

INTEGRATION OF ECONOMIC AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION APPROACHES IN CHILD LABOR ELIMINATION POLICIES IN WEST NUSA TENGGARA

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Abstract:

This study examines the integration of economic approaches and inclusive communication in addressing child labor issues in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) Province, Indonesia. Based on data from the August 2024 National Labor Force Survey (Sakernas), NTB has one of the highest child labor rates in Indonesia, with 19.15% of children aged 10-17 years engaged in economic activities. This research analyzes the socioeconomic factors driving child labor and evaluates the effectiveness of current policy interventions through an interdisciplinary framework combining economic analysis and inclusive communication strategies. The study employs a mixed-method approach, utilizing secondary data from Sakernas 2024 and document analysis of relevant policies. Results reveal that poverty, low parental education, rural residence, and cultural norms significantly contribute to child labor prevalence. The agricultural sector employs 45.36% of working children, predominantly as unpaid family workers (85.09%). Most working children (86.66%) continue schooling, indicating potential for intervention. The study proposes an integrated policy framework encompassing economic incentives including conditional cash transfers and social protection expansion, inclusive communication strategies engaging multiple stakeholders through culturally sensitive messaging, strengthened education access and quality, and enhanced labor inspection and enforcement mechanisms. This integrated approach addresses both structural economic constraints and socio-cultural dimensions, offering a comprehensive strategy for child labor elimination aligned with SDG targets. The findings provide actionable recommendations for policymakers to develop evidence-based interventions that protect children's rights while supporting family economic security.

Key words: *child labor, economic intervention, inclusive communication*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini mengkaji integrasi pendekatan ekonomi dan komunikasi inklusif dalam menangani permasalahan pekerja anak di Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB), Indonesia. Berdasarkan data Survei Angkatan Kerja Nasional (Sakernas) Agustus 2024, NTB memiliki salah satu tingkat pekerja anak tertinggi di Indonesia, dengan 19,15% anak usia 10-17 tahun terlibat dalam kegiatan ekonomi. Penelitian ini menganalisis

faktor sosial ekonomi yang mendorong pekerja anak dan mengevaluasi efektivitas intervensi kebijakan saat ini melalui kerangka interdisipliner yang menggabungkan analisis ekonomi dan strategi komunikasi inklusif. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan metode campuran, memanfaatkan data sekunder dari Sakernas 2024 dan analisis dokumen kebijakan terkait. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa kemiskinan, pendidikan orang tua yang rendah, tempat tinggal di perdesaan, dan norma budaya berkontribusi signifikan terhadap prevalensi pekerja anak. Sektor pertanian mempekerjakan 45,36% anak yang bekerja, sebagian besar sebagai pekerja keluarga tanpa upah (85,09%). Sebagian besar anak yang bekerja (86,66%) masih bersekolah, menunjukkan potensi untuk intervensi. Studi ini mengusulkan kerangka kebijakan terintegrasi yang mencakup insentif ekonomi termasuk bantuan tunai bersyarat dan perluasan perlindungan sosial, strategi komunikasi inklusif yang melibatkan berbagai pemangku kepentingan melalui pesan yang sensitif secara budaya, penguatan akses dan kualitas pendidikan, dan peningkatan mekanisme inspeksi dan penegakan hukum ketenagakerjaan. Pendekatan terintegrasi ini menangani kendala ekonomi struktural dan dimensi sosio-budaya, menawarkan strategi komprehensif untuk penghapusan pekerja anak yang sejalan dengan target SDGs.

Kata kunci: pekerja anak, intervensi ekonomi, komunikasi inklusif.

A. INTRODUCTION

Child labor remains a persistent global challenge that undermines children's fundamental rights to education, health, and normal childhood development. The International Labour Organization estimates that millions of children worldwide continue to be engaged in work that deprives them of their childhood and potential, posing serious threats to their physical and mental development. In Indonesia, despite significant economic progress and policy interventions, child labor persists as a critical social issue, particularly in provinces with high poverty rates and agricultural economies.

