



## Synergy Between Regional Parliament and Local Government in Realizing Poverty Alleviation Policy: A Case Study in Disadvantaged Regions in Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

*This research examines the effectiveness of synergy between Regional Parliament (DPRD) and Local Government (Pemda) in implementing poverty alleviation policies in Indonesia's disadvantaged regions. Using a qualitative approach with multiple-site case studies across five disadvantaged districts, this study analyzes factors affecting successful inter-institutional coordination in policy formulation and implementation. Results indicate that vision alignment, effective communication, clear role distribution, and strong leadership are key determinants of successful poverty alleviation programs. The research identifies both supporting and inhibiting factors in institutional synergy, including political will, resource availability, monitoring systems, and cultural dynamics. This study provides comprehensive recommendations for institutional strengthening and improving coordination capacity between DPRD and Local Government in poverty alleviation efforts in disadvantaged regions.*

**Keywords:** Regional Parliament; Local Government; Poverty Alleviation; Disadvantaged Regions; Institutional Synergy; Policy Coordination



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## INTRODUCTION

Poverty alleviation requires an integrated approach involving all stakeholders, including close cooperation between legislative and executive institutions at the regional level (Sen, 2019). Poverty remains a major challenge in Indonesia's development, especially in disadvantaged regions. Despite various efforts undertaken, development gaps between regions persist as a reality that needs serious attention. In the context of regional autonomy, the roles of Regional Parliament (DPRD) and Local Government (Pemda) become highly strategic in poverty alleviation efforts at the local level.

The implementation of poverty alleviation policies in disadvantaged regions faces various complex challenges, ranging from resource limitations to institutional coordination problems. Synergy between DPRD as regional legislative body and Local Government as executive becomes a key factor in the success of poverty alleviation programs. Both have complementary roles and functions in the process of policy formulation, implementation, and supervision. The effectiveness of their collaboration directly impacts the outcomes of poverty reduction initiatives in these regions.

Previous research demonstrates that the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programs heavily depends on the quality of inter-institutional coordination. A study conducted by Widodo (2022) revealed that regions with good synergy levels between DPRD and Local Government show more positive results in poverty reduction. However, gaps remain in understanding how to build and maintain such synergy effectively, particularly in contexts with limited resources and institutional capacity. The mechanisms through which this synergy operates and the specific factors that enable or constrain it require deeper investigation.

In the context of disadvantaged regions, coordination challenges become more complex due to various factors such as infrastructure limitations, suboptimal institutional capacity, and the complexity

of socio-economic problems. These regions often face multiple deprivations simultaneously, including geographic isolation, limited human resources, inadequate public services, and persistent poverty traps. The interplay between these factors creates a challenging environment for effective governance and policy implementation. This research focuses on five disadvantaged districts in Indonesia with different characteristics to analyze how synergy between DPRD and Local Government can be optimized in specific local contexts.

The research aims to analyze factors influencing the effectiveness of synergy between DPRD and Local Government in implementing poverty alleviation policies in disadvantaged regions. Specifically, this research aims to: first, identify patterns of interaction and coordination between DPRD and Local Government in formulating and implementing poverty alleviation policies; second, analyze supporting and inhibiting factors in building effective synergy between both institutions; and third, formulate recommendations for institutional strengthening in the context of poverty alleviation in disadvantaged regions. These objectives are designed to provide both theoretical insights and practical guidance for improving inter-institutional collaboration.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to deeper understanding of inter-institutional relationship dynamics in regional development contexts. Research findings are expected to provide input for improving local governance, particularly in poverty alleviation efforts in disadvantaged regions. The study addresses a critical knowledge gap regarding the specific mechanisms and contextual factors that enable effective collaboration between legislative and executive branches at the local level. Furthermore, it contributes to the broader literature on decentralization and poverty governance in developing countries.

