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## The Accuracy of Social Assistance Based on DTSEN (Single Social and Economic Data) in Reducing Poverty in The City of Serang

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### Abstract

Poverty remains a multidimensional development challenge that extends beyond income deprivation and is closely associated with unequal access to education, healthcare, employment opportunities, housing, and social protection. This study analyzes the accuracy of DTSEN-based social assistance targeting in poverty alleviation efforts in Serang City, focusing on the Family Social Security Program (Jamsos) and Productive Economic Enterprise Assistance (UEP). A qualitative case study approach was employed through interviews, observations, and document analysis involving social welfare officials, program facilitators, beneficiaries, and eligible non-beneficiaries. The findings indicate that DTSEN has strengthened beneficiary identification through a more integrated socioeconomic database. Targeting accuracy, however, remains affected by data validation challenges, inter-agency coordination issues, budget limitations, and changes in household socioeconomic conditions. Jamsos contributes to short-term social protection by reducing the burden of basic household expenditures, while UEP provides opportunities for economic empowerment despite uneven outcomes among beneficiaries. Effective poverty alleviation requires continuous data updating, stronger monitoring mechanisms, institutional coordination, and sustained capacity-building efforts to enhance long-term economic independence.

**Keywords:** DTSEN, Poverty Alleviation, Serang City, Social Assistance, Targeting Accuracy.



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## INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains one of the most persistent development challenges across both developed and developing countries because it encompasses not only income deprivation but also unequal access to education, healthcare, employment opportunities, adequate housing, and social protection systems (Todaro & Smith, 2020). Contemporary poverty reduction strategies increasingly emphasize the importance of integrated social protection systems supported by accurate socioeconomic databases, reflecting a global shift toward evidence-based welfare governance and data-driven policy interventions (World Bank, 2022). Within this context, the effectiveness of social assistance programs is no longer assessed solely through the amount of assistance distributed but through their capacity to reach vulnerable populations accurately and contribute to sustainable improvements in welfare conditions. From a development planning perspective, social assistance constitutes a policy instrument through which governments allocate limited resources to address social problems and improve public welfare outcomes. Development planning theory emphasizes that policy effectiveness depends upon accurate information, institutional coordination, and the capacity of public institutions to translate policy objectives into measurable social impacts (Conyers & Hills, 1984).

Previous studies have demonstrated that the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programs is strongly influenced by the quality of beneficiary identification systems, institutional coordination, and the availability of reliable socioeconomic data. Research on Indonesia's unified targeting system indicates that weaknesses in data updating mechanisms and differences between administrative and field conditions may generate inclusion and exclusion errors that reduce program effectiveness (Tohari et al., 2019). Other studies have shown that social assistance programs can strengthen household resilience and reduce short-term welfare pressures, although their long-term impact often depends on implementation quality, monitoring mechanisms, and beneficiary characteristics (Purnama et al., 2023).

Research conducted in Serang City reveals that poverty is shaped by interconnected factors including unemployment, limited educational attainment, and income instability (Ningrum et al., 2024). Similar findings emphasize that unequal access to public services remains an important factor influencing poverty persistence at the local level (Dzulkifli & Azaria, 2024).

Despite these contributions, the existing literature presents several limitations. Most studies focus either on the effectiveness of social assistance programs or on poverty dynamics as separate issues, while relatively limited attention has been given to the relationship between integrated social data systems, beneficiary targeting accuracy, and the implementation of poverty alleviation programs at the local government level. Recent regulatory changes introducing the National Single Social and Economic Data (DTSEN) as the primary reference for social assistance targeting represent a significant institutional transformation, yet empirical evidence regarding its implementation and effectiveness remains limited, particularly in local contexts (Kementerian Sosial Republik Indonesia, 2025). Questions also remain regarding how data quality, administrative coordination, and field verification processes influence the accuracy of social assistance distribution.



**Figure 1. Statistics on the Percentage of the Poor Population in Serang City**  
Source: *databoks.com*

These unresolved issues are particularly relevant in Serang City, where poverty continues to constitute a significant development concern despite the implementation of various social protection and empowerment programs. Data from the Central Statistics Agency indicate that the number of poor residents in Serang City reached 41.07 thousand people in 2025, equivalent to 5.51 percent of the total population, demonstrating that socioeconomic vulnerability remains a continuing policy challenge (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Banten, 2025). The implementation of DTSEN is expected to strengthen targeting accuracy and improve resource allocation efficiency, yet the practical effectiveness of this system depends on institutional capacity, inter-agency coordination, and continuous data validation processes.