West Nusa Tenggara Province presents a particularly concerning case of child labor prevalence in Indonesia. According to the August 2024 National Labor Force Survey, approximately 152,520 children aged 10-17 years, representing 19.15% of the child population in this age group, are engaged in economic activities. This figure positions NTB as having the third-highest child labor rate among Indonesian provinces, exceeded only by East Nusa Tenggara and West Sulawesi. The magnitude of this problem becomes even more apparent when considering that NTB's child labor rate significantly exceeds the national average of 7.79%, indicating systemic challenges that require urgent and comprehensive intervention.

The demographic profile of working children in NTB reveals important patterns. Male children constitute 54.13% of working children, while 45.87% are female. The majority of working children fall within the 15-17 age group at 56.31%, which aligns with ILO's minimum working age standards. However, a concerning 43.69% of working children are below 15 years of age, including 20.26% in the 10-12 age bracket who should not be working under any circumstances according to Indonesian labor law. Geographically, child labor is more prevalent in rural areas at 54.22% compared to urban areas at 45.78%, reflecting the agricultural nature of NTB's economy and the traditional practices in rural communities.

The sectoral distribution of working children demonstrates the dominance of agriculture, which employs 45.36% of child workers, followed by services at 41.04% and manufacturing at 13.61%. A striking characteristic of child labor in NTB is that 85.09% of working children are classified as unpaid family workers, suggesting that child labor is deeply embedded in family economic strategies and cultural norms rather than formal employment arrangements. Importantly, 86.66% of working children continue to attend school, indicating that many children attempt to balance education and work, though this dual burden often compromises their educational outcomes and overall development.

The persistence of child labor in NTB reflects a complex interplay of economic, social, and cultural factors. Economically, poverty remains a primary driver, with families depending on children's contributions to household income. The province's poverty rate of 12.91% as of March 2024, while showing improvement, remains higher than the national average. Additionally, low parental education levels, limited access to quality education, and inadequate social protection systems contribute to child labor prevalence. Culturally, traditional views that consider child work as character building and a form of respect to parents further perpetuate the practice, particularly in agricultural communities where children's participation in family farming is seen as normal socialization into adult roles.

Current policy responses to child labor in Indonesia include legal frameworks such as Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, Law No. 13 of 2003 on Labor, and ratification of ILO Conventions 138 and 182. These instruments prohibit child labor and mandate protection for children who exceptionally engage in light work. The government has implemented various programs including the Child Labor Reduction Program, District/City Worthy of Children initiatives, and social assistance schemes. However, the persistently high child labor rates in NTB suggest that these interventions have achieved limited success, indicating gaps in policy design, implementation, or both.

The academic literature on child labor offers extensive theoretical and empirical insights that can inform policy interventions. Economic theories emphasize poverty and household income constraints as primary determinants, with Basu and Van's seminal work establishing the luxury axiom proposing that children work only when household income falls below subsistence levels. Subsequent research has validated this hypothesis while identifying additional economic factors including parental unemployment, informal sector dominance, and credit market imperfections. Recent empirical studies have examined the effectiveness of economic interventions in reducing child labor, with conditional cash transfer programs showing promising results in various contexts. De Hoop and Rosati demonstrated that such programs in Latin America significantly reduced child labor while increasing school enrollment, while Dammert and colleagues found that Brazil's Bolsa Família program reduced child labor participation by approximately four percentage points among beneficiary families.

However, economic interventions alone may prove insufficient without addressing socio-cultural dimensions of child labor. Sociological perspectives highlight how cultural norms, social networks, and community attitudes shape labor market participation of children. In many agricultural societies, children's work is viewed as essential for skills transmission and socialization rather than exploitation, complicating intervention efforts that frame all child work as harmful. This cultural embeddedness requires interventions

that respect local contexts while promoting children's rights and wellbeing. Communication and social mobilization have emerged as critical components of comprehensive child labor elimination strategies. Inclusive communication approaches that engage multiple stakeholders through culturally appropriate messaging have demonstrated effectiveness in changing attitudes and behaviors.