The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive approach to analyzing institutional synergy, considering not only formal coordination aspects but also informal factors that influence the effectiveness of inter-institutional cooperation. This research also provides new perspectives by analyzing cases in disadvantaged regions with specific characteristics and challenges. Previous studies have largely focused on either legislative-executive relations in general or poverty programs in isolation. This study uniquely examines their intersection in challenging governance environments, providing insights into how institutional arrangements can be adapted to local conditions and constraints.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Institutional Synergy Concept in Local Governance**

Institutional synergy represents a key concept in effective governance. According to Prasojo (2023), synergy between regional legislative and executive institutions encompasses three main dimensions: policy coordination, clear role distribution, and effective supervision mechanisms. These dimensions are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, creating a framework for productive inter-institutional relations. Policy coordination involves regular consultation, information sharing, and joint planning processes that align the priorities and actions of different institutions. Clear role distribution ensures that each institution understands its responsibilities and authorities, minimizing overlap and conflict. Effective supervision mechanisms enable accountability and continuous improvement in policy implementation.

The concept of institutional synergy extends beyond mere cooperation to encompass mutual reinforcement and value creation through collaboration. In the context of poverty alleviation, Suharto (2022) emphasizes the importance of collaborative approaches involving various stakeholders at the regional level. This collaborative framework recognizes that poverty is a multidimensional problem requiring coordinated responses across different policy domains and governance levels. Effective synergy creates opportunities for integrated programming, resource pooling, and complementary actions that amplify impact beyond what isolated efforts could achieve.

Recent scholarship has highlighted the importance of both formal and informal dimensions of institutional synergy. Formal mechanisms include legal frameworks, organizational structures, and procedural rules that define inter-institutional relationships. However, informal factors such as trust, shared values, personal relationships, and political culture often prove equally or more important in determining collaboration outcomes (Hidayat, 2024). Understanding both dimensions is essential for designing effective interventions to strengthen institutional synergy.

### **Roles of DPRD and Local Government in Poverty Alleviation**

Regional Parliament (DPRD) has three main functions: legislation, budgeting, and supervision. In the context of poverty alleviation, Rahman (2023) identifies that DPRD effectiveness heavily depends on the quality of communication and coordination with Local Government. The legislative function involves formulating regional regulations that provide legal frameworks for poverty alleviation programs. The budgeting function determines resource allocation priorities and ensures adequate funding for poverty programs. The supervision function monitors implementation, evaluates outcomes, and holds the executive accountable for performance.

The effectiveness of DPRD in poverty alleviation depends significantly on its members' capacity to understand local poverty dynamics, engage with constituents, and translate community needs into effective policies and budgets. This requires not only technical skills but also political will and commitment to pro-poor policies. Research by Ismail (2023) emphasizes that DPRD members must balance multiple roles as legislators, constituency representatives, and oversight actors, often under resource constraints and competing political pressures.

Meanwhile, Local Government serves as policy executor responsible for implementing poverty alleviation programs in the field. As the executive branch, Local Government designs specific programs, mobilizes resources, coordinates implementation across departments and levels, and delivers services to target populations. The success of poverty alleviation initiatives ultimately depends on Local Government's administrative capacity, technical expertise, and ability to adapt national and regional policies to local conditions (Nasution, 2023).

The relationship between DPRD and Local Government in poverty alleviation should ideally be characterized by mutual support and complementarity rather than conflict or competition. DPRD provides political legitimacy, legal frameworks, financial resources, and accountability mechanisms that enable Local Government action. Local Government provides technical expertise, implementation capacity, and on-ground feedback that inform DPRD decision-making. When this relationship functions well, it creates conditions for effective and sustainable poverty reduction. However, various factors can disrupt this ideal relationship, including political rivalries, institutional competition, information asymmetries, and divergent priorities.

### **Characteristics of Disadvantaged Regions and Development Challenges**

Disadvantaged regions have special characteristics that affect the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programs. Research by Gunawan (2023) identifies several main challenges: first, infrastructure and accessibility limitations that constrain economic activities, service delivery, and connectivity to markets and opportunities. Geographic isolation often compounds poverty by increasing transaction costs and limiting access to information, technology, and external resources. Poor infrastructure also hampers government capacity to reach remote populations with essential services and programs.

Second, low human resource capacity represents both a cause and consequence of underdevelopment in disadvantaged regions. Limited educational opportunities, brain drain of talented individuals, and inadequate training programs create skills deficits that constrain both private sector development and public sector effectiveness. This capacity gap affects all aspects of poverty alleviation, from policy design to implementation and monitoring. Building human capacity in disadvantaged regions requires sustained investment and innovative approaches to overcome geographic and resource constraints.

