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#### Abstract

This article examines the implementation of slum prevention and housing improvement policies in Lhokseumawe City. The implementation of this policy has implemented a comprehensive approach to overcome the problem of slum housing through the formation of an integrated task force, funded by fiscal incentives for infrastructure development. The main initiatives include building and repairing livable houses in various districts, especially with a focus on Banda Sakti District in the 2024 fiscal year. The process begins with comprehensive identification and mapping of uninhabitable houses and infrastructure that requires repair, followed by collaborative planning and design involving the community. Effective communication and coordination between government institutions, communities and other stakeholders is critical to the success of this policy in order to align with the common goal of improving the quality of housing and creating a livable environment. Despite challenges such as community esistance to relocation and coordination issues, the city's proactive steps demonstrate a commitment to improving living conditions and building sustainable, well-managed urban communities. This paper highlights the importance of a holistic and collaborative approach in achieving effective and sustainable outcomes in urban development and housing policy.

Keywords: Implementation, Policies, Improving, Quality, Slum Housing

## INTRODUCTION

Lhokseumawe City covers an area of 181.06 km<sup>2</sup> (18,106 hectares). Located on the northern coast of Aceh Province, it is one of the 23 regencies/cities in the province and lies on a strategic distribution and trade route for Aceh. Its position, midway between Banda Aceh, the provincial capital, and Medan, the capital of North Sumatra, enhances its strategic role. Astronomically, Lhokseumawe City is situated between 04° 54' – 05° 18' North Latitude and 96° 20' – 97° 21' East Longitude, with an elevation ranging from 2 to 24 meters above sea level.

The population of Lhokseumawe City in 2022 was 191,396, with 460,583 people living in poverty. The number of residents who migrated to Lhokseumawe City was 4,148 (Central Statistics Agency [BPS], 2022).

The distribution of slum housing and slum settlements in Lhokseumawe City is identified through baseline survey data and the mapping of the city's slum profile. Lhokseumawe City covers an area of 181.06 km<sup>2</sup> (18,106 hectares) and consists of four sub-districts: Banda Sakti, Muara Satu, Muara Dua, and Blang Mangat. Additionally, the city includes nine villages and 68 desa/gampong. The profile of slum housing and settlements requiring intervention, based on the 2020 Decree on the Designation of Slum Housing and Settlements in Lhokseumawe City, is divided into two criteria: Priority Handling Areas and Priority Handling Villages.

Slum settlements can impact the quality of life of residents and lead to various problems, such as environmental degradation. Slum conditions are characterized by dirty, disorganized, and often densely populated environments, which can be found in many cities and urban areas around the world.

Slum housing conditions can vary significantly depending on geographic location, economic development levels, and government policies in the area. However, in many cases, slum housing reflects social inequality

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and the failure of development systems to achieve justice and equity for all citizens. In Lhokseumawe City, the 'Pusong Lama' area has 1,056 slum buildings, while the 'Pusong Baru' area has 321 slum buildings that are experiencing irregular or disorganized development. This often means that these structures are built without clear planning, lack legal land ownership, do not comply with applicable building regulations, or lack solid structural integrity. This situation indicates non-compliance with development regulations and highlights concerning conditions in terms of development management in the area (Bappeda Lhokseumawe, 2024).

The Lhokseumawe City Regulation Number 11 of 2018 on the Prevention and Improvement of Slum Housing and Settlements provides the legal foundation for the Lhokseumawe City government to address issues related to slum housing and settlements. One of the necessary actions in implementing this policy is the enforcement of illegal buildings constructed by residents. This enforcement is a concrete measure implemented by the government as part of its efforts to prevent and improve the quality of slum housing and settlements. The aim of this step is to clear and reorganize public spaces and encourage residents to comply with applicable building regulations. The implementation of this policy also involves active participation from the local community. The government can engage the community in the enforcement process through outreach, public consultations, or participation in recovery and reorganization activities in the affected areas.

Policy implementation refers to the process of putting decisions or rules into practical action on the ground. The description of policy implementation can include the following steps: The first step in policy implementation is to ensure that all parties involved have a clear understanding of the objectives and scope of the policy to be applied.

