Strategies Of Bengkulu City Social Service In Distributing Social Assistance For Natural Disaster Victims

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Abstract. This study aims to determine and analyze the strategy of the Bengkulu City Social Service in distributing social assistance to natural disaster victims so that the assistance is accurate, efficient, and effective in Bengkulu City. This research uses a qualitative approach presented descriptively, with three informants selected for data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation. Based on the results of the research and discussion using the SWOT Analysis theory as the basis for organizational strategy preparation by Slamet Riyanto (2021:28), which consists of four indicators, the findings show that the Social Service has implemented a distribution strategy that is generally effective, yet still requires internal strengthening and optimal utilization of external opportunities to respond to various disaster risks sustainably. The results indicate that the Bengkulu City Social Service possesses strong institutional capacity, trained human resources, responsive procedures, and adaptive coordination, supported by clear SOPs that facilitate smooth distribution of disaster assistance. Limitations appear in budget constraints, irregular training, incomplete digital data systems, and less optimal internal communication. Significant opportunities arise from government policy support, cross sector collaboration, digital system development, and high community participation in disaster management. Various threats, including disaster uncertainty, political dynamics, physical barriers, and potential public complaints, have been addressed through preparedness efforts, standby logistics, and fast, humane service delivery.

Keywords: *Strategy, Social Assistance Distribution, Social Services Office.*

INTRODUCTION

Natural disasters remain one of the most persistent challenges faced by many regions in Indonesia, particularly in areas with high environmental vulnerability. Bengkulu City, located along the western coast of Sumatra, is categorized as one of the regions with recurrent disaster occurrences, especially floods, landslides, and other hydrometeorological events. These disasters frequently disrupt social and economic activities, damage residential areas, and threaten the welfare and security of local communities. As a result, the role of government institutions in disaster response, particularly in the distribution of social assistance, becomes essential to ensure that the needs of disaster victims are met promptly and efficiently.

The Social Service Office of Bengkulu City holds a strategic position as the government unit responsible for disaster related social protection, emergency response, and the distribution of essential aid. Its role includes managing resources, coordinating with cross sector institutions, and ensuring the delivery of basic necessities such as food, temporary shelter, clothing, and psychosocial support. However, the distribution of social assistance in disaster situations is often confronted with complex challenges. These challenges may involve limited availability of accurate data, geographical barriers that hinder access, budget constraints, communication

gaps between agencies, and risks of delays in aid delivery. Considering these obstacles, the Social Service Office is required to develop strategic frameworks that are adaptive, responsive, and aligned with regulatory standards.

Indonesia has established a strong legal foundation for disaster management and assistance distribution. Several regulations guide the implementation of social protection during emergencies, including the Law on Disaster Management, the Law on Handling the Poor, and the Government Regulation on the Implementation of Social Welfare. These laws outline the responsibilities of central and regional governments in providing timely and appropriate assistance to disaster victims. In line with these regulations, the Ministry of Social Affairs also issues specific guidelines that define procedures for social assistance distribution during disasters. These guidelines emphasize the importance of accuracy, transparency, efficiency, and coordination among relevant institutions.

In Bengkulu City, disaster events have shown recurring patterns, with certain districts consistently identified as high risk areas. These areas often experience severe impacts, resulting in significant numbers of affected households that require immediate assistance. The Social Service Office has established operational procedures that begin with receiving disaster reports, conducting field assessments, verifying affected households, coordinating with leadership, preparing aid packages, and deploying personnel to distribute assistance. The presence of trained disaster response members, including Taruna Siaga Bencana (Tagana), further supports the operational capacity of the Social Service Office in managing disaster situations.Despite the existence of structured standard operating procedures, practical implementation in the field is not always optimal. Variations in disaster intensity, sudden increases in the number of victims, and unpredictable environmental conditions require the Social Service Office to consistently evaluate and improve its strategies. The need for accurate and real time data collection remains critical, as inaccurate data may lead to mistargeted distribution, delays, or unequal allocation of resources. Moreover, limited budget availability restricts the ability to conduct routine training programs or expand logistical capacity. These challenges highlight the necessity for a strategic analysis that can help identify internal strengths, weaknesses, external opportunities, and potential threats that may influence the effectiveness of assistance distribution.