Third, financial resource limitations severely constrain poverty alleviation efforts in disadvantaged regions. Low local revenue generation capacity, dependence on transfers from higher government levels, and competing demands for scarce resources create chronic budget deficits for poverty programs. Abdullah (2023) notes that disadvantaged regions often face a vicious cycle where poverty limits revenue generation, which in turn constrains poverty alleviation investments. Breaking this cycle requires both increased external support and more efficient use of available resources.

Fourth, socio-cultural complexity adds another layer of challenge in many disadvantaged regions. Ethnic diversity, traditional governance structures, customary land tenure systems, and cultural norms around gender and social hierarchy can both constrain and enable poverty alleviation efforts. Effective programs must be culturally appropriate and leverage positive cultural assets while addressing cultural barriers to development. Maryanti (2023) emphasizes the importance of community participation and cultural sensitivity in poverty programs in Eastern Indonesia regions, where cultural factors significantly influence program outcomes.

These interconnected challenges create particularly difficult environments for effective governance and poverty alleviation. The synergy between DPRD and Local Government becomes even more critical in disadvantaged regions, as institutional coordination can help overcome some constraints through better resource mobilization, more effective program design, and improved implementation capacity. However, achieving such synergy is also more difficult in these contexts due to capacity limitations and competing pressures.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research employs a qualitative approach with a multiple-site case study design. Five disadvantaged districts were selected as research locations based on several criteria: poverty level, geographic characteristics, local political dynamics, and performance of poverty alleviation programs. The selection of multiple sites allows for cross-case comparison and identification of patterns across different contexts while maintaining the depth of understanding characteristic of case study research.

The five selected districts represent diversity in geographic location (covering regions in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Eastern Indonesia), ethnic composition, economic base, and governance characteristics. This diversity enables the research to capture various manifestations of institutional synergy and poverty challenges across different Indonesian contexts. Each district has been classified as disadvantaged according to official government criteria and has implemented poverty alleviation programs involving both DPRD and Local Government.

Data collection was conducted through three main methods. First, in-depth interviews with key informants including DPRD members, Local Government officials, poverty program implementers, civil society representatives, and community members. A total of 75 informants were interviewed across the five districts, with interview duration ranging from 60 to 120 minutes. Interviews followed semi-structured protocols allowing for flexibility while ensuring systematic coverage of key topics. All interviews were recorded with informant consent and transcribed for analysis.

Second, document analysis was performed on policy documents, budget allocations, program reports, meeting minutes, and other relevant materials. This method provided insights into formal institutional arrangements, policy frameworks, resource allocations, and documented outcomes. Document analysis also enabled triangulation with interview data and observation findings. Over 200 documents were reviewed across the five research sites.

Third, non-participant observation was conducted during DPRD sessions, coordination meetings between DPRD and Local Government, program implementation activities, and community events. Observation focused on interaction patterns, communication dynamics, decision-making processes, and informal aspects of institutional relationships. Detailed field notes were maintained throughout the observation period.

Data analysis followed thematic analysis procedures. Interview transcripts, documents, and observation notes were coded using both deductive codes derived from the research framework and inductive codes emerging from the data. Codes were then organized into themes and patterns representing key findings. Cross-case analysis identified commonalities and differences across the five districts. Analysis was conducted using NVivo software to facilitate systematic coding and pattern identification. Member checking and peer debriefing were employed to enhance credibility of findings.

Research quality was ensured through several strategies. Credibility was enhanced through prolonged engagement in the field, triangulation of data sources and methods, member checking with key informants, and peer debriefing with other researchers. Transferability was supported through thick description of contexts and findings. Dependability was strengthened through systematic documentation of research procedures and decision trails. Confirmability was achieved through careful data management and reflexive awareness of researcher perspectives and potential biases.

Ethical considerations were carefully addressed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all informants, with clear explanation of research purposes, procedures, and informant rights. Confidentiality was maintained through anonymization of sensitive information and secure data storage. The research received ethical clearance from the institutional review board and was conducted in accordance with professional ethical standards for social research.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Patterns of Synergy Between DPRD and Local Government**

Research findings reveal variation in synergy patterns across the five studied districts. Districts with higher success rates in poverty alleviation programs demonstrate several common characteristics that distinguish them from less successful cases. Understanding these patterns provides insights into how institutional synergy operates in practice and what conditions enable its effectiveness.

