a district/city development system that integrates the commitment and resources of the government, community and business world that are planned comprehensively and sustainably in policies, programs and activities to fulfill children's rights. The essence of KLA is the creation of districts/cities, where children can grow and develop optimally and are protected from violence and discrimination.

The Republic of Indonesia as a unitary state adheres to the principle of decentralization in the administration of government by providing opportunities and flexibility to regions to implement regional autonomy. In the administration of regional government, regional heads are assisted by regional apparatus consisting of staff elements that assist in policy formulation and coordination, accommodated in the secretariat, supervisory elements accommodated in the form of an inspectorate, planning elements accommodated in the form of an agency, elements supporting the duties of regional heads in the preparation and implementation of specific regional policies, accommodated in the form of technical institutions and elements implementing regional affairs accommodated in regional services.

Gorontalo City Children as mandated in Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as per the Regulation of the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, and Regional Regulation (Perda) of Gorontalo City Number 7 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities in Article 6 of the KLA development policy is directed at fulfilling children's rights as follows:

1. Civil rights and freedoms of children
2. Family environment and alternative care
3. Basic health and well-being
4. Education and use of free time and cultural activities
5. Special protection.

The government program focuses on programs to fulfill the rights of children who are deprived or cannot be fulfilled because they are on the streets, including the right to identity, the right to care, the right to basic needs, the right to health, the right to education, and the right to receive legal assistance and protection, considering that life on the streets makes them very vulnerable to being involved in legal cases, whether their involvement is as victims or as perpetrators.

In Regional Regulation Number 7 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities, Article 6 explains that the KLA development policy is directed at fulfilling children's rights which include:

- a. Civil rights and freedoms
- b. Family environment rights and alternative care

- c. Basic health and welfare rights
- d. Right to education, use of free time, cultural activities and Special protection rights.

However, due to the agency's overly broad scope, the Population Control, Family Planning, Women's Empowerment, and Child Protection Service (PPKBP3A) has several other areas that must also be managed by this Service, namely the Population Control and Family Planning Sector (PPKB), the Family Resilience and Welfare Sector, the Women's Empowerment and Fulfillment of Children's Rights Sector (P3HA), and finally the Women and Children's Protection Sector (PPA). This can ensure that the PPKBP3A Service cannot truly focus on child protection. Another child protection agency at the regional government level is the Integrated Service Center for Women and Children's Empowerment (P2TP2A). Unfortunately, P2TP2A has not been able to work optimally due to limited infrastructure, human resources, and of course, budgeting that is not in accordance with the programs provided by the regional government. So it can only work under normal conditions and as is. Even then, it is not fully active in carrying out its obligations, let alone truly guaranteeing children's rights.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research is Normative-Empirical Legal Research (applied law research), which is research that uses normative-empirical legal case studies in the form of legal behavior products. The main point of study is the implementation or implementation of positive legal provisions and contracts in fact in every specific legal event that occurs in society in order to achieve predetermined goals.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Implementation of local government responsibilities to create Child-Friendly Cities

The efforts to realize a Child-Friendly City (KLA) by the Gorontalo City Government are a concrete form of implementing the constitutional mandate and the mandate of the law that requires the regional government to guarantee the fulfillment of children's rights in all aspects of development, including the right to survival, growth and development, protection, and active participation in social life. In this context, the Gorontalo City Government places the issue of protecting and fulfilling children's rights as one of the priorities in the planning and implementation of sustainable regional development, through integrated policies, strong regulations, and cross-sector collaboration involving government institutions, the community, the business world, and the mass media.

As a manifestation of its normative commitment, the Gorontalo City Government has established Regional Regulation Number 7 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities, which serves as a legal umbrella for all policies and activities oriented towards fulfilling children's rights. The regulation explains that the implementation of Child-Friendly Cities is part of a development system that guarantees the fulfillment of children's rights and protection in a comprehensive and sustainable manner, the implementation of which is not only limited to the governmental sphere but also involves the wider community as an integral part of the child protection ecosystem. This regulation also emphasizes that the implementation of Child-Friendly Cities must pay attention to five main clusters of children's rights, namely civil rights and freedoms, family environment and alternative care, basic health and welfare, education and use of free time, and special protection.

The Gorontalo City Government also places special emphasis on improving the quality of family care, which is the primary foundation for child protection. Through the

establishment of the Melati Family Learning Center (PUSPAGA), the community, particularly parents and prospective parents, are provided with education and counseling services on child rights-based parenting, the importance of positive family communication, and the prevention of physical, verbal, and emotional violence in the home. This program is one of the local government's concrete efforts to prevent child marriage, which remains a serious challenge in various regions of Indonesia, including Gorontalo.