The integration of economic and communication approaches represents a promising but underexplored strategy for child labor elimination. While substantial research exists on economic determinants and interventions, and separate literature examines communication strategies, limited scholarship systematically integrates these approaches into comprehensive policy frameworks. Recent work by Audet and colleagues suggests that multidimensional interventions addressing both material constraints and attitudinal factors achieve superior outcomes compared to single-dimension programs. However, context-specific application of such integrated approaches, particularly in the Indonesian context and specifically in provinces like NTB with distinct socioeconomic characteristics, remains limited.

This study aims to address these research gaps by examining the integration of economic approaches and inclusive communication strategies in child labor elimination policies in West Nusa Tenggara Province. The research objectives are to analyze the socioeconomic factors that contribute to child labor prevalence in NTB, evaluate current policy interventions and identify gaps in implementation and effectiveness, develop an integrated policy framework that combines economic incentives and inclusive communication strategies tailored to NTB's specific context, and provide evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders to enhance child labor elimination efforts aligned with Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 8.7 which calls for effective measures to eradicate forced labor and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor by 2025.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach utilizing secondary data analysis and document review methodology. The primary data source is the August 2024 National Labor Force Survey conducted by Statistics Indonesia, specifically focusing on NTB Province data concerning children aged 10-17 years. Sakernas provides comprehensive information on labor force participation, employment characteristics, working hours, wages, education status, and demographic variables, making it an authoritative source for child labor analysis. The research analyzes statistical data on working children's characteristics including age distribution, gender, geographical location, educational attainment, school participation, occupational sectors, employment status, working hours, and income. Additionally, this study conducts systematic document analysis of relevant policies and legal frameworks including national legislation, international conventions, government programs, and academic literature published between 2019-2024. The analytical framework integrates economic perspectives examining material determinants of child labor with communication theories focusing on stakeholder engagement and behavior change strategies. Data analysis involves descriptive statistics to characterize working children populations, comparative analysis across demographic and geographical categories, and critical policy evaluation to identify implementation gaps. The Relative Standard Error calculations from Sakernas data ensure statistical reliability of estimates,

with particular attention to estimates with RSE exceeding 25% which require cautious interpretation.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socioeconomic Profile and Determinants of Child Labor in NTB

The socioeconomic profile of child labor in NTB reveals systematic patterns that reflect broader structural inequalities and household economic vulnerabilities. The August 2024 data indicates that 152,520 children aged 10-17 years are engaged in economic activities, representing a prevalence rate substantially exceeding the national average. Gender analysis reveals that male children constitute the majority at 54.13% of working children compared to female children at 45.87%. This gender disparity aligns with cultural perceptions that boys possess greater physical capacity for work and should assume responsibility for family economic welfare, though this statistical representation may underestimate female child labor as girls' domestic work and assistance in household enterprises often remain invisible and unreported in labor force surveys.

Age distribution demonstrates concentration in the 15-17 age group at 56.31%, corresponding with ILO's minimum working age standards and Indonesian legal provisions. However, the concerning reality is that 43.69% of working children are below 15 years of age, including 30,901 children in the 10-12 age bracket who should be entirely prohibited from work under national and international law. The presence of children in this youngest age group in the labor market indicates significant enforcement gaps and suggests that poverty and household economic stress override legal protections, compelling families to engage even very young children in economic activities.

Geographical analysis reveals pronounced rural-urban disparities in child labor prevalence. Rural areas account for 54.22% of working children despite constituting 46.89% of the child population, indicating higher child labor rates in rural communities. This pattern reflects the agricultural nature of rural economies where children's labor is readily absorbed into family farming and related activities. The Labor Force Participation Rate for children in rural areas reaches 22.17%, substantially higher than the 16.91% in urban areas. Rural households face multiple disadvantages including lower incomes, limited access to quality education, greater distance to schools, and stronger cultural norms favoring children's participation in agricultural work as preparation for adult responsibilities.