Kabupaten/Kota	Persentase Penduduk Miskin Menurut Kabupaten/Kota di Provinsi Banten (persen)	
	2025	
Kab Pandeglang		8,51
Kab Lebak		8,03
Kab Tangerang		6,42
Kab Serang		4,48
Kota Tangerang		5,19
Kota Cilegon		3,44
Kota Serang		5,51
Kota Tangerang Selatan		2,39
Provinsi Banten		5,63

Keterangan Data :  
 Sumber : Diolah dari data Survei Sosial Ekonomi Nasional (Susenas)

**Figure 2. Percentage of the Poor Population by Regency/City in Banten Province in 2025**  
 Source: Central Bureau of Statistics

In addition, the poverty line in Serang City was set at IDR 540,786 per capita per month in 2024. This poverty line represents the minimum amount of money required to meet basic food and non-food needs. Individuals whose expenditures fall below this threshold are classified as poor. To help people meet their basic needs, reduce household financial burdens, and prevent vulnerable groups from falling deeper into poverty, social assistance programs play a crucial role as a policy instrument.

Kabupaten/Kota	Garis Kemiskinan - Maret (Rp)	Garis Kemiskinan - September (Rp)	Jumlah Penduduk Miskin - Maret (ribu) (Ribu)	Jumlah Penduduk Miskin - September (ribu) (Ribu)	Persentase Penduduk Miskin - Maret	Persentase Penduduk Miskin - September
Pandeglang	479.886	...	113,45	...	9,18	...
Lebak	440.705	...	111,71	...	8,44	...
Tangerang	632.941	...	266,43	...	6,55	...
Serang	449.291	...	68,86	...	4,51	...
Kota Tangerang	785.113	...	128,91	...	5,43	...
Kota Cilegon	663.533	...	17,31	...	3,75	...
Kota Serang	540.786	...	41,62	...	5,65	...
Kota Tangerang Selatan	828.278	...	43,33	...	2,36	...
Banten	654.213	667.403	791,61	777,49	5,84	5,70

Sumber :  
 Susenas Maret 2024/National Socio-Economic Survey (SUSENAS) March 2024

**Figure 3. Percentage of the Poor Population by Regency/City in Banten Province in 2024**  
 Source: Central Bureau of Statistics

Accurate targeting of beneficiaries remains one of the major challenges in the implementation of social assistance programs. In practice, however, social assistance programs frequently face data-related issues, such as eligible individuals who have not yet been registered, beneficiaries whose financial circumstances have changed but remain listed, duplicate records, changes of residence, deaths, and shifts in household socioeconomic conditions. These issues may result in exclusion errors, where eligible individuals are omitted, and inclusion errors, where ineligible recipients are included. As this situation demonstrates, the effectiveness of social protection programs depends heavily on data accuracy. To improve the quality of data on social assistance beneficiaries, the government has initiated the development of the National Integrated Social and Economic Data System (DTSEN), an integrated

database containing social and economic information on individuals and households. DTSEN supports program planning, policy evaluation, and strategic decision-making at all levels of government, from the national to the regional level. Through DTSEN, community data can be filtered based on indicators such as household welfare rankings, occupation, education, housing conditions, asset ownership, socioeconomic status, and demographic characteristics. This approach is expected to enable the government to determine assistance targets in a more accountable, measurable, and objective manner. The utilization of integrated social databases reflects contemporary public governance approaches that emphasize data-driven decision making, accountability, and evidence-based welfare management in the implementation of social policies (Sopanah, 2023).



**Figure 4. DTSEN**

Data matching, welfare ranking, and the verification and validation of community conditions are the methods used to identify social assistance beneficiaries under the National Integrated Social and Economic Data System (DTSEN). A key component of DTSEN is the welfare decile classification, which categorizes households according to their socioeconomic welfare level. Households in the lower deciles are prioritized for social assistance because they are considered more economically vulnerable. However, welfare deciles are dynamic, as household conditions may change over time due to births, deaths, relocation, job loss, increased income, or other family-related circumstances. Therefore, regular data updates through village and sub-district administrations, the Social Affairs Office, as well as community-based proposal and objection mechanisms, are essential to maintaining the accuracy of social assistance targeting. This mechanism is consistent with planning principles that regard development interventions as dynamic processes requiring continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment in response to changing social conditions (Riyadi & Bratakusumah, 2005).

One of the initiatives undertaken by the Serang City Government to alleviate the financial burden of disadvantaged and marginalized communities is the provision of social assistance. This study focuses on two assistance programs: the Social Security Program (Jamsos) and the Productive Economic Enterprise Assistance Program (UEP). The Jamsos program aims to reduce household socioeconomic risks, maintain purchasing power, and assist low-income families in meeting their basic needs. In contrast, UEP adopts an empowerment-oriented approach by providing business capital to enable beneficiaries to engage in productive economic activities. Although the two programs have different characteristics, both contribute to poverty reduction. Jamsos primarily emphasizes short-term social protection, particularly in helping families meet their basic needs. This support is essential for low-income households that require assistance to sustain adequate levels of consumption. Meanwhile, UEP focuses on strengthening economic self-reliance through the provision of business financing. When utilized effectively and accompanied by adequate guidance, the program has the potential to increase

beneficiaries' income, support the development of small family enterprises, and reduce dependence on consumptive assistance.