One analytical method that is useful in evaluating organizational strategy is SWOT Analysis. This approach examines the internal strengths and weaknesses of an institution along with the external opportunities and threats that shape its operational environment. Through this analysis, decision makers can develop strategies that maximize existing strengths, minimize weaknesses, capitalize on opportunities, and anticipate threats that may occur. Applying SWOT Analysis to the Social Service Office of Bengkulu City can provide a structured overview of how the institution manages disaster response and how its strategies influence the overall effectiveness of social assistance distribution.

The need for accurate and efficient social assistance distribution in disaster situations has become increasingly important, especially considering the rising frequency of extreme weather events associated with climate change. Communities affected by disasters rely on immediate support to restore their basic needs and sustain their livelihoods. Therefore, the quality of service provided by the Social Service Office reflects not only institutional performance but also the government's commitment to social protection and humanitarian responsibility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Studies

Several previous studies provide a conceptual foundation for understanding the strategic role of government institutions in distributing social assistance to disaster victims. A study by

Sabila Wetania (2023) examined the strategy of the Social Service Office in distributing logistical assistance during flood disasters in Aceh Selatan. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the research identified that the implementation of aid distribution had been carried out well, yet still faced limitations related to human resources, budget availability, and logistical capacity. This study highlights the importance of improving institutional readiness and optimizing available resources to ensure timely distribution of assistance.

Another relevant study was conducted by Sukmiridiyanto, focusing on the strategic management of public organizations, particularly in the contexts of Surabaya City and the Jakarta Provincial Government. The study emphasized how technology integration and the participation of stakeholders significantly improve the performance of public service institutions. Findings indicated that clear strategic planning and adaptive implementation play an essential role in enhancing service quality, although challenges such as bureaucratic resistance and institutional rigidity remain. These previous studies demonstrate the importance of strategic approaches in public sector management, particularly within disaster response operations.

The similarities across these studies lie in the use of qualitative methods and the emphasis on strategy formulation and implementation in public service institutions. However, each study differs in its theoretical focus. For instance, Wetania employs descriptive analysis related to disaster logistics, whereas Sukmiridiyanto's work explores strategic management frameworks and public governance. This study adopts SWOT Analysis as proposed by Slamet Riyanto, highlighting its relevance for identifying internal and external factors that affect organizational performance in disaster related social assistance distribution.

Concept of Strategy

The concept of strategy has evolved from its early origins in military science to its present application in business, public administration, and social policy. Strategy is generally defined as a long term plan designed to achieve specific goals through the effective use of organizational resources. Chandler (1962) defines strategy as the determination of long term objectives accompanied by the allocation of resources necessary to accomplish these goals. This definition emphasizes the forward looking nature of strategy and its role in guiding institutional direction.

Porter (1996) views strategy as the creation of a unique and valuable position achieved through a set of different activities. This perspective underlines the importance of differentiation and identifies strategy as a pattern of actions that distinguish one organization from others. Marrus (2002) further explains that strategy is a structured plan determined by top level leadership to ensure that organizational objectives are accomplished through systematically designed actions.

In the context of public institutions, strategy serves as a mechanism to align organizational capabilities with community needs. Public sector organizations, unlike private firms, must consider the interests of multiple stakeholders. This makes the formulation of strategy more complex, requiring considerations of political influences, regulatory frameworks, and public accountability.

