

Beyond Programme Availability

Are Policy Priorities Aligned with Children’s Needs in Indonesia?

Evidence from Multidimensional Child Deprivation and Government Programme Priorities

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“Investing in children today builds a stronger Indonesia tomorrow.”



KEY MESSAGE

Indonesia has established programmes across multiple dimensions of child wellbeing. **However, programme availability does not automatically mean that policy priorities are aligned with the scale and nature of children’s unmet needs.**

THE POLICY PROBLEM

Children’s wellbeing cannot be understood through monetary poverty alone. A child may live in a household above the poverty line while still experiencing deprivation in essential dimensions such as health, education, housing, basic facilities, protection, or information.



A multidimensional perspective recognises that children can experience multiple and overlapping deprivations.

The policy question is therefore not simply:

Are programmes available?



Are policy priorities aligned with the needs children actually experience?

Almost

3 in 10

Indonesian children experience multidimensional deprivation in at least two dimensions of wellbeing.



29.95%



Data source:
National Socio-Economic Survey (SUSENAS),
March 2025, BPS-Statistics Indonesia.
Author’s calculations.

HIGHEST LEVELS OF CHILD DEPRIVATION

The proportion of children experiencing deprivation varies across dimensions. Health and facilities have the highest levels of deprivation.



Health
34.35%

Highest level of deprivation



Facilities
26.13%

Second highest level of deprivation



Education
14.62%

“Children’s needs are not evenly distributed across dimensions. Some forms of deprivation affect significantly larger proportions of children and may require stronger policy attention.”



CHILDREN THRIVE
WHEN POLICIES MEET THEIR REAL NEEDS.



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Policy Alignment Exists, but It Is Uneven

Are government programme priorities responding proportionately to children's needs?

The analysis compares the level of child deprivation in each dimension with the relative priority of government programmes. The findings show that policy alignment exists in several dimensions, but it is not consistent across all areas of child wellbeing.

"A child's wellbeing is interconnected. So should be our policies."

CHILD DEPRIVATION AND PROGRAMME PRIORITY ACROSS SEVEN DIMENSIONS

DIMENSION	CHILD DEPRIVATION (% of children)	PROGRAMME PRIORITY
 Health	34.35%	High
 Facilities	26.13%	Moderate
 Education	14.62%	High
 Nutrition	13.86%	High
 Housing	11.87%	Moderate
 Protection	6.74%	High child focus; limited financial scale
 Information	2.18%	No direct coverage



THE KEY FINDING

Facilities represent the clearest potential policy gap.



FACILITIES

26.13%

of children
experience
deprivation

Moderate

programme
priority

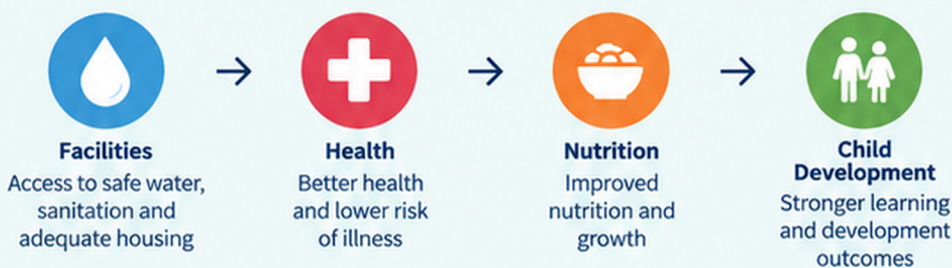


POTENTIAL POLICY GAP

Facilities have the second-highest level of child deprivation, yet programme priority is only moderate. This does not necessarily mean that programmes do not exist, but that the level of policy priority may not yet be proportionate to the scale of children's unmet needs.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Children do not experience problems in separate policy sectors. Deprivation in one dimension can affect outcomes in other dimensions.



Policy responses should reflect the interconnected nature of children's needs rather than addressing each problem in isolation.

"When basic facilities improve, children are healthier, better nourished, and have greater opportunities to thrive."



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What Should Policymakers Do?

Three actions to ensure policy priorities better reflect children's needs

Building on the evidence, this brief recommends three actions to strengthen the alignment between children's needs, policy priorities, and programme implementation.

"Evidence should lead to action for every child."

1 Use Multidimensional Deprivation Evidence to Inform Policy Priorities

Government institutions should systematically incorporate evidence on children's multidimensional deprivation into policy and programme prioritisation.

This can support decisions about:



Priority issues



Programme design



Geographical targeting



Cross-sectoral coordination



Monitoring and evaluation



Key principle

Move beyond identifying only who is economically vulnerable towards understanding what needs children are experiencing.

"Monetary indicators remain important, but they do not capture all forms of disadvantage experienced by children."