However, the success of both Jamsos and UEP depends heavily on the accuracy of beneficiary data, the quality of field verification, inter-agency coordination, and the capacity of local governments to provide supervision and support. Poorly targeted social assistance may lead to social inequality, feelings of resentment within communities, and declining public trust in government institutions. Conversely, assistance that reaches those who genuinely need it can alleviate financial burdens, strengthen household social resilience, and more effectively support poverty reduction efforts. Based on these considerations, it is important to examine the effectiveness of utilizing the National Integrated Social and Economic Data System (DTSEN) as a basis for targeting social assistance in poverty reduction initiatives in Serang City. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Jamsos and UEP programs, examine how DTSEN is utilized in the screening and identification of social assistance beneficiaries, and identify the challenges involved in ensuring that assistance reaches those who are truly eligible. The findings are expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of DTSEN as a social assistance targeting mechanism and its contribution to poverty alleviation efforts in Serang City.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the implementation of the National Single Social and Economic Data (DTSEN) in social assistance distribution and its targeting accuracy in poverty alleviation efforts in Serang City. A qualitative approach was selected because the study seeks to gain an in-depth understanding of social phenomena, particularly the processes, experiences, and meanings associated with the implementation of DTSEN in determining social assistance beneficiaries (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The case study design was considered appropriate because the research focused on a specific case, namely the utilization of DTSEN as the basis for identifying and determining social assistance beneficiaries in Serang City. This approach enabled a comprehensive examination of beneficiary identification, verification processes, and the implementation of DTSEN-based social assistance programs within their actual social and institutional context.

Informants were selected purposively based on their involvement in the implementation of DTSEN and social assistance programs. The informants consisted of officials from the Serang City Social Affairs Office, social assistance facilitators, beneficiary households, and community members who met the eligibility criteria but had not received assistance. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to obtain detailed information regarding the implementation of DTSEN, the determination of social assistance beneficiaries, and challenges encountered during implementation. Observations were undertaken to directly examine activities and conditions related to DTSEN-based social assistance programs in the field, while documentation was used to collect supporting materials such as social assistance reports, poverty statistics, DTSEN regulations, and other relevant administrative documents.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The analysis was conducted continuously throughout the research process by selecting, simplifying, and organizing data into themes relevant to the research objectives. Findings were subsequently presented in a systematic narrative form to facilitate the identification of patterns, relationships, and emerging trends. To ensure the credibility of the findings, source triangulation and technique triangulation were employed by comparing information obtained from different informants as well as data generated through interviews, observations, and documentation. Repeated observations and careful examination of the collected data were also conducted to strengthen the trustworthiness and consistency of the research findings (Creswell, 2015).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Overview of Poverty in Serang City**

Poverty in Serang City remains a persistent development challenge that extends beyond income deprivation and reflects broader inequalities in access to education, healthcare, employment opportunities, social protection, and adequate housing. Contemporary development literature

increasingly conceptualizes poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by structural and institutional factors rather than solely by household income levels (Todaro & Smith, 2020). Within this perspective, poverty reduction requires policy interventions capable of addressing both immediate welfare deficits and long-term socioeconomic vulnerabilities.



**Figure 5. Trends in Poverty in The City Of Serang**  
 Source: BPS, managed by the author (2026)

Data presented in this study indicate that the number of poor residents in Serang City reached 41.07 thousand people in 2025, equivalent to 5.51 percent of the total population. Although this figure declined from 41.62 thousand people or 5.65 percent in 2024, the reduction remains relatively modest when viewed against the continuing socioeconomic pressures experienced by low-income households (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Banten, 2025). The persistence of poverty despite gradual statistical improvement suggests that economic growth alone has not fully translated into equitable welfare gains among vulnerable groups.



**Figure 6. Poverty Line and Dimensions**  
 Source: BPS, managed by the author (2026)

The field findings reveal that poverty in Serang City is strongly associated with unstable employment conditions, limited earning capacity, educational constraints, and unequal access to essential public services. These conditions reinforce one another and create a cycle of vulnerability that is difficult to escape through market participation alone. Similar conclusions were reported by Ningrum

et al. (2024), who found that unemployment, low educational attainment, and restricted access to healthcare constitute interconnected determinants of poverty in Serang City. The causal interaction among these variables indicates that poverty should be interpreted as a dynamic social process rather than a static economic status.

From a development planning perspective, accurate identification of vulnerable populations becomes a critical prerequisite for effective poverty alleviation policies. Development planning theories emphasize that public interventions can achieve their intended objectives only when supported by reliable socioeconomic information regarding target beneficiaries (Conyers & Hills, 1984). In the context of Serang City, the continuing existence of households located just above the poverty line illustrates the fragility of welfare improvements, as unexpected events such as job loss, inflation, illness, or changes in household composition can rapidly push families back into poverty. This condition reinforces the importance of social protection mechanisms that are capable of reaching not only the poor but also populations exposed to significant socioeconomic risks.