SWOT Analysis as a Strategic Framework

SWOT Analysis is a widely used strategic planning tool that assesses an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses along with external opportunities and threats. Developed in the 1970s, the framework provides a systematic approach to identifying factors that influence organizational performance. According to Slamet Riyanto (2021), SWOT Analysis helps organizations map their current conditions and formulate strategies that leverage strengths, reduce weaknesses, utilize opportunities, and anticipate threats.

a. Strengths

Strengths refer to internal capabilities that provide an advantage over others. These include institutional expertise, availability of trained personnel, clear procedures, and supportive organizational culture. Strengths enable institutions to respond effectively to challenges and to maintain operational stability.

b. Weaknesses

Weaknesses are internal limitations that hinder organizational performance. These may include insufficient budget allocation, lack of updated data systems, inadequate training programs, or communication barriers. Identifying weaknesses is critical to preventing operational failures and improving institutional capacity.

c. Opportunities

Opportunities are external conditions that may benefit an organization. In the context of public service delivery, opportunities may arise from government policies, technological advancements, cross sector collaborations, and increased public awareness related to disaster preparedness.

d. Threats

Threats refer to external challenges that may disrupt organizational operations. These may include unpredictable disaster occurrences, political instability, geographical constraints, and public dissatisfaction. Understanding threats is necessary for developing anticipatory measures and improving institutional resilience.

SWOT Analysis is relevant to this study because it provides a structured way to examine how the Bengkulu City Social Service Office manages its disaster assistance strategies, and how internal and external factors influence the effectiveness of those strategies.

Social Assistance and Disaster Response

Social assistance is defined as the provision of financial aid, basic goods, or services by government institutions to individuals, families, or communities in need. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs Regulation (2011), social assistance aims to support those who are economically vulnerable and affected by social risks. The Ministry of Finance (2015) further explains that social assistance serves as a mechanism to protect citizens from economic shocks and to maintain minimum living standards.

In disaster contexts, social assistance plays a crucial role in meeting urgent needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and healthcare. Disaster victims often experience disruptions in income, displacement, and psychological stress. Therefore, timely and accurate distribution of assistance is essential for maintaining their welfare and safety. Government regulations, including the Law on Disaster Management (2007) and the Government Regulation on Social Welfare (2012), mandate that social assistance be provided in an organized, transparent, and accountable manner.The Social Service Office functions as the primary institution responsible for implementing social protection policies during disasters. Its tasks include conducting field assessments, verifying affected households, coordinating with other agencies such as BPBD and Tagana, preparing aid packages, and ensuring proper documentation. The effectiveness of these processes depends heavily on institutional readiness, availability of resources, and the ability to coordinate with external partners.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore in depth the strategies implemented by the Bengkulu City Social Service in distributing social assistance to natural disaster victims. The qualitative method was chosen because it allows the researcher to understand social processes, institutional mechanisms, and field realities through direct interaction with informants and the research setting. The study was conducted at the Bengkulu City Social Service Office, which serves as the central institution responsible for managing

disaster related social protection. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique in which participants are chosen based on their relevance, expertise, and involvement in the research topic. Three informants were included, consisting of the Head of the Social Service Office, the Head of the Protection and Social Security Division, and the Chair of Tagana.

These individuals were selected because they possess direct knowledge, authority, and operational experience in managing assistance distribution during disasters. Data were collected using observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to understand actual work conditions, coordination patterns, and the implementation of operational procedures within the office and in the field. Semi structured interviews were used to explore informants' perspectives regarding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the assistance distribution strategy. Documentation was used to collect supporting data such as internal reports, official documents, SOPs, photographs, and records related to disaster response activities.

The collected data were analyzed through qualitative data analysis techniques, which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. All information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation was systematically organized and interpreted using the SWOT Analysis framework proposed by Slamet Riyanto. This analytical process enabled the researcher to identify internal and external factors that influence the effectiveness of the Social Service Office's strategy in distributing social assistance to disaster victims.