Educational status represents a critical dimension of child labor analysis. Remarkably, 86.66% of working children in NTB continue attending school, indicating that child labor predominantly takes the form of combining work and education rather than complete school dropout. This finding offers both challenges and opportunities for intervention. Children attempting to balance work and schooling face compromised educational outcomes, including reduced study time, higher absenteeism, lower academic achievement, and increased risk of eventual school dropout. However, the high school attendance rate among working children suggests that families value education and that interventions supporting school continuation while reducing work burden could achieve significant impact. Nevertheless, 13.34% of working children have never attended school or are no longer enrolled, representing approximately 20,353 children whose right to

education has been violated. Rural areas show higher rates of non-enrollment among working children at 19.72% compared to urban areas at 5.79%, and male working children are more likely to be out of school at 16.27% than female working children at 9.89%.

Educational attainment data reveals that 52.15% of working children have completed only primary school or less, while 43.26% have completed junior secondary education, and merely 4.59% have attained senior secondary education. These low educational levels reflect both the reality that many children begin working before completing education and the barrier that work presents to educational progression. The concentration of working children at lower educational levels reinforces concerns about human capital development, as these children face severely limited future employment prospects and earning potential, perpetuating poverty across generations.

Economic theories of child labor emphasize poverty and household income constraints as primary determinants. In contexts of poverty where household income falls below subsistence levels, children's labor becomes an economic necessity for family survival, overriding long-term considerations about education and development. The relatively high poverty rate in NTB at 12.91% provides crucial context for understanding child labor prevalence. Poverty operates through multiple mechanisms to perpetuate child labor, creating immediate pressure for children to contribute economically, constraining access to quality education by limiting affordability of school-related expenses, restricting access to credit and savings mechanisms that could enable households to smooth consumption, and concentrating in rural areas and agricultural sectors where child labor absorption is easiest and cultural acceptance strongest.

The concentration of working children in unpaid family work at 85.09% strongly suggests that household economic survival strategies, rather than formal child labor demand, drive children's economic participation in NTB. Families engage children in agricultural work, household enterprises, and various economic activities not primarily because external employers seek child workers, but because household production systems require additional labor inputs that children can provide without monetary cost. This pattern indicates that effective interventions must address household economic security and agricultural productivity alongside child labor prohibition. Parental education represents another critical economic determinant of child labor, operating through multiple pathways including higher incomes reducing economic pressure, greater awareness of education's importance and long-term returns, stronger capacity to assist children's learning, and enhanced ability to navigate educational systems.

Sectoral Distribution and Working Conditions

The sectoral distribution of child labor in NTB reflects the province's economic structure dominated by agriculture and services. Agriculture employs 45.36% of working children, services account for 41.04%, and manufacturing employs 13.61%. This distribution aligns with the overall employment structure in NTB, where agriculture remains the largest employment sector, particularly in rural areas where 56.10% of working children engage in agricultural activities compared to only 32.63% in urban areas. Agricultural work typically involves assisting family members in cultivation, harvesting, animal husbandry, and related activities that follow seasonal patterns and can accommodate

children's school schedules to some extent. However, agricultural work poses significant risks to children's health and development through exposure to pesticides and agrochemicals, operation of dangerous equipment, carrying heavy loads, prolonged sun exposure, and repetitive physical strain that can cause immediate injuries and long-term health consequences.

The services sector, which employs 41.04% of working children predominantly in urban areas at 49.10%, encompasses diverse activities including retail trade, food services, domestic work, and various personal services. Service sector work may involve long working hours, interaction with customers that can expose children to inappropriate situations, and physical demands of standing for extended periods or carrying goods. Female working children show higher participation in services at 49.40% compared to male children at 33.95%, likely reflecting gender norms that channel girls toward service-oriented activities considered more socially acceptable.