2 Establish a Regular Child Policy Alignment Review

Policy alignment should not be assumed simply because programmes exist. A regular review mechanism should compare children's needs with policy priorities.

MEASURE



Identify patterns of child deprivation.

MAP



Map existing programmes and priorities.

COMPARE



Compare children's needs with programme priorities.

IDENTIFY



Identify areas of alignment and potential gaps.

RESPOND



Adjust priorities, of allocation, and resources.

"Policy alignment should be reviewed, not assumed."

A regular and evidence-based review can help ensure that policy priorities reflect the scale and nature of children's unmet needs.

3 Strengthen Responses Where Policy Gaps Are Identified

Evidence should be used not only to identify problems, but also to guide policy responses. Particular attention should be given to the following dimensions:



Facilities

High deprivation, moderate programme priority.

- Strengthen policy attention to facilities-related deprivation.
- Improve cross-sectoral coordination.
- Consider links with health, nutrition and child development.
- Identify geographical areas with the greatest unmet needs.



Protection

Strong child-focused policy attention, but limited financial scale.

- Assess whether policy commitments are supported by adequate resources.
- Review implementation capacity.
- Strengthen the connection between policy ambition and programme delivery.



Information

No direct programme coverage.

- Maintain regular monitoring of children's access to information.
- Clarify institutional responsibility for this dimension.
- Identify emerging risks before deprivation becomes more widespread.



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From Evidence to Action

A more aligned and responsive approach requires coordinated action across institutions.

Improving policy alignment cannot be achieved by a single institution or sector. Multidimensional child deprivation requires collaboration between planning institutions, coordinating ministries, sectoral ministries, data providers, and local governments.

"Different sectors, one goal: a brighter future for every child in Indonesia."

Who Should Act?

Each institution has an important role to play.



Bappenas

Planning and Priority Review

Integrate multidimensional child deprivation evidence into development planning and policy prioritisation.



Coordinating Ministries

Cross-Sectoral Coordination

Strengthen policy alignment across sectors affecting children's wellbeing.



Sectoral Ministries

Programme Alignment

Review whether programme priorities reflect evidence of children's unmet needs.



BPS (Statistics Indonesia)

Data and Monitoring

Support the availability of regular data and multidimensional monitoring.



Local Governments

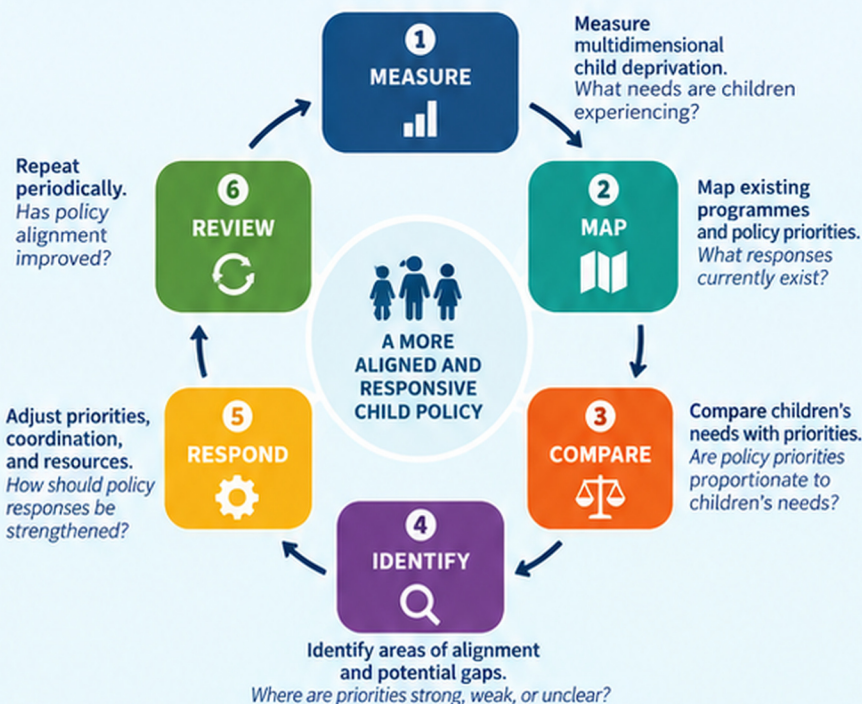
Local Policy Response

Use local deprivation patterns to identify priorities and tailor responses.

"When we align policies with children's real needs, we create more opportunities for them to thrive."

A Proposed Policy Cycle

A simple mechanism for strengthening policy alignment.



From Evidence to Impact

Children's needs should inform policy priorities and lead to stronger, more effective programmes.



KEY POLICY MESSAGE

The question is no longer simply whether programmes for children exist, but whether policy priorities are sufficiently aligned with the scale and nature of children's unmet needs.

STRONGER EVIDENCE. BRIGHTER FUTURES.



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