This study aims to analyze the implementation of government policies, specifically Regulation Number 11 of 2018 on the Prevention and Improvement of Slum Housing and Settlements. This regulation provides the legal foundation for the Lhokseumawe City government to address issues related to slum housing and settlements, with a focus on a holistic and integrative approach, particularly in addressing the interconnected issues of improving the quality of slum housing in Lhokseumawe, Aceh, Indonesia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

## The Implementation of Policy

The implementation of policies depends, in part, on the use of policy instruments, which are a collection of tools and measurements used to carry out policy goals. Information, incentives, and infrastructure are examples of common policy tools. Mandatory policy instruments, like laws, should also be included, *(Tian et al. 2022)*.

Implementation involves a series of actions to deliver policies to the public, ensuring that these policies achieve the desired outcomes (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975). According to Dimock & Dimock (2009), policy implementation involves several stages carried out by the responsible parties. This includes setting organizational goals and objectives, analyzing and formulating policies and strategies, making decisions, planning, programming, organizing, mobilizing people, executing operations, supervising, and evaluating. Edward III (1978) further explains that policy implementation is affected by four key variables: communication, resources, disposition, and structure. According to Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), policy implementation involves the actions taken by individuals, officials, or government and private organizations to achieve the goals established by policy decisions. It is a process aimed at realizing the selected and set objectives. Organizing these objectives through statutory regulations is a crucial component and is deeply intertwined with the decision-making environment. In other words, the implementation of a policy is closely linked to human factors, which include various social, cultural, and political backgrounds, (Hoang 2021).

The government's role as the executive branch is crucial in enforcing laws within the country. There are several reasons why government policy on law enforcement is essential. Firstly, the government is tasked with managing its territory and population to achieve state objectives. For Indonesia, the nation's goals have been explicitly defined by the founders. Although the theory of separation of powers places law enforcement within the judiciary, the executive branch still holds responsibility within the framework of checks and

balances, as well as in ensuring the rule of law in daily governance. Additionally, the government has a vested interest in fostering an environment conducive to the rule of law. Thus, the legal policy of large-scale social restrictions represents an Indonesian government policy with authority over law enforcement in both judicial and legislative contexts, (Sumardiyono and Suryono 2021).

Policy development has shifted from focusing on physical assets to reforming regulatory frameworks and infrastructure. However, approaches that emphasize policy orientation, institutionalism, and community participation in housing issues have often been overlooked (Chiodelli, 2016). Financing has evolved from solely credit allocation to a combination of direct subsidies and credit, yet there remains insufficient attention to the social diversity of residents, including immigrants and tenants. This underscores the need for more comprehensive policies that consider the varied content and procedural aspects of housing and spaces. Generally, there is a noticeable lack of focus on the diverse nature and procedural aspects of housing and living environments, (Rafieian and Kianfar 2023).

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, large-scale policy interventions began to address the significant challenges posed by rapid industrialization and urbanization of the mid-nineteenth century (Hall, 2006, p. 57; Tallon, 2013). For instance, Haussmann's renovation of Paris (1853–1871) was a major urban renewal project aimed at solving issues like severe overcrowding and contaminated water supplies (Jordan, 1992; Shapiro, 1985, p. xiii). In Britain, state intervention had minimal impact on housing renewal until the 1930s, when the Greenwood Act (1930) promoted widespread slum clearance by providing subsidies and requiring local authorities to rehouse displaced slum residents (Couch, 1990, pp. 16–20). In the United States, reform movements such as American Park (1840s) and City Beautiful (1890s) aimed to enhance urban aesthetics in response to the urban decay and disorder prevalent in late nineteenth-century American cities. In the United States, the departure of wealthy residents and businesses contributed to the spread of slums and the decline in downtown property values. This trend was seen as threatening the economic stability of American cities and was a key factor leading to the introduction of the Housing Act of 1949. This first piece of legislation provided federal funding specifically for slum clearance (Rapkin, 1980; Zipp, 2013), (Nachmany and Hananel 2022).