RESULTS

The findings of this study describe the strategic performance of the Bengkulu City Social Service in distributing social assistance to natural disaster victims, based on data obtained through interviews, observation, and documentation. The analysis was carried out using the SWOT framework, which highlights internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats that influence the effectiveness of disaster assistance distribution. The results show that the Social Service has several strong internal capabilities. The availability of trained human resources, particularly staff who have received disaster response training, supports rapid mobilization during emergency events. The presence of Tagana members, who routinely assist in field operations, further enhances the institution's readiness. In addition, the Social Service possesses clear standard operating procedures that regulate assessment, verification, and distribution processes, enabling aid to be delivered in a structured and systematic manner. Coordination with leadership and cross departmental collaboration were also identified as strengths that help facilitate timely decision making and effective field operations.

Despite these strengths, the study also found notable weaknesses that hinder optimal performance. Budget limitations continue to restrict the ability of the Social Service to provide comprehensive assistance, especially when disaster events involve large numbers of victims. Training for field personnel is conducted irregularly, resulting in varying levels of preparedness among staff. The data management system has not yet been fully digitized, leading to recurrent challenges in updating recipient information and validating field conditions, which may result in delays or inaccuracies in distribution. Internal communication between divisions was also found to be inconsistent at times, reducing overall coordination efficiency.

In addition to internal conditions, the study identified various external opportunities that could strengthen the Social Service's disaster response strategies. Government regulations and strong policy support at both the national and regional levels provide frameworks that can be utilized to improve coordination and resource allocation. Opportunities for collaboration with nongovernmental organizations, private sector partners, and community groups offer additional support for logistics, manpower, and outreach programs. The development of digital

technologies such as real time data collection platforms presents another opportunity to enhance accuracy and transparency in the distribution process. Furthermore, increasing community awareness and participation in disaster preparedness contributes to a more responsive local environment.

The study also highlights several external threats that pose challenges to effective distribution of social assistance. The unpredictable nature of natural disasters, including sudden floods and varying levels of severity, complicates planning and resource allocation. Political dynamics and administrative changes may influence the continuity of programs or the prioritization of resources. Physical challenges such as difficult terrain, damaged infrastructure, or blocked access routes during disasters further delay the distribution process. Additionally, potential dissatisfaction or complaints from the public regarding delays or perceived inequities in assistance distribution may create pressure on the institution and affect its public credibility.

Overall, the results indicate that the Bengkulu City Social Service has demonstrated an effective yet improvable strategy in delivering social assistance to disaster victims. The institution's strengths support its operational capacity, but weaknesses must be addressed to ensure more efficient and accurate service delivery. By leveraging opportunities and mitigating threats, the Social Service can strengthen its strategic position and enhance its role in disaster management across Bengkulu City.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the strategy implemented by the Bengkulu City Social Service in distributing social assistance to natural disaster victims is influenced by a combination of internal capacities and external contextual factors. The strengths identified in the results demonstrate that the institution possesses a solid operational foundation supported by trained human resources, structured procedures, and adaptive coordination mechanisms. The presence of well prepared personnel, including disaster response teams, reflects the institution's ability to mobilize quickly in emergency situations. This finding aligns with theories of strategic management which emphasize that human resource competence and clear operational guidelines are essential components of organizational readiness in responding to crises.

At the same time, the results highlight weaknesses that require strategic attention. Limited budgets, irregular training programs, and incomplete digital data systems reveal structural constraints that reduce institutional efficiency. These weaknesses correspond with previous studies demonstrating that public institutions frequently encounter resource shortages that hinder timely service delivery. In the context of disaster response, weaknesses in data accuracy and communication can significantly delay the identification of victims and the allocation of appropriate assistance. This indicates a need for improved internal coordination, better resource planning, and investment in digital technologies to support data processing and verification.

The external opportunities available to the Social Service provide substantial potential for strengthening disaster response mechanisms. Strong government policy support, cross sector collaboration, and advancements in digital technology represent avenues through which the institution can enhance its strategic capacity. These opportunities support the broader perspective within public administration literature that emphasizes the importance of inter organizational cooperation and technological innovation in improving public service performance. The high level of community participation observed in Bengkulu City also contributes positively to the disaster management environment, as community engagement increases the flow of information, accelerates reporting, and enhances the distribution process.