The findings position poverty in Serang City as a multidimensional and dynamic condition that requires integrated policy responses combining social protection and economic empowerment. The continuing presence of vulnerable households despite declining poverty rates demonstrates the necessity of improving targeting mechanisms, strengthening beneficiary identification systems, and ensuring that social assistance programs are directed toward populations facing the greatest socioeconomic risks.

### **Social Assistance Programs Implemented**

The social assistance programs examined in this study consist of the Family Social Security Program (Jamsos) and Productive Economic Enterprise Assistance (UEP), both of which represent complementary policy instruments within the broader framework of poverty alleviation. While Jamsos primarily focuses on short-term social protection through the provision of support for basic household needs, UEP is designed to strengthen beneficiaries' productive capacities by facilitating access to business capital and income-generating opportunities. The coexistence of these two programs reflects the growing recognition that poverty reduction strategies must balance immediate welfare support with longer-term economic empowerment initiatives (Todaro & Smith, 2020).

Field findings indicate that Jamsos plays an important role in reducing the financial burden faced by low-income households, particularly among families experiencing unstable income and limited economic resilience. Beneficiaries reported that the assistance contributed to maintaining household consumption and alleviating pressures associated with daily living expenses. Such outcomes are consistent with social protection literature emphasizing that targeted cash-based assistance can strengthen household resilience against economic shocks while preventing further deterioration of living conditions (World Bank, 2022). Within the context of Serang City, the program functions as a protective mechanism intended to safeguard vulnerable families from deeper poverty. At the same time, the effectiveness of Jamsos remains dependent on accurate beneficiary identification and administrative coordination to ensure that assistance reaches households experiencing the highest levels of socioeconomic vulnerability.

In contrast, UEP adopts an empowerment-oriented approach by encouraging beneficiaries to engage in productive economic activities capable of generating sustainable income. The program provides financial support intended to stimulate small-scale entrepreneurship and expand economic opportunities among poor households. Development planning scholars argue that poverty alleviation becomes more sustainable when public interventions facilitate the accumulation of productive assets and strengthen the economic capabilities of disadvantaged groups (Kuncoro, 2018). Evidence obtained during the study suggests that UEP possesses the potential to improve beneficiaries' economic independence when accompanied by adequate supervision, mentoring, and business development support. These findings indicate that productive assistance contributes not only to income generation but also to strengthening the long-term economic resilience of beneficiary households.

The distinction between Jamsos and UEP reflects two complementary dimensions of social welfare policy. Jamsos addresses immediate welfare deficits through social protection measures, whereas UEP seeks to address structural poverty by enhancing income-generating capacity. Similar policy integration has been identified as an essential component of effective poverty reduction because welfare assistance alone rarely produces lasting socioeconomic mobility among beneficiary households

(Siagian, 2008). Development planning frameworks further emphasize that policy outcomes depend on the alignment between program objectives, target populations, and implementation mechanisms (Tjokroamidjojo, 1995). Evidence from the field demonstrates that inaccurate targeting may reduce program effectiveness by directing assistance toward ineligible households while excluding individuals facing genuine socioeconomic hardship. The success of both programs therefore depends not only on the availability of assistance but also on the accuracy of social data, institutional coordination, and the capacity of implementing agencies to ensure that support is delivered to those most in need.

### Data Collection Mechanism and the Utilization of the National Single Social and Economic Data (DTSEN)

The implementation of social assistance programs in Indonesia increasingly relies on integrated data systems to improve targeting accuracy and strengthen evidence-based policymaking. The establishment of the National Single Social and Economic Data (DTSEN) represents a strategic effort to consolidate fragmented welfare databases into a unified information system capable of supporting social assistance distribution, policy evaluation, and development planning. Contemporary development planning literature emphasizes that the quality of public interventions is fundamentally dependent on the availability of accurate and up-to-date socioeconomic information concerning target populations (Conyers & Hills, 1984). Within this framework, DTSEN serves not merely as an administrative database but as an institutional instrument for improving the effectiveness of social protection programs. Field findings indicate that DTSEN functions as the primary reference for identifying prospective beneficiaries of Jamsos and UEP in Serang City. The system contains information regarding household welfare status, demographic characteristics, employment conditions, educational attainment, housing quality, and other socioeconomic indicators used to determine eligibility for social assistance. The integration of these variables enables policymakers to prioritize households experiencing higher levels of vulnerability while reducing reliance on fragmented administrative records. The official DTSEN platform was specifically designed to provide an integrated and continuously updated database capable of supporting social welfare interventions across multiple levels of government (Kementerian Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional/Bappenas, 2026).