## Improving the Quality of Slum Housing

The housing projects examined in this paper were part of a large national housing initiative launched in South Africa in 1994. Although the program has undergone periodic revisions and name changes, its primary goal has remained the same: to address the economic and geographic impacts of apartheid by providing formal housing to low-income households. The program annually allocates funds to local housing authorities for the construction and distribution of 40m<sup>2</sup>, single-story, two-room houses on individual plots. Local authorities identify large parcels of land that can each accommodate several hundred houses. To meet budget constraints, authorities often select inexpensive land located on the urban periphery. Often, these housing developments (Hofmeyr, 2008). Each project must pass an environmental impact assessment, receive zoning approval from local municipalities, and ensure infrastructure access, leading authorities to implement the most feasible projects each year. Existing policy research describes South African public housing as a top-down system where government authorities determine housing locations and allocations with minimal input from local communities (Durojaye et al., 2013), (Bradlow, Polloni, and Violette 2023).

Most developing countries do not officially include slum dwellers in their census counts, effectively concealing the presence of slums and heightening residents' vulnerability to unlawful evictions. Data indicates that forced evictions are on the rise. From 2000 to 2002, 6.7 million residents were evicted, 2.5 million more than the 4.2 million evicted during the previous two years (1998-2000). Evictions and demolitions of slum areas are common and have been reported in every region. These actions often precede redevelopment efforts and can severely disrupt the livelihoods of communities and individuals, causing significant psychological and economic stress and exposing them to increased risks of violence and exploitation, (Ernst, Phillips, and Duncan 2013).

Since 2004, Moroccan authorities have been advocating for the creation of new cities to offer affordable housing to low-income individuals. A primary aim of this initiative is to provide relocation sites for slum dwellers. While policymakers argue that these measures will alleviate poverty and promote social inclusion, residents facing displacement have shown significant resistance to the resettlement programs. Tamesna, the second new city established under this policy, was primarily intended to resettle approximately three thousand households from informal settlements in the neighboring rural commune of Sidi Yahya Zaer (SYZ). However, by summer 2017, only two-thirds of the households had relocated, with delays in the resettlement process due to some residents' refusal to participate, (Keep, Montanari, and Greenlee 2021).

Slums represent severe inequalities that extend beyond just the immediate living conditions of residents, impacting various aspects of life such as access to healthcare and education. Despite years of government efforts at the local, state, and national levels to address these issues, slums continue to exist in India. A significant reason for the failure of these policies is their top-down design and implementation, which adopts a one-size-fits-all approach (Tiwari & Rao, 2016). These policies have typically relied on solutions from technocrats and bureaucrats, rather than engaging with the affected communities to develop alternatives. Moreover, the policies have often overlooked the diverse and complex nature of the housing challenges prevalent in slums (Patel, Koizumi & Crooks, 2014, 2020), (Killemsetty, Johnson, and Patel 2022).

#### Slum

UN-Habitat's working definition of a slum, established through extensive discussions among professionals and organizations in 2003, is widely recognized globally. This definition, based on measurable indicators, defines a slum as a residential area with at least one of the following conditions: substandard buildings, overcrowding, inadequate access to sanitation facilities, or insecure residential status (Jain, 2010). Similarly, Cities Alliance describes slums as marginalized areas within municipalities where living standards are extremely poor. These areas typically lack basic housing, public facilities, social infrastructure, and public open spaces (Cities Alliance, 1999), (Doe, Peprah, and Chidziwisano 2020).

Slum or informal settlements primarily arise due to the unequal and unfair distribution of state resources, increasing land prices, distortions in housing market pricing policies, and the forcible eviction of people from indigenous lands (Morka, 2007; Yeung, 1991), (Ajibade and McBean 2014).

Policy debates around slums rose to prominence in the early 1960s, with scholars such as anthropologist Oscar Lewis initially dominating the discussion. Lewis (1961) linked the problems of the urban underclass to cultural traits such as lack of ambition, criminal behavior, and difficulty adapting to modern urban life. This perspective gives rise to the belief that the poor are to blame for their inability to enter the formal housing market, thus hindering government and private sector investment in low-income housing (Choguill, 1999; Scheba & Turok, 2021). In the late 1960s, scholars such as Charles Abrams, William Mangin, and John Turner began to change the discourse regarding low-income housing. Abrams (1966) argued that slums are a natural result of rapid urbanization and industrialization. Likewise, Mangin (1967) argued that informal housing should be seen not as a social pathology but as a rational response to the complex challenges posed by rapid urbanization, migration, and housing shortages, (Rantissi and Gitis 2024).