One of the important achievements of the Gorontalo City Government is the active involvement of children in the development process through the establishment of the Gorontalo City Children's Forum, which serves as a forum for children to voice their opinions, ideas, and aspirations to the government. This forum is not only involved in the commemoration of children's holidays, but also in public consultation forums, development planning meetings (*musrenbang*), and policy evaluations that directly impact the lives of children in the city. Thus, children's participation is not merely symbolic, but truly becomes part of the decision-making system at the regional level.

1. Regional policies and legal products that support the fulfillment of children's rights

In order to realize a Child-Friendly City and ensure that children's basic rights can be fully fulfilled, the Gorontalo City Regional Government has developed a number of policies and legal products aimed at creating a child-friendly environment, both through normative, institutional, and operational technical approaches. This is an implementation of the national mandate stated in Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, which explicitly states that the central and regional governments have an obligation to guarantee, protect, and respect children's rights in every development policy, program, and activity.

One form of this commitment is realized through the enactment of Gorontalo City Regional Regulation Number 7 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities, which serves as the main legal instrument for the implementation of Child-Friendly Cities at the regional level. This regulation not only regulates the basic principles of child protection, such as non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life and development, and child participation, but also outlines the responsibilities of local governments, regional apparatus organizations (OPD), the business world, the media, and civil society in creating an environment that supports optimal child growth and development.

In addition to regulatory policies, the Gorontalo City Government also developed and implemented the Regional Action Plan (RAD) for Child-Friendly Cities, a strategic planning document outlining cross-sectoral targets, indicators, and strategies for realizing child-friendly cities. This document is crucial because it serves as a technical reference for all regional agencies to integrate children's rights into their annual work plans and activities, and as a basis for evaluating the achievements of Child-Friendly Cities by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA).

The local government also demonstrated its commitment to child participation by establishing and strengthening the Gorontalo City Children's Forum, which serves as a platform for children to express their aspirations and actively participate in the public policy formulation process. The government facilitates this forum through training, activity space, and involvement in the Children's Development Planning Meeting (*Musrenbang*), child rights campaigns, and other public consultation forums.

2. Activity programs related to fulfilling children's rights

In an effort to realize Gorontalo City as a Child-Friendly City (KLA), the local government has designed and implemented various programs and activities that

directly and indirectly aim to fulfill, protect, and respect children's rights as mandated in laws and regulations, especially Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, and refer to the five clusters of Child-Friendly City indicators from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA). These programs are cross-sectoral and involve various Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD), children's forums, schools, communities, and the business world.

Although various programs and activities have been implemented by the Gorontalo City Government in an effort to fulfill children's rights as stated in the Child-Friendly City regional action plan, the results of the evaluation of the implementation of these programs show that there are still a number of gaps between planning and implementation, and not all indicators of a Child-Friendly City have been fulfilled evenly in all administrative areas, especially in the special protection and child participation clusters.

Although the Gorontalo City Government has implemented various programs and activities to support the fulfillment of children's rights as stipulated in national and regional policies related to Child-Friendly Cities, evaluation results indicate that there are still a number of structural, technical, and socio-cultural obstacles, which cause a mismatch between planning and implementation in the field. In some aspects, such as increasing access to basic education and health services, and the establishment of children's forum institutions, these programs have made a positive contribution. However, in general, implementation still faces serious challenges, particularly in terms of coordination between regional government agencies (OPD), budget consistency, limited human resources, and weak results-based monitoring and evaluation.

The evaluation also found that despite being established and regularly participating in activities, the Children's Forum still faces obstacles to substantial engagement. Children's participation in policy formulation is often merely symbolic, with no concrete follow-up to their expressed aspirations. Furthermore, the child information system is not functioning optimally due to the lack of data integration between regional government agencies (OPD) and the absence of a comprehensive, real-time, digital-based data collection system.

b. Factors Influencing the Implementation of Local Government Responsibilities in Creating Child-Friendly Cities

The implementation of the Gorontalo City Regional Government's responsibility in realizing a Child-Friendly City (KLA) is inseparable from various factors that influence each other and greatly determine the extent to which the policies and programs that have been designed can run effectively, directed, and sustainably in order to provide protection, fulfillment of rights, and participation of children in various aspects of life. Although normative commitments have been outlined in the form of regional policies and regulations, in practice there are a number of key factors that influence the optimal implementation of KLA in Gorontalo City.

A. Budget

One important aspect that directly influences the implementation of the Gorontalo City Regional Government's responsibility in realizing a Child-Friendly City (KLA) is the availability, allocation, and utilization of the regional budget allocated for programs to protect and fulfill children's rights. Within the framework of public policy, the budget is not only a financing instrument, but also a concrete form of political commitment and development priorities set by the regional government. Therefore, the extent to which the KLA program can run effectively

depends greatly on the proportion and continuity of the budget provided by the regional government in the APBD (Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget) document.