Despite these institutional improvements, the findings reveal that data accuracy remains a significant challenge in maintaining precise beneficiary targeting. Several forms of administrative inconsistency continue to emerge, including duplicate records, outdated household information, unreported residential mobility, deaths that have not been recorded in the system, and changes in household economic conditions. These issues contribute to two common targeting errors within social assistance programs: exclusion errors, where eligible households fail to receive assistance, and inclusion errors, where assistance is allocated to households that no longer meet eligibility criteria. Similar concerns were identified by Tohari et al. (2019), who argued that weaknesses in data updating mechanisms and differences in local implementation practices can substantially affect the accuracy of poverty-targeting systems in Indonesia. The findings suggest that the effectiveness of DTSEN depends not only on the integration of socioeconomic data but also on continuous verification, regular data updating, and coordination among implementing institutions to ensure that social assistance is distributed to households experiencing genuine socioeconomic vulnerability.

Peran DTSEN dalam Ketepatan Sasaran Bantuan Sosial



Figure 7. The Role of DTSEN

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Central Statistics Agency, and compiled by the author (2026)

The strengthening of DTSEN has also been accompanied by regulatory reforms intended to improve data governance and institutional accountability. The issuance of Minister of Social Affairs Regulation No. 3 of 2025 established a new framework governing the updating, utilization, and monitoring of DTSEN while replacing the previous DTKS-based management system regulated under Ministerial Regulation No. 3 of 2021 (Kementerian Sosial Republik Indonesia, 2025). This regulatory transition reflects a broader policy shift toward a more integrated and dynamic approach to social welfare data management, recognizing that household socioeconomic conditions continuously evolve over time.

Evidence gathered during the study demonstrates that DTSEN-based targeting is conducted through welfare ranking, data matching, and verification procedures designed to identify households with the greatest socioeconomic vulnerability. Households located within lower welfare categories receive higher priority for assistance allocation because they face greater risks of poverty and social exclusion. The effectiveness of this approach remains contingent upon continuous data updating processes conducted through collaboration among village administrations, district authorities, social service agencies, and community-based reporting mechanisms. Population dynamics such as births, deaths, migration, employment transitions, and changes in household composition frequently alter welfare conditions, creating a need for ongoing data verification to preserve targeting accuracy (Ramadhan & Caesar, 2025).

From a development planning perspective, the utilization of DTSEN reflects a transition from assistance distribution based primarily on administrative eligibility toward a model grounded in data-driven social policy. Effective planning requires the systematic alignment of limited public resources with the populations facing the most pressing socioeconomic needs, particularly within contexts characterized by budgetary constraints and complex poverty dynamics (Hajar et al., 2022). The findings suggest that DTSEN has strengthened the institutional capacity of the Serang City government to identify vulnerable populations more systematically. Its contribution to poverty reduction, however, remains dependent upon sustained inter-agency coordination, regular data validation, field verification, and continuous monitoring mechanisms capable of ensuring that social assistance reaches households experiencing genuine socioeconomic hardship.

### **Distribution Process and Coordination among Program Implementers**

The implementation of social assistance programs in Serang City, particularly the Family Social Security Program (Jamsos) and Productive Economic Enterprise Assistance (UEP), represents an institutional mechanism through which local government seeks to fulfill the basic welfare rights of vulnerable populations. The Serang City Social Affairs Office functions as the primary implementing agency responsible for coordinating beneficiary identification, verification procedures, and assistance distribution in accordance with existing regulatory provisions governing poverty alleviation and social welfare services (Mahendra, 2023).



**Figure 8. An on-site interview with officials from the Banten Provincial Social Services Agency**  
Source: Personal Document (2026)

Field findings indicate that the distribution process begins with the utilization of the National Single Social and Economic Data (DTSEN) as the principal reference for identifying prospective beneficiaries. The Social Affairs Office integrates DTSEN information with demographic and socioeconomic indicators generated by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) to ensure that assistance is directed toward households experiencing the greatest levels of vulnerability. This integration reflects the increasing reliance on evidence-based welfare administration in which policy decisions are guided by standardized socioeconomic data rather than discretionary judgments alone (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026).

Inter-agency coordination constitutes a critical component of beneficiary selection. The Social Affairs Office collaborates with BPS in determining welfare classifications based on household deciles, with social assistance programs primarily targeted toward households located within welfare deciles one through five. Households categorized within the lowest deciles generally receive priority consideration because they experience higher levels of socioeconomic deprivation and face greater risks of exclusion from essential welfare services (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). The findings suggest that the use of welfare deciles contributes to a more systematic and transparent targeting process compared with approaches relying solely on administrative recommendations.

The selection mechanism for UEP beneficiaries demonstrates a more rigorous verification process due to the productive nature of the assistance provided. Community members may submit proposals through local administrative channels, after which prospective beneficiaries are screened using DTSEN records and subjected to direct field verification. Observational findings reveal that program implementers do not rely exclusively on administrative data; they conduct on-site assessments to evaluate actual household conditions and determine whether applicants possess the characteristics required to participate in productive economic activities (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). This procedure serves to reduce the possibility of allocating productive capital assistance to households that do not meet program objectives.