According to the most recent national census, Nairobi is home to 3.14 million residents (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2010), up from just under half a million at the country's independence in 1963. The city's population has grown due to both natural increase and migration from rural and other urban areas. Nairobi has long been the country's principal city, attracting people seeking livelihood opportunities absent in the predominantly agricultural rural regions. However, the rapid population growth has not been matched by adequate provision of affordable housing and other social amenities, leading to the proliferation of slum settlements. Nairobi is estimated to have over 150 slum settlements scattered throughout the city, which occupy less than 5% of the city's land but house an estimated 60-70% of the population (Beguy et al., 2015). Numerous studies have highlighted the challenges faced by slum residents, including minimal public sector presence and poor access to public goods and services, negatively impacting various health outcomes (Kyobutungi et al., 2008; Mugisha, 2006), (Dianati et al. 2019).

The lack of infrastructure for waste disposal is glaringly evident in slum areas. Waste is not only generated within the slum but slums are often situated next to larger community dump sites. Human waste disposal is particularly problematic, with community-shared toilets becoming the norm. However, these toilets may not be maintained, may be too few in number, or may not exist at all. For example, in 1998, 40,000 people in Kibera, a large slum in Nairobi, shared 10 latrines, while in a slum in India, 120,000 people shared 19 latrines. This situation leads to open defecation or the use of "flying toilets" (excrement in a plastic bag thrown into the environment). National statistics do not differentiate between general urban areas and urban slum areas, and conditions in slums are often significantly worse than those reported at the national level, (Ernst, Phillips, and Duncan 2013).

## **METHODS**

This study is designed using qualitative approach which is often referred to as naturalistic method because this research is based on a natural setting. This approach is also an approach that is oriented to phenomena or natural symptoms. Given its orientation, it is fundamental to naturalisation and cannot be done in laboratories but the field. *Informants are purposefully chosen, considering their individual criteria, which include their social and economic status, their positions, level of education, and competencies.* Qualitative researchers strive to comprehend events and experiences by conducting detailed descriptive and interpretive analyses of individuals' experiences, views, perspectives, and perceptions of their social reality, (Whiffin et al. 2022). This qualitative analysis enables us to depict the lived reality composed of individuals' experiences and their interpretations of those experiences, (Hernandez-Nino et al. 2021).

Data Reduction: a. Data Collection: Gather relevant data through surveys, observations. b. Narrative Description: Describe the collected data and its attributes. Report Findings: a. Documentation: Create a comprehensive report that outlines the analysis procedure and outcomes. b. Visualization of Results: Incorporate effective visuals to illustrate the findings. c. Interpretation: Explain the results and their significance.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The issue of slum settlements is a significant challenge in the development of Lhokseumawe City and often leads to controversy. Despite various efforts to address the problem over time, slum areas continue to expand, and new ones even emerge. Specifically, the presence of slum settlements negatively impacts the city's governance image, creating a perception that the government is unable to effectively manage and provide adequate living services for its citizens. There are several key findings regarding the arrangement of buildings and environmental conditions in Lhokseumawe City. Building irregularities are a significant issue, with 65.19% or 1,399 houses in the area being poorly organized. This indicates that most buildings do not adhere to established planning guidelines, resulting in a disorganized appearance and difficult access. In terms of housing suitability, 35.09% or 753 houses are deemed unfit for habitation, not meeting technical requirements and falling into the category of inadequate housing. These homes lack proper standards in construction, safety, health, and comfort. The irregularity and poor condition of these buildings can have a negative impact on the quality of life for residents. Those living in uninhabitable houses often face serious issues related to health, safety, and overall well-being. Areas with disorganized and substandard housing tend to have less clean and orderly environments, affecting the city's aesthetics and the comfort and health of its residents. Additionally, these conditions reflect poorly on the government's ability to manage and regulate urban development effectively, highlighting a failure to provide adequate basic services for its citizens.