Conversely, the presence of external threats presents continual challenges that must be anticipated. The unpredictable nature of natural disasters requires flexible and dynamic strategies, particularly because the scale and location of disasters vary over time. Environmental unpredictability corresponds with theoretical discussions which assert that public

sector organizations must adopt adaptive strategies to remain responsive under volatile conditions. Political changes and potential public dissatisfaction also pose risks that may influence resource distribution and public trust. These findings underscore the need for long term strategic planning that incorporates risk management, stakeholder communication, and contingency frameworks.

Overall, the discussion indicates that the Social Service has demonstrated a reasonable level of effectiveness in implementing disaster related social assistance strategies. However, the interplay between strengths that support operations and weaknesses that hinder performance suggests that the institution must enhance its internal systems to achieve more consistent efficiency. The opportunities available provide a clear direction for institutional development, especially through technological improvement and collaborative partnerships. At the same time, awareness of external threats is crucial for designing strategies that are resilient and capable of addressing sudden changes in disaster conditions. By integrating these factors, the Bengkulu City Social Service can refine its strategic framework and improve the long term sustainability of disaster assistance distribution efforts.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the strategy implemented by the Bengkulu City Social Service in distributing social assistance to natural disaster victims has generally functioned effectively, although several areas require improvement to ensure greater accuracy, responsiveness, and sustainability. The analysis using the SWOT framework shows that the institution possesses significant internal strengths, including trained human resources, clear operational procedures, structured coordination mechanisms, and the presence of Tagana members who support field operations. These elements form a strong institutional foundation that enables the Social Service to respond promptly and systematically during disaster events.

However, the study also identifies internal weaknesses that must be addressed to enhance overall organizational performance. Limited budget resources, irregular training schedules, incomplete digital data systems, and inconsistencies in internal communication contribute to operational inefficiencies that can hinder timely aid distribution. These weaknesses highlight the need for better resource planning, more consistent capacity building, and the development of a comprehensive digital data management system.

Externally, various opportunities exist that can further strengthen disaster response strategies. Strong government policy support, cross sector collaborations with public and private institutions, technology based data systems, and increasing community participation all offer potential to improve coordination, accelerate aid distribution, and enhance service quality. At the same time, external threats such as unpredictable disaster patterns, political shifts, accessibility challenges, and potential public dissatisfaction require the Social Service to implement adaptive and anticipatory strategies to maintain institutional resilience.

Overall, this study concludes that the Bengkulu City Social Service has taken important steps toward building an effective disaster assistance distribution system, but continued strategic improvements are essential. By maximizing its strengths, addressing internal limitations, utilizing external opportunities, and mitigating emerging threats, the institution can further enhance its capacity to deliver timely, equitable, and accountable social assistance to communities affected by natural disasters.

LIMITATION

This study acknowledges several limitations that may influence the depth, scope, and generalizability of its findings. First, the research relies on a qualitative descriptive approach with a limited number of informants, consisting only of key personnel within the Bengkulu City Social Service and Tagana. While these informants possess direct knowledge of disaster

assistance distribution, the restricted sample size limits the diversity of perspectives represented in the study. Second, the data collection process depends heavily on interviews, observation, and documentation conducted within a predetermined time frame, which may not fully capture variations in disaster response practices that occur across different disaster events or seasonal conditions.

Third, the study focuses specifically on the distribution of social assistance within the administrative context of Bengkulu City, which means the findings cannot be generalized to other regions with different institutional structures, geographic challenges, or resource capacities. Additionally, the analysis relies on existing documents and internal reports that may reflect the institution's formal procedures but may not fully portray operational challenges that occur in real time. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into strategic practices and institutional conditions that influence the effectiveness of social assistance distribution, while also offering a foundation for future studies to expand on these findings using broader data sources and larger research samples..

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