**Figure 9. Field observations by the Department of Social Services**  
Source: Social Services Department Spokesperson (2026)

Field verification functions not only as a mechanism for validating beneficiary data but also as a process for assessing the feasibility of proposed business activities. Program officers evaluate whether the requested assistance is intended to establish or strengthen small-scale economic enterprises rather than support businesses that have already achieved relative financial stability. This practice reflects the supervisory role of the Social Affairs Office in maintaining data accuracy and ensuring consistency between program objectives and beneficiary characteristics (Mahendra, 2023). Following beneficiary verification and the approval of the final recipient list, assistance is disbursed through a supervised administrative mechanism. Evidence from the study indicates that UEP beneficiaries receive direct assistance from social workers or program facilitators during the utilization of funds and are required

to provide proof of expenditure corresponding to the amount received. Such monitoring mechanisms are intended to strengthen accountability and minimize the risk of productive assistance being diverted toward short-term consumption needs (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026).

Despite the existence of structured administrative procedures, the implementation process continues to encounter coordination challenges. Several informants reported inconsistencies between administrative records and conditions encountered during program implementation, reflecting broader issues identified in social assistance evaluations where weaknesses in monitoring systems and institutional coordination contribute to targeting inefficiencies and implementation delays (Purnama et al., 2023). Communication gaps among distribution agencies, local governments, and community-level administrators also create obstacles in information sharing and beneficiary validation, reducing distribution effectiveness and increasing the possibility of discrepancies in beneficiary records during the disbursement process (Wijayanti et al., 2025). These findings indicate that effective program implementation requires not only reliable databases but also continuous communication and operational coordination among implementing actors.

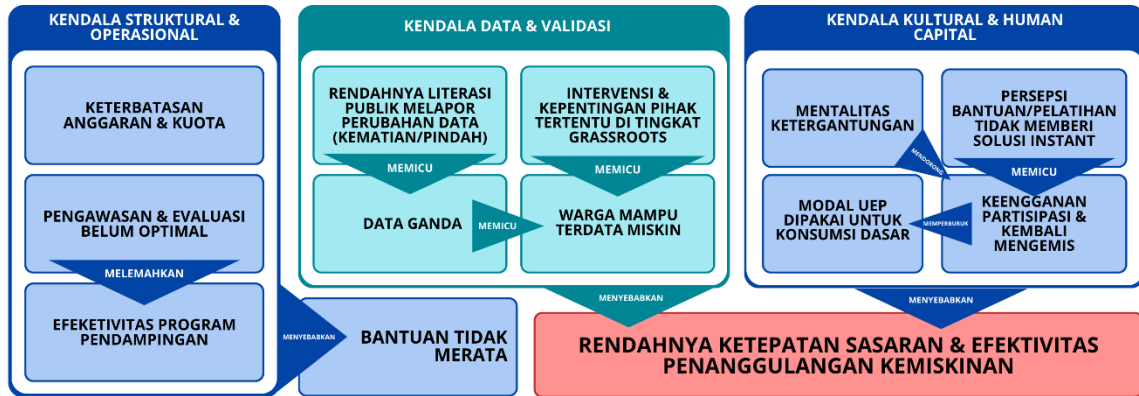
The study further reveals that limited socialization and coordination may influence public perceptions regarding program eligibility and fairness. Differences in understanding among program implementers, local communities, and vulnerable groups concerning beneficiary selection criteria can generate dissatisfaction and weaken public trust in social assistance programs, a pattern similarly identified in previous studies on welfare distribution and beneficiary prioritization (Melinda et al., 2025). The effectiveness of Jamsos and UEP is therefore closely associated with the quality of coordination established among supervisory institutions, field facilitators, and local administrative actors. Strong collaborative mechanisms enhance data accuracy, strengthen monitoring capacity, and improve targeting precision, thereby increasing the contribution of social assistance programs to poverty reduction efforts in Serang City.

### **Implementation Challenges and the Accuracy of Social Assistance Targeting**

The implementation of the Family Social Security Program (Jamsos) and Productive Economic Enterprise Assistance (UEP) in Serang City continues to face several critical challenges that affect targeting accuracy. Field findings indicate that one of the primary obstacles relates to budget limitations and the allocation quotas determined by the government. Social Affairs Office officials confirmed that although individuals may already be registered in DTSEN within priority welfare deciles (deciles 1–5), they are not guaranteed to receive assistance if the allocation quota provided by the provincial or municipal government has been fully exhausted during a particular distribution period (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). This condition reflects the continuing gap between the number of eligible beneficiaries and the fiscal capacity available to accommodate social welfare needs, a challenge frequently encountered in poverty alleviation programs (Mahendra, 2023).