The implementation of policies to prevent slum housing and settlements in Lhokseumawe City faces significant challenges, despite direct outreach efforts to the community. One of the strategies employed is the establishment and utilization of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) known as Kelompok Pemanfaat dan Pemelihara (KPP). The KPPs are community-based organizations formed with the goal of managing, utilizing, and maintaining residential environments to ensure they remain clean and habitable. The successful implementation of these policies requires active community involvement through the KPPs. Although the current execution has not been entirely smooth, efforts to raise awareness, empower these organizations, and provide government support can help overcome the challenges. With a holistic and collaborative approach, these policies can be effectively realized to create clean and livable residential environments.

The implementation of policies to prevent slum housing and settlements in Lhokseumawe City faces significant challenges, particularly in terms of community involvement. Many residents were initially unaware of the importance of maintaining their environment. To address this, educational efforts and concrete actions were undertaken to demonstrate the positive impact of their participation. One of the first steps taken was a community-wide cleanup of household waste in Banda Sakti District. Successful implementation of these policies requires active community engagement and awareness. Through ongoing education and tangible actions like the mass cleanup in Banda Sakti, residents can directly see and experience the benefits of their participation. With the right support and multisectoral cooperation, these policies can succeed in creating a clean, healthy, and livable residential environment for all citizens.

Coordination that is not fully operational is one of the biggest challenges in implementing government policies and programs, especially those involving various related agencies. In Lhokseumawe City, the implementation of coordinated housing and slum prevention policies that are not yet running smoothly can hamper well-planned efforts. When various related agencies cannot work synergistically, efforts that should be synergistic often become fragmented, resulting in less than optimal results. A lack of effective coordination can be caused by various factors, such as differences in priorities between agencies, ineffective communication, or a lack of shared understanding of objectives and approaches to be taken. For example, one department may focus on physical infrastructure development, while another department emphasizes social aspects such as community empowerment. This misalignment can cause policies that should be integrated to be implemented separately, thereby reducing their potential positive impact. To overcome this problem, strengthening the relevant agencies who not only have decision-making authority but are also committed to working together to achieve common goals. These teams need to share an integrated understanding of the vision and mission of the policies being implemented and must have adequate access to effective communication and collaboration tools.

Regular coordination meetings are also important to ensure all parties remain aligned. These meetings should not be just a formality but should serve as a forum for aligning goals, identifying and overcoming obstacles, and formulating joint strategies. This way, each department can adapt its approach based on needs in the field, ensuring that every action taken is aligned with the overall goal. In the context of preventing housing and slum settlements in Lhokseumawe City, these efforts will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. Strong coordination ensures that each department understands its role and how it contributes to overall success. For example, agencies responsible for infrastructure can ensure the availability of basic facilities such as clean water and sanitation, while agencies that focus on social issues can work with communities to raise awareness and encourage participation in protecting the environment. In this way, the challenges faced in implementing these policies can be better overcome. When all parties are aligned in their goals and actions, the results will be more successful, both in terms of the quality of the housing environment and community welfare. A clean, healthy and livable environment is not just a goal but is a reflection of the government's success in providing the best service to its citizens. Strengthening coordination between related agencies and involving various stakeholders are important steps that not only increase the likelihood of program success but also build public trust in the government. With a collaborative and coordinated approach, housing and slum prevention policies in Lhokseumawe City can be realized effectively and provide real benefits for all levels of society.

Implementation of housing and slum prevention policies in Lhokseumawe City requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach involving various stakeholders. An important step taken was the formation of an integrated task force that included representatives from various related agencies, such as housing, public works and social services. The goal of this task force is to ensure that every aspect of policy, from planning to evaluation, is implemented effectively and efficiently. The formation of this integrated task force is very important because the problem of slum housing cannot be handled by one agency alone. Infrastructure problems such as poor drainage systems require intervention from the Public Works Department. The Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP) and Wilayatul Hisbah (WH) add a strategic dimension to slum reduction efforts. Satpol PP and WH play an important role in maintaining public order and public peace, as well as

enforcing city regulations. they can exercise more effective oversight, particularly in enforcing laws regarding zoning and illegal construction, which often contribute to the emergence of slum areas. The role of Satpol PP and WH is more than just law enforcement; they also act as agents of change, educating people about the importance of protecting their environment. The advisors appointed by the Mayor will provide direction and support to Satpol PP and WH, ensuring they carry out their duties with a humane but firm approach, so that the community feels involved and not intimidated.