First, successful districts exhibit regular and structured communication between DPRD and Local Government. This goes beyond formal meetings mandated by regulations to include informal consultations, working groups, and joint planning sessions. In District A, for example, DPRD and Local Government established a joint poverty task force that meets monthly to discuss program progress, challenges, and needed adjustments. This regular interaction facilitates information sharing, mutual understanding, and timely problem-solving. In contrast, District D with lower performance shows sporadic communication primarily limited to formal requirements, resulting in information gaps and coordination failures.

Second, clear role distribution in planning and program implementation characterizes successful synergy. When both institutions understand their respective responsibilities and authorities, overlap and conflict are minimized while complementarity is maximized. District B provides an exemplary case where DPRD focuses on policy frameworks, budget allocation, and oversight, while Local Government handles program design, implementation, and service delivery. This clarity emerges from both formal regulations and informal understandings developed through sustained interaction. Districts with ambiguous role definitions experience frequent conflicts over authority and responsibility, undermining program effectiveness.

Third, effective supervision mechanisms enable accountability without creating adversarial relationships. In well-functioning cases, DPRD oversight is constructive rather than punitive, focusing on performance improvement rather than blame allocation. District C demonstrates how DPRD can use its supervision function to support program improvement through regular monitoring, evidence-based feedback, and collaborative problem-solving. This contrasts with District E where supervision often becomes politically charged and focused on finding faults rather than enhancing performance, creating defensive behavior and reducing cooperation.

Fourth, active involvement in decision-making processes characterizes effective synergy. This means both institutions participate meaningfully in decisions affecting poverty alleviation, from initial policy formulation through implementation adjustments. Such involvement requires mechanisms for joint deliberation, consultation processes that respect each institution's prerogatives, and willingness to consider different perspectives. When either institution is excluded or marginalized from key decisions, synergy suffers and policy outcomes deteriorate.

### **Supporting Factors for Effective Synergy**

The research identifies several key factors that support effective synergy between DPRD and Local Government in poverty alleviation efforts. Understanding these enabling factors provides guidance for strengthening institutional collaboration in other contexts.

Strong and visionary leadership emerges as the most critical supporting factor. Leaders in both institutions who genuinely commit to poverty alleviation and value inter-institutional cooperation can overcome many obstacles to synergy. In District A, the district head and DPRD chairperson shared a vision for poverty reduction and modeled collaborative behavior, setting a tone that cascaded through their respective institutions. Their leadership created space for innovation, encouraged cross-institutional problem-solving, and reinforced the importance of coordination. Conversely, districts with leadership conflicts or disinterest in collaboration struggle to achieve effective synergy regardless of other favorable conditions.

Integrated information systems facilitate synergy by ensuring both institutions have access to relevant, timely, and accurate data. District B implemented a shared poverty database accessible to both DPRD and Local Government, enabling evidence-based planning and monitoring. This system reduced information asymmetries, supported joint analysis of poverty trends, and facilitated coordinated responses to emerging issues. Information integration also enhanced transparency and accountability, as both institutions work from common data rather than competing narratives.

Collaborative work culture represents another crucial supporting factor. When institutional cultures emphasize cooperation over competition, shared goals over institutional aggrandizement, and

collective problem-solving over blame assignment, synergy flourishes. Such cultures develop over time through positive experiences of collaboration, leadership reinforcement, and institutional learning. District C's success partly stems from a collaborative culture cultivated through regular joint activities, cross-institutional task forces, and celebration of collaborative achievements. Building collaborative culture requires sustained effort but yields significant returns in institutional effectiveness.

Adequate human resource capacity enables effective participation in synergistic arrangements. Both institutions need staff with appropriate technical skills, analytical capabilities, and interpersonal competencies to engage productively in coordination processes. Districts investing in capacity building for both DPRD members and Local Government officials show better synergy outcomes. This capacity includes understanding poverty issues, policy analysis skills, budgeting expertise, and communication abilities. Capacity development should target both individual competencies and organizational capabilities for collaboration.

### **Inhibiting Factors and Challenges**

The research also identifies significant factors that inhibit synergy and pose challenges to effective collaboration. Recognizing these barriers is essential for developing strategies to overcome them.