Another significant challenge concerns the validity and dynamic nature of population data. Although beneficiary selection is conducted through a data-based system, field officers often encounter substantial discrepancies between administrative records and actual socioeconomic conditions. Cases of inclusion errors remain evident, where individuals categorized as poor in the database are found to possess relatively strong economic conditions and adequate living standards (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). Similar issues have been identified in social protection systems where data updating mechanisms are unable to keep pace with rapid socioeconomic changes among households (World Bank, 2022).

This situation is exacerbated by limited public awareness regarding the importance of reporting demographic changes, including residential mobility, deaths, or changes in household composition. Such circumstances contribute to duplicate records, outdated information, and inaccuracies within beneficiary databases, ultimately reducing targeting precision (Mahendra, 2023). Previous studies similarly found that weaknesses in administrative updating procedures remain a major source of targeting inefficiency in social assistance programs (Wijayanti et al., 2025). Field evidence also indicates that local social and political interests occasionally influence data collection processes, creating opportunities for economically capable households to be included among potential beneficiaries despite not meeting welfare criteria (Wijayanti et al., 2025; Tohari et al., 2019).



**Figure 10. Reasons for the Low Accuracy of Social Assistance Targeting in Indonesia**  
 Source: Author (2026)

Figure 10 illustrates the interaction between data-related constraints, structural weaknesses, and sociocultural factors that collectively influence the effectiveness of social assistance targeting. The diagram demonstrates how upstream challenges associated with data and validation processes intersect with structural and operational constraints, while simultaneously interacting with cultural barriers among beneficiaries. Data-related problems originate from limited public awareness regarding administrative reporting obligations, generating duplicate records and reducing database accuracy. Local social and political intervention during beneficiary identification may further distort targeting outcomes by facilitating the inclusion of households that no longer experience significant economic hardship.

At the structural level, weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms reduce the effectiveness of program supervision and beneficiary assistance. Limited institutional oversight contributes to uneven distribution practices and decreases the ability of implementing agencies to identify targeting errors in a timely manner, reflecting findings that emphasize the importance of monitoring systems in ensuring effective social assistance implementation (Purnama et al., 2023). From the perspective of culture and human capital, the implementation of empowerment-oriented programs such as UEP is also constrained by beneficiary mindsets and limited managerial capacity. Several recipients were found to discontinue their business activities after receiving assistance, while productive capital was frequently redirected toward meeting immediate household consumption needs rather than being reinvested for business development (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). These conditions indicate that financial assistance alone is often insufficient to generate sustainable economic transformation when entrepreneurial readiness remains weak.

These challenges are further reflected in the persistence of dependency-oriented attitudes among some beneficiaries, who tend to perceive assistance as a continuous source of support rather than an opportunity to strengthen economic independence (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). Similar patterns have been observed in poverty studies highlighting the influence of behavioral and cultural factors on individual responses to development interventions (Ningrum et al., 2024). A perception gap regarding empowerment programs also remains evident, particularly among beggars and other vulnerable groups who often regard training and productive assistance initiatives as incapable of providing immediate financial benefits, reducing participation and encouraging a return to previous livelihood strategies (Melinda et al., 2025). Weak monitoring systems and the limited utilization of information technology further reinforce these structural and cultural barriers, indicating that stronger data integration, improved supervision mechanisms, and continuous community-based guidance are necessary to enhance the effectiveness of Jamsos and UEP in reducing poverty in Serang City (Mahendra, 2023).

### The Impact of Social Assistance on Poverty Alleviation Efforts

The Impact of Social Assistance on Poverty Alleviation Efforts There is a tendency among beggars and other highly vulnerable groups to perceive training programs and empowerment-oriented assistance as incapable of providing immediate financial solutions to their daily economic needs,

leading to reluctance to participate and a preference for returning to previous livelihood practices (Melinda et al., 2025). Weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, coupled with the limited optimization of information systems at the implementation level, further contribute to the persistence of these structural and cultural challenges (Purnama et al., 2023). Similar conditions indicate that poverty alleviation programs require not only financial resources but also effective governance and continuous institutional oversight to ensure sustainable outcomes (Mahendra, 2023). The accumulation of these issues highlights the importance of periodic data integration and intensive social guidance to prevent stagnation in the effectiveness of poverty reduction efforts through Jamsos and UEP.



**Figure 11. Field observations conducted by the Banten Provincial Social Services Agency**  
Source: Banten Provincial Social Services Agency (2026)

The social assistance programs implemented in Serang City are fundamentally designed to address two important dimensions of poverty alleviation: short-term social protection and long-term economic empowerment. Charitable-oriented programs, such as the Family Social Security Program (Jamsos) and other regular assistance schemes, including the Non-Cash Food Assistance Program (BPNT), have made a significant contribution to reducing the burden of basic household expenditures and strengthening the resilience of vulnerable households against economic shocks (Wijayanti et al., 2025). Such interventions are consistent with the broader function of social protection systems in safeguarding household welfare during periods of economic uncertainty (Todaro & Smith, 2020). Nevertheless, the impact of these programs remains largely temporary and has not fundamentally enabled poor households to escape poverty in a sustainable manner (Purnama et al., 2023).