Good coordination between the integrated task force and Satpol PP and WH will determine the success of this policy. Regular coordination meetings allow each party to share the latest information, discuss challenges, and find solutions together. This also allows adjustments to be made in the field so that the program becomes more dynamic and responsive to the actual needs of the community. It is hoped that these efforts can create a cleaner, healthier and more orderly residential environment in Lhokseumawe City. A well-organized living environment not only improves the quality of life of citizens but also reflects the government's success in providing quality services. Residents who live in well-maintained areas tend to experience higher levels of well-being, both physically and mentally. Implementing housing and slum prevention policies in Lhokseumawe City will improve the image of local government in the eyes of the public, demonstrate their ability to manage the city effectively and respond to important issues such as slum housing. Implementation of housing and slum prevention policies in Lhokseumawe City is not only about physical development but also building awareness, concern and community involvement in maintaining the quality of their living environment. Collaboration between the government and society is the key to achieving this goal, creating a city that is cleaner, healthier and more orderly for all its citizens.

Effective communication is crucial for supporting collaboration and coordination among the various parties involved in managing housing and residential areas. Clear and open communication ensures that all stakeholders, including the government, community members, and relevant agencies, understand their roles and responsibilities. This alignment helps ensure that every action taken is consistent with the shared goal of improving housing quality and creating livable environments. Additionally, good communication minimizes misunderstandings and miscommunications, thereby enhancing the efficiency of implementing the designed programs and policies.

Relocating residents from slum areas to better housing in Banda Masen aims to provide them with healthier, safer, and more comfortable living conditions. However, this effort often encounters significant challenges, particularly when residents resist relocation and are unwilling to move into the new housing provided. Resistance to relocation is typically influenced by several factors. Firstly, residents may have strong emotional attachments to their old homes. These locations may have been part of their lives for many years, with deep social connections to neighbors, friends, and the surrounding community. Moving to a new place can feel like a loss of identity and the social network they have built over time. Lhokseumawe City, through the Public Works and Housing Agency (PUPR), is continuously working to improve the quality of life for residents living in slum areas. One of its efforts includes a program for constructing and upgrading habitable houses across various districts. In the 2023 fiscal year, this program includes the following developments: Banda Sakti District is set to receive 14 new homes, Blang Mangat District will get 4 new homes, Muara Dua District will have 6 new homes plus an additional one, and Muara Satu District will see 9 new homes along with an additional 2 homes. This program is funded by the fiscal incentive allocation for the field of infrastructure development. For the 2024 fiscal year, the program will continue its focus on improving uninhabitable houses in Banda Sakti District, with a target of repairing 13 homes in Gampong Pusong, Gampong Jawa Lama, and Keude Aceh. The implementation of slum prevention and settlement policies in Lhokseumawe City begins with identifying and mapping through surveys in each district to pinpoint uninhabitable houses and infrastructure needing repair. This is followed by planning and designing the repairs, with involvement from both the community and experts to ensure that local needs are addressed.

## CONCLUSION

Efforts to deal with housing and slum settlements in Lhokseumawe City are characterized by a strategic approach involving various stakeholders and funding sources. The formation of an integrated task force

accompanied by the Mayor's direction to increase the role of Satpol PP and WH aims to make housing policy management and enforcement more effective. Effective communication between government agencies, communities, and other interested parties is critical to aligning goals and increasing the efficiency of these efforts. Implementation of the Slum and Slum Housing Prevention Policy in Lhokseumawe City to improve housing conditions, supported by fiscal incentives, focusing on building and repairing houses in target districts, with special attention to local needs through detailed surveys and community involvement. By paying attention to the physical and social dimensions of housing, this policy seeks to provide a healthier, safer and more comfortable living environment for its residents. The commitment to improving the quality of housing in Lhokseumawe City shows a comprehensive and collaborative urban development approach, which aims to create livable housing and settlements while building trust and involvement of all stakeholders.

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