Employment status analysis reveals the overwhelming dominance of unpaid family work, with 85.09% of working children classified as unpaid family workers. This finding has crucial implications for understanding child labor dynamics in NTB. Unpaid family work typically occurs within household enterprises or family farms where children assist parents or relatives without receiving wages. While such arrangements may be perceived as less exploitative than wage employment and may allow greater flexibility for school attendance, they remain problematic because the absence of employer-employee relationships places these working arrangements outside formal labor regulations, eliminating legal protections regarding working conditions, hours, and occupational safety. Only 7.38% of working children are classified as wage employees or own-account workers, while 7.53% work as casual laborers, indicating that child labor in NTB predominantly occurs within the informal economy where regulatory oversight is minimal. The formal-informal sector analysis confirms this pattern, with 95.35% of working children engaged in informal sector activities.

Working hours provide critical indicators of work burden and potential harm. The data shows that 77.22% of working children work 0-15 hours per week, which falls within the light work category permitted under certain conditions for children aged 13-15. However, 14.61% work 16-30 hours weekly, 2.16% work 31-40 hours, and 6.01% work more than 40 hours weekly, exceeding the standard adult working week. The presence of children working excessive hours raises serious concerns about exploitation, as such work burden inevitably compromises education, rest, recreation, and normal child development. Analysis by age group reveals that among the 10-12 age cohort where no work should occur, 92.01% of those working do so for 0-15 hours weekly, but 1.51% work more than 40 hours, constituting clear violations of child rights and national law.

Male working children demonstrate higher tendency toward excessive work hours, with 7.65% working more than 40 hours weekly compared to 4.07% of female working children. Similarly, rural working children show greater likelihood of excessive work hours at 7.30% than urban working children at 4.48%, reflecting both the intensive labor demands of agricultural work and potentially greater economic desperation in rural households. Average earnings data indicates that working children receive mean monthly wages or income of 825,548 rupiah, showing an increase from previous years. However, these average figures mask significant variation and should be interpreted cautiously

given that 85% of working children are unpaid family workers. Male working children earn considerably more than female working children at 1,024,826 rupiah versus 537,937 rupiah monthly, reflecting both gender wage gaps observed in adult labor markets and likely differences in work intensity, sectors, and types of remunerative work accessible to boys versus girls.

Socio-Cultural Factors and Community Dynamics

Beyond economic determinants, socio-cultural factors significantly shape child labor patterns in NTB. Cultural norms regarding childhood, work, family obligations, and gender roles influence how communities perceive children's work and whether it is viewed as harmful exploitation or normal socialization. In many agricultural societies, including NTB's traditional communities, children's participation in family farming and household production is considered natural, beneficial for character development, and essential for transmitting skills and work ethics across generations. These cultural perspectives complicate intervention efforts designed to eliminate child labor, as they may encounter resistance from communities who view external criticism of children's work as cultural imperialism or failure to understand local realities.

The tension between universal children's rights frameworks emphasizing protection and education versus cultural relativism respecting diverse childrearing practices and economic arrangements poses significant challenges for policy design and implementation. Effective interventions must navigate this tension by acknowledging cultural contexts while asserting non-negotiable rights principles and demonstrating harmful consequences of exploitative work on children's development. Gender norms substantially influence child labor patterns, as evidenced by differences in male and female working children's sectoral distribution, work types, and earnings. The higher participation of male children in agricultural work versus female children, and conversely greater female participation in services, reflects gender socialization that channels boys toward outdoor productive work and girls toward domestic and service activities. These gendered patterns begin in childhood and shape lifelong occupational trajectories, contributing to gender segregation and wage gaps in adult labor markets.

Social networks and community dynamics also influence child labor prevalence. In communities where child labor is widespread, individual families may face social pressure to conform to norms of children's economic contribution, while children whose peers work may themselves desire to work. Conversely, communities with strong educational cultures and expectations of children's school attendance can create positive peer pressure supporting education. Religious and traditional leaders often hold significant influence in NTB communities and can serve as powerful allies or obstacles for child labor elimination. Engaging these influential figures in inclusive communication strategies, providing them with evidence about child labor's harmful impacts, and supporting their advocacy for children's education can leverage their authority to shift community attitudes.