On the other hand, the Productive Economic Enterprise Assistance (UEP) program, which is specifically intended to promote self-reliance and economic advancement among beneficiary households, demonstrates highly varied outcomes in practice. The findings indicate that the effectiveness of UEP is closely associated with the socioeconomic characteristics of beneficiaries and their capacity to manage productive resources. This variation suggests that economic empowerment programs are influenced not only by the availability of financial capital but also by the readiness of beneficiaries to transform assistance into sustainable economic activities (Kuncoro, 2018).



**Figure 12. An on-site interview with officials from the Banten Provincial Social Services Agency**  
Source: Personal Document (2026)

According to information provided by Social Affairs Office officials, the success of UEP in reducing poverty is strongly dependent on the quality of human resources and the basic economic stability of recipient households (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). Empirical evidence shows that when households lack a stable source of income, such as families relying on irregular daily wage labor, UEP funds are frequently diverted to cover immediate consumption needs despite increases in the amount of assistance provided. As a result, business capital is gradually depleted, limiting opportunities for enterprise growth and reflecting a failure in capital accumulation processes (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). Similar patterns have been identified in poverty studies emphasizing the vulnerability of low-income households to short-term economic pressures (Ningrum et al., 2024).

Social Affairs Office officials also emphasized that the empowerment impact of UEP is often reduced by cultural barriers, particularly fatalistic attitudes and dependency-oriented mindsets among some beneficiaries (Aparatur Dinas Sosial Kota Serang, 2026). Certain recipients tend to view their socioeconomic condition as an unavoidable circumstance and demonstrate limited motivation to expand their businesses or pursue economic innovation. Assistance is consequently perceived as a recurring source of support rather than as a means of building economic independence. These findings indicate that financial capital alone is insufficient to produce meaningful poverty graduation outcomes when entrepreneurial attitudes and self-development capacities remain underdeveloped.

The limited impact of empowerment programs is also reflected among highly vulnerable groups such as homeless individuals and beggars. Social assistance programs and vocational training initiatives are frequently perceived as policies that do not provide immediate solutions to daily economic challenges (Melinda et al., 2025). As a result, many individuals choose to continue begging rather than transition to alternative occupations through empowerment programs. This phenomenon is further reinforced by the continuing practice of giving cash donations in public spaces, which unintentionally sustains street-based survival strategies (Melinda et al., 2025).

These findings support the argument that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon rooted in interconnected factors such as limited educational attainment, unemployment, economic vulnerability, and social-cultural conditions (Ningrum et al., 2024). Poverty alleviation strategies therefore require integrated interventions that address both structural and behavioral dimensions rather than relying solely on financial assistance. Development policies that focus exclusively on resource transfers often encounter limitations when broader socioeconomic constraints remain unresolved (Todaro & Smith, 2020).

The authority exercised by the Serang City Social Affairs Office in distributing Jamsos and UEP has functioned as an important instrument for fulfilling the basic rights of poor communities and improving their welfare conditions (Mahendra, 2023). From the perspective of long-term impact, however, these programs have not yet fully succeeded in addressing poverty at a structural level. The transition from welfare dependency to economic self-sufficiency requires policy innovations that extend beyond financial transfers, including intensive financial management assistance, capacity-building

initiatives, entrepreneurial mentoring, and program approaches that are responsive to local cultural characteristics (Purnama et al., 2023). Strengthening these dimensions is essential for enhancing the sustainability and effectiveness of poverty alleviation efforts in Serang City.

## CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that the implementation of the National Single Social and Economic Data (DTSEN) has significantly improved the quality of social assistance beneficiary identification in Serang City. DTSEN enables the government to assess prospective beneficiaries based on household vulnerability, welfare deciles, and socioeconomic conditions, thereby strengthening the targeting process. Nevertheless, targeting accuracy remains constrained by several challenges, including outdated records, duplicate data, changes in household socioeconomic circumstances, budget and quota limitations, and the continued need for field-based verification and validation. The study indicates that the effectiveness of DTSEN depends not only on the availability of integrated data but also on institutional coordination, data updating mechanisms, administrative capacity, and continuous monitoring throughout the implementation process.

The Family Social Security Program (Jamsos) and Productive Economic Enterprise Assistance (UEP) function as complementary instruments in poverty reduction efforts. Jamsos contributes to short-term social protection by helping vulnerable households meet basic needs and maintain purchasing power, whereas UEP seeks to strengthen economic self-reliance through productive business activities. The effectiveness of UEP, however, remains closely associated with beneficiary readiness, business mentoring, monitoring mechanisms, and the capacity of recipients to manage assistance productively. Strengthening data updating procedures, improving coordination among implementing institutions, enhancing beneficiary supervision, and expanding empowerment-based assistance are essential for increasing targeting accuracy and maximizing the contribution of DTSEN-based social assistance to sustainable poverty reduction in Serang City.

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