In Gorontalo City, the budget for Child-Friendly City activities is generally distributed across several Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPDs), such as the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency (DP3A), the Health Agency, the Education Agency, the Social Service Agency, and others. However, observations and interviews with relevant parties indicate that the dedicated budget explicitly allocated to the Child-Friendly City program remains limited, both in terms of size and continuity. Many activities still rely on grants, central government assistance, or cross-sectoral program initiatives that do not directly address Child-Friendly City indicators.

This limited budget has prevented several important programs, such as training on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, strengthening the Children's Forum, developing family learning centers (PUSPAGA), and providing child-friendly infrastructure, from being implemented optimally or sustainably. Furthermore, because the budget is dispersed and not centralized within a specific KLA program, planning and reporting are less integrated, making it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of fund use in relation to achieving KLA indicators.

In an interview with the Head of Child Protection, DP3A Gorontalo City said that:

"The budget for Child-Friendly City activities has been limited. We at DP3A have activities related to child protection, such as the Children's Forum, PUSPAGA, and children's rights education. However, not all activities have been optimally supported because the allocation is still small and sometimes depends on the current year's priorities."

This statement indicates that despite formal commitments from local governments, in practice, budget allocation for children's programs is still not a top priority within the Regional Budget (APBD). Many programs still need to be implemented according to available funding, and several substantive activities, such as training child advocates, psychological recovery for victims of violence, or the development of child-friendly public spaces, have not been fully implemented each year.

B. Community and Children's Participation

One of the factors that plays a significant role in supporting or hindering the implementation of the Gorontalo City Regional Government's responsibility in realizing a Child-Friendly City (KLA) is the level of community and child participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs related to the fulfillment and protection of children's rights. In the context of child-rights-oriented development, community participation is seen not only as moral or administrative support, but also as a form of active involvement in creating a safe, friendly, and inclusive social environment for children.

Ideally, community participation encompasses the roles of families, community leaders, community organizations, the business world, and the media in supporting the child protection ecosystem. Likewise, children, as rights holders, should be given sufficient space to voice their aspirations and opinions, both through formal forums such as the Children's Forum and in everyday social life. However, in practice in Gorontalo City, this level of participation still faces a number of significant challenges.

Based on observations and interviews with various stakeholders in Gorontalo City, it was discovered that there is still a gap in community understanding and involvement regarding the importance of fulfilling children's rights. Some people still believe that the responsibility to protect children is solely the responsibility of the government and schools, without realizing that families and communities play a primary role as the first and closest environment for children. This is exacerbated by low public literacy regarding children's rights and non-violent parenting patterns, which leads to the continued prevalence of domestic violence and the neglect of children's rights to education and health.

Meanwhile, in terms of child participation, although the Gorontalo City Government has established Children's Forums at the city and sub-district levels, children's involvement in decision-making has not yet been fully implemented substantively. Children are often only involved ceremonially, for example as pledge readers or participants in annual activities, but have not been actively given the space to express ideas, complaints, or recommendations that are then considered in program development by the government. This indicates that the mechanism for child participation is not fully directed at empowerment, but rather remains a formality.

Based on the results of an interview with the Head of the Child Protection Division, Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Service (DP3A) of Gorontalo City, it was explained that in general the involvement of children and the community in the KLA program has been ongoing, but still faces challenges in terms of sustainability, capacity, and community awareness:

"We already have Children's Forums at the city and some sub-district levels. They participate in the Children's Musrenbang (Development Planning Forum) and child rights campaigns. But many people still view these activities as merely symbolic. Furthermore, not all children in this city can participate because not all sub-districts have active Children's Forums."

The statement emphasized that the Children's Forum, as a platform for children's participation, has been facilitated, but its implementation has been uneven. Some children lack equal access to participation due to geographical limitations or the lack of a sub-district-level Children's Forum. Furthermore, the perception of some in the community that children's participation is merely ceremonial or complementary to government activities also diminishes the meaning of participation itself.

4. CONCLUSION

The previous descriptions serve as a starting point for drawing conclusions regarding the main problem of this research, namely:

Implementation of the responsibility of the Gorontalo City Regional Government in realizing a Child-Friendly City in terms of policy of the regional government has developed a number of policies that regulate the protection, fulfillment of children's rights to education, health, and participation, as well as empowering institutions related to children such as the Children's Forum and Integrated Posyandu. However, in practice, there are still several obstacles that affect the effectiveness of the program, such as budget limitations, coordination between agencies that is not optimal, and community and child participation that is not fully active and meaningful and Implementation of the responsibility of the Gorontalo City Regional Government in realizing a Child-Friendly City in terms of Program activities in fulfilling Children's rights The Gorontalo City Regional Government has

implemented various activities aimed at fulfilling children's basic rights, such as education, health, protection, and participation. Programs such as the Integrated Posyandu, the Children's Forum, as well as child socialization and empowerment activities show the government's concrete efforts in creating a child-friendly environment.

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