Policy Framework and Implementation Gaps

Indonesia has established a comprehensive legal and policy framework addressing child labor, reflecting commitments to international conventions and national development

priorities. Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection guarantees children's rights to survival, development, protection from violence and discrimination, and participation. Law No. 13 of 2003 on Labor prohibits employment of children with exceptions for light work by children aged 13-15 under strict conditions. Indonesia has ratified ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age establishing 15 years as minimum working age, and ILO Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labor obligating immediate action to eliminate hazardous child labor. The Ministry of Manpower implements the Child Labor Reduction Program targeting children from poor households who have dropped out of school. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection coordinates the District/City Worthy of Children initiative promoting comprehensive child-friendly policies at local government levels. Various social assistance programs including conditional cash transfers, rice subsidies, and education assistance aim to reduce poverty and support children's school attendance, indirectly addressing child labor drivers.

Despite this robust framework, the persistently high child labor rates in NTB indicate significant implementation gaps and policy effectiveness challenges. Child labor predominantly occurs in informal sector activities and family-based work that fall outside labor inspection systems designed for formal enterprises. Labor inspectors lack capacity, resources, and authority to monitor household-based work or small-scale agriculture, creating vast enforcement blind spots. Local governments in poor regions like NTB face budget limitations that constrain program implementation. Child protection offices remain understaffed, education facilities require upgrading, and social protection coverage remains incomplete. Competing development priorities and insufficient budget allocations to child welfare limit intervention scope and sustainability.

Child labor elimination requires coordination across multiple sectors including labor, education, social welfare, health, and local government, yet inter-agency coordination often remains weak. Information sharing gaps, unclear role divisions, and bureaucratic fragmentation hinder comprehensive approaches. At local levels, district and village governments may lack awareness of national programs or capacity to implement them effectively. While Sakernas provides valuable national and provincial child labor data, more granular district and sub-district level data would enable better targeting of interventions to high-prevalence areas. Real-time monitoring systems to track program implementation and outcomes remain underdeveloped. Insufficient public awareness of child labor's harmful impacts and children's rights perpetuates tolerant attitudes toward children's work. Parents may not recognize that seemingly benign activities like helping in family farming constitute child labor with negative developmental consequences.

Integrated Policy Framework: Economic and Communication Approaches

Addressing NTB's child labor challenge requires an integrated policy approach that simultaneously tackles economic constraints driving child labor and transforms socio-cultural norms that perpetuate it. This integrated framework combines economic incentives that reduce household dependence on children's income contributions with inclusive communication strategies that engage stakeholders, raise awareness, and promote behavior change. Expanding and strengthening conditional cash transfer programs represents a proven economic intervention for reducing child labor while promoting education. Evidence from similar programs demonstrates effectiveness in reducing child labor by several percentage points while increasing school enrollment. For

NTB, this intervention should include expanding coverage to reach all poor households with children aged 10-17 particularly in rural areas and districts with highest child labor prevalence, ensuring transfer amounts sufficiently compensate for lost child labor income while covering education-related costs, designing conditions that account for agricultural seasonality while maintaining minimum attendance thresholds, aligning payment schedules with school fee deadlines and peak agricultural periods, and linking recipients to complementary services including health care, nutritional support, and skills training.

Given that 45.36% of working children engage in agriculture, enhancing agricultural productivity and farm household incomes can reduce demand for child labor while improving family economic security. Interventions should include providing smallholder farmers with improved seeds, fertilizers, irrigation access, and training in modern farming techniques that increase yields without requiring additional labor inputs from children, offering subsidized access to labor-saving agricultural machinery that reduces physical labor demands during peak periods, strengthening farmers' connections to markets through cooperative development and value chain integration that improve farm gate prices and income stability, supporting transition to higher-value crops and agricultural diversification strategies that generate greater income per unit of labor, and expanding rural financial services including savings accounts, agricultural insurance, and affordable credit that enable households to smooth consumption and invest in education despite seasonal income fluctuations.