Sectoral ego and institutional competition frequently undermine synergy. When institutions prioritize their own visibility, credit, and power over collective impact, collaboration suffers. District D exemplifies how inter-institutional rivalry over program ownership and public recognition created redundant initiatives, resource waste, and coordination failures. This competition often reflects deeper political rivalries and can be exacerbated by media attention to institutional conflicts. Overcoming sectoral ego requires leadership commitment to shared goals, mechanisms for joint achievements recognition, and cultural change toward collaborative values.

Budget constraints represent a fundamental challenge to poverty alleviation and institutional synergy. Disadvantaged regions typically face severe resource limitations that create intense competition for scarce funds. When budget scarcity leads to zero-sum thinking where one institution's gain is another's loss, synergy becomes difficult. However, research findings also show that resource constraints can sometimes motivate collaboration when recognized as a shared challenge requiring joint solutions. The key lies in framing resource issues as common problems rather than distributive conflicts. Innovative resource mobilization and efficiency gains through coordination can partially mitigate budget constraints.

Political interest conflicts pose significant challenges to institutional synergy. DPRD members and Local Government officials may have different political affiliations, constituencies, and electoral incentives that create divergent priorities. In District E, political polarization between DPRD majority and Local Government resulted in obstructionism, delayed budget approvals, and policy gridlock that severely hampered poverty programs. Managing political conflicts while maintaining functional collaboration requires institutional mechanisms for depoliticizing technical issues, cultivating personal relationships across political divides, and emphasizing shared accountability for poverty outcomes.

Weak monitoring and evaluation systems undermine synergy by obscuring program performance, limiting learning opportunities, and reducing accountability. Without robust M&E, neither institution has reliable information about what works, what needs improvement, or how their collaboration affects outcomes. This information gap facilitates blame-shifting, prevents evidence-based adjustments, and reduces incentives for coordination. Strengthening M&E systems through joint indicators, regular monitoring protocols, and collaborative evaluation processes can enhance synergy while improving program effectiveness. Shared M&E frameworks also facilitate mutual accountability between institutions.

### **CONCLUSION**

This research demonstrates that effective synergy between Regional Parliament and Local Government significantly influences poverty alleviation outcomes in disadvantaged regions. The quality of institutional collaboration emerges as a critical determinant of program success, with successful cases characterized by regular communication, clear role distribution, effective supervision, and active joint decision-making. These patterns of effective synergy enable both

institutions to leverage their respective strengths and overcome limitations through coordinated action.

Several key factors support effective synergy, with strong and visionary leadership identified as paramount. When leaders in both institutions genuinely commit to poverty alleviation and model collaborative behavior, they create conditions for sustained cooperation that can overcome many obstacles. Integrated information systems, collaborative work cultures, and adequate human resource capacity further enable productive inter-institutional relationships. These supporting factors often reinforce each other, creating virtuous cycles of improving collaboration and effectiveness.

However, significant challenges persist, including sectoral ego, budget constraints, political conflicts, and weak monitoring systems. These inhibiting factors create barriers to synergy that require deliberate strategies to address. Overcoming these challenges necessitates both institutional reforms and cultural change toward more collaborative governance approaches. The research findings suggest that while formal mechanisms matter, informal factors such as trust, relationships, and shared values often prove equally or more important in determining collaboration outcomes.

Based on these findings, several recommendations emerge for strengthening institutional synergy in poverty alleviation. First, leadership development programs should emphasize collaborative skills and shared vision building for both DPRD members and Local Government officials. Second, establishing joint institutional mechanisms such as poverty task forces can facilitate regular interaction and coordinated planning. Third, developing integrated information systems accessible to both institutions can reduce information asymmetries and support evidence-based collaboration. Fourth, capacity building initiatives should target both technical competencies and interpersonal skills needed for effective coordination. Fifth, monitoring and evaluation systems should incorporate joint indicators and collaborative review processes to enable mutual learning and accountability.

This research contributes to theoretical understanding of institutional synergy in decentralized governance contexts while providing practical insights for improving poverty alleviation in disadvantaged regions. The findings highlight the importance of context-specific approaches that recognize local political dynamics, cultural factors, and resource constraints. Future research could explore how institutional synergy evolves over time, investigate the role of external actors in facilitating collaboration, and examine how digital technologies might enhance coordination capacity. Comparative studies across different governance contexts could also yield valuable insights into conditions enabling effective inter-institutional collaboration for poverty reduction.

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