Reducing opportunity costs of schooling while enhancing education quality and relevance increases returns to education and strengthens household incentives to prioritize children's schooling over work. Key interventions include implementing comprehensive school feeding programs that provide nutritional benefits improving learning outcomes while reducing household food costs, providing free or subsidized transportation to schools particularly in rural areas where long distances constitute major barriers, developing alternative education delivery models including evening classes and accelerated learning programs for over-age children, integrating age-appropriate vocational skills training for older adolescents into educational curricula ensuring that when children eventually enter the workforce they possess marketable skills, investing in teacher training and adequate compensation that improve instructional quality and learning outcomes, and upgrading school facilities and providing adequate learning materials that make school attendance attractive.

Comprehensive social protection that addresses multiple household vulnerabilities reduces child labor risk factors. Interventions should include ensuring all families access affordable healthcare through the National Health Insurance system to prevent health shocks from depleting household resources, developing unemployment protection mechanisms for workers in the informal sector to prevent parental job loss from immediately translating into child labor necessity, providing adequate benefits for households with disabled members to prevent children from assuming excessive care burdens, strengthening pension systems to reduce elderly family members' dependence on children's economic support, and establishing rapid response mechanisms to provide emergency cash or in-kind support to households experiencing crisis events that might otherwise compel child labor as coping strategy.

Economic interventions alone prove insufficient without complementary communication strategies that raise awareness, challenge cultural norms, and mobilize stakeholder action. Inclusive communication approaches engage multiple actors through culturally appropriate messaging that respects local contexts while asserting children's rights. Implementing sustained evidence-based communication campaigns should inform communities about child labor's negative consequences and children's rights through utilizing research evidence demonstrating impacts on health, education, and long-term earnings potential, framing messages positively around benefits of education rather than exclusively negative messaging about child labor harms, employing diverse communication channels including television, radio, social media, community meetings, and school-based sessions, delivering messages in local languages using culturally relevant examples and imagery, and featuring testimonials from former working children who have successfully transitioned to education.

Establishing platforms for inclusive dialogue among diverse stakeholders builds shared understanding and collective commitment to child labor elimination. Priority stakeholder engagement activities include organizing parent forums and family counseling sessions that provide safe spaces for discussing economic pressures and exploring alternatives to child labor, engaging religious and traditional leaders as child protection champions who integrate children's rights messages into religious teachings and community guidance, targeting employers through awareness sessions about legal obligations and child labor harms, creating opportunities for children themselves to voice their experiences and perspectives through child participation forums empowering children as active agents, and collaborating with NGOs and community-based organizations that extend intervention reach and leverage their community relationships and mobilization capacity.

Specific communication efforts should promote education's value and counter perceptions that education offers limited returns through highlighting successful individuals from NTB who achieved social mobility through education, disseminating information about formal sector employment opportunities and wage differentials by education level, publicizing school quality improvements and learning achievements that build confidence in education system effectiveness, and educating parents about critical importance of early childhood for cognitive development. Systematic behavior change communication campaigns should apply behavioral science insights to shift attitudes and practices regarding child labor and education through highlighting that education is becoming the dominant norm creating positive peer pressure, designing choice architecture that makes school attendance easier and default option, facilitating public commitments by parents to maintain children in school, and training community members as role models who visibly practice and advocate for child education.

Establishing formal coordination mechanisms at provincial and district levels ensures coherent communication and avoids contradictory messaging. Coordination structures should include creating inter-agency task force chaired by the Governor's office with representatives from relevant departments to coordinate policies and programs, establishing district-level teams responsible for local adaptation of provincial strategies and program implementation, convening private sector representatives to promote voluntary child labor elimination commitments, and engaging universities and research institutions in program evaluation and evidence generation. Strategic engagement with media institutions amplifies messaging reach and influences public discourse through

providing journalists with training on child labor issues and ethical reporting on children, developing partnerships with media outlets for sustained coverage through dedicated programming and public service announcements, leveraging social media platforms for targeted campaigns reaching younger parents, and incorporating child labor and education themes into popular entertainment programming that reach mass audiences.

Implementation Roadmap and Monitoring

Translating this integrated policy framework into practice requires systematic implementation planning with clear responsibilities, timelines, and monitoring mechanisms. A phased implementation roadmap should begin with foundation building through establishing coordination structures with clear mandates and budgets, conducting comprehensive district-level child labor mapping to identify high-prevalence areas, designing and piloting integrated interventions in selected high-prevalence districts combining economic support and communication strategies, developing standardized communication materials and implementation guidelines adapted to NTB context, establishing baseline monitoring systems with indicators tracking child labor prevalence and outcome changes, and launching awareness campaigns and stakeholder engagement processes in pilot districts.

The expansion and intensification phase should scale successful interventions from pilot districts to all districts based on evaluation findings, expand conditional cash transfer coverage to reach all eligible poor households with children at risk, intensify agricultural productivity and livelihood diversification programs in rural areas with highest child labor concentration, strengthen education system through infrastructure upgrades and quality improvements, conduct mid-term evaluation assessing progress toward targets and intervention effectiveness, and refine strategies based on monitoring data and stakeholder feedback. The consolidation and sustainability phase should achieve universal coverage of social protection and education support programs for vulnerable households, institutionalize communication strategies through integration into routine government operations, strengthen enforcement mechanisms including labor inspection capacity and sanctions for violations, develop sustainable financing mechanisms including provincial budget allocations and performance-based transfers, conduct final evaluation documenting outcomes and cost-effectiveness, and disseminate findings and best practices to other provinces facing similar challenges.

Robust monitoring systems should track both process indicators measuring program implementation and outcome indicators measuring child labor reduction and education improvements. Key outcome indicators include child labor prevalence rate disaggregated by demographics, school enrollment and attendance rates, working hours distribution among working children, proportion of children in hazardous work, household poverty rates and income levels, parental awareness scores regarding child labor harms, and community norm indicators measuring attitudes toward child labor and education. Process indicators include conditional cash transfer program coverage rates and payment timeliness, number of households receiving livelihood support, school feeding program coverage, number of awareness campaigns conducted and reach achieved, stakeholder engagement meeting frequency and participation rates, labor inspection coverage and enforcement actions taken, and budget allocations and expenditure rates for child labor programs.

Data collection should occur through multiple sources including administrative records, household surveys, qualitative interviews, focus group discussions, and participatory monitoring involving communities. Annual progress reports should be presented to provincial and district legislatures, disseminated publicly, and used to inform budget allocations and strategy adjustments. Independent external evaluations should occur at mid-term and end-term to provide objective assessment of effectiveness and value for money. This integrated policy framework directly supports Indonesia's commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 8.7 on taking immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labor and secure prohibition and elimination of worst forms of child labor by 2025, SDG 4 on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, SDG 1 on ending poverty, SDG 5 on achieving gender equality, and SDG 10 on reducing inequality. The integrated approach ensures that child labor elimination contributes to broader development objectives rather than being pursued in isolation, creating synergies across multiple SDGs and supporting NTB's overall sustainable development trajectory.

D. CONCLUSION

Child labor in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) remains a multidimensional issue driven by poverty, limited education access, agricultural dependence, and cultural norms that normalize children's work. Most child workers engage in unpaid family labor, highlighting economic survival motives rather than formal labor demand. While existing legal frameworks are comprehensive, enforcement gaps, limited resources, and weak coordination hinder effectiveness. Sustainable elimination requires an integrated approach combining economic interventions such as conditional cash transfers, agricultural productivity improvement, and social protection with inclusive communication strategies that shift community attitudes and strengthen stakeholder engagement. Economic support must be paired with behavioral change to ensure long-term impact. Implementation success depends on political will, adequate funding, inter-sectoral coordination, culturally adaptive strategies, and robust monitoring. Strengthening provincial and district leadership, expanding education access, and promoting awareness through local leaders and media are critical. This integrated framework offers NTB a viable path to significantly reduce child labor, protect children's rights, and advance sustainable development aligned with the SDG 8.7 target for eliminating the worst forms of child labor by 2025.

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