

Policy Implementation Model for the Management of Low-Cost Rental Apartments (Rusunawa) in Bandung City

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Abstract

The main problem of this research centers on the existence of a serious and multidimensional implementation deficit in the management of Low-Cost Rental Apartments (Rusunawa) in Bandung City. This study employs a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. Data were collected through field observations at strategic locations such as the Cingised, Rancacili, and Sadang Serang Rusunawa complexes, as well as through in-depth interviews with stakeholders from the Housing and Settlement Area Agency (Dinas Perumahan dan Kawasan Permukiman/DPKP) and the Rusunawa Technical Implementation Unit (UPTD) of Bandung City. The findings reveal that the implementation of Rusunawa management policies in Bandung City has not yet been optimal due to weak inter-agency coordination and limited managerial capacity within the implementing organizations. Resource-related factors, particularly the shortage of civil servants and the reactive nature of maintenance budgeting, constitute major obstacles in maintaining the quality of public services. In addition, the study finds that the implementers' disposition and policy communication variables have not been effective in fostering voluntary compliance among residents, especially in adhering to occupancy duration regulations and administrative requirements. As a solution, this research proposes a policy implementation strengthening model based on service digitalization (Smart Rusunawa) and social engineering to ensure the sustainability of Rusunawa as humane and equitable transitional housing.

Keywords: Policy Implementation Model, Rusunawa Management.

A. INTRODUCTION

The provision of adequate, affordable, and sustainable housing in urban areas remains one of the most fundamental challenges faced by governments in contemporary urban development. Housing is widely recognized as a basic human need that not only functions as physical shelter but also serves as a foundation for family development, social stability, and the improvement of human welfare (UN-Habitat, 2020). In the Indonesian context, the right to housing is constitutionally guaranteed as part of the broader commitment to ensure decent living standards and a healthy environment for all citizens (Ramadhan, 2025).

Rapid urbanization has significantly intensified housing pressures in many developing countries. Urban population growth often leads to increasing demand for housing while the availability of urban land becomes increasingly limited. As a result, housing prices escalate beyond the reach of low-income households, creating barriers for marginalized communities to access formal housing markets (Angel, 2012; Hapsari, Ishaq & Ismiyati, 2024). This phenomenon is particularly visible in metropolitan cities where economic opportunities attract large numbers of migrants,

intensifying housing shortages and expanding informal settlements (UN-Habitat, 2020).

Bandung, as the capital of West Java Province and one of Indonesia's major urban centers, has experienced significant urban growth over the past two decades. The city functions as an important hub for education, tourism, and economic activities, which continuously attracts migration from surrounding regions. This demographic growth has contributed to increased population density and an expanding housing backlog. At the same time, geographical constraints within the Bandung basin limit the expansion of horizontal housing development. Consequently, the transformation from horizontal housing patterns to vertical housing systems has become an increasingly important strategy in urban spatial planning (Firman, 2004; Afifah & Ginting, 2025).

In response to these challenges, the local government has implemented housing policies aimed at providing affordable housing through the development of Rental Low-Cost Apartments, commonly known as *Rumah Susun Sederhana Sewa* (Rusunawa). The development of Rusunawa is intended to provide affordable housing for low-income communities (Masyarakat Berpenghasilan Rendah/MBR), while simultaneously improving urban spatial efficiency and reducing the growth of slum settlements (Ministry of Public Works and Housing, 2021). In Bandung, several Rusunawa complexes have been developed in locations such as Rancacili, Cingised, and Sadang Serang as part of the city's strategy to address urban housing shortages.

From a policy perspective, Rusunawa is designed not only as a housing facility but also as a transitional housing mechanism intended to support low-income households in improving their socio-economic conditions before eventually moving into independent housing (Agustiningtyas, 2024; Mayaka & Baidhowi, 2025). Public rental housing systems are widely recognized as important instruments in urban housing policy to improve access to housing for vulnerable groups while promoting social stability in rapidly urbanizing cities (Scanlon, Whitehead, & Fernández Arrigoitia, 2014).

Despite its strategic role, the implementation of Rusunawa management policies often faces significant challenges (Dompok & Salsabila, 2024). Empirical evidence from several cities indicates that public housing programs frequently encounter problems such as maintenance deficits, rent arrears, weak institutional capacity, and limited community participation (Gilbert, 2016). Similar challenges are also observed in Bandung, where several Rusunawa complexes have experienced physical deterioration, increasing rental arrears, and social conflicts among residents. These issues suggest the presence of a gap between policy objectives and actual outcomes in policy implementation.

The existence of comprehensive regulatory frameworks does not automatically guarantee effective policy outcomes. According to policy implementation theory, the success or failure of a policy is largely determined by how policies are translated into practical actions by implementing institutions (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984).

Implementation problems often arise when policy objectives are unclear, resources are insufficient, or coordination among implementing agencies is weak.

To better understand these challenges, this study adopts the policy implementation framework developed by Donald S. Van Meter and Carl E. Van Horn. This model identifies six key variables influencing policy implementation: policy standards and objectives, resources, inter-organizational communication, characteristics of implementing agencies, socio-economic and political conditions, and the disposition of policy implementers (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975). This framework is widely used in policy implementation studies because it provides a comprehensive analytical lens to explain the gap between policy design and policy outcomes.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the implementation of Rusunawa management policies in Bandung City and to identify the factors influencing their effectiveness. By examining the interaction between policy design, institutional capacity, and socio-economic conditions, this research seeks to propose a more effective model for the implementation of public rental housing management. The findings are expected to contribute to the improvement of urban housing governance and provide policy recommendations for strengthening public housing management in rapidly growing cities.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Public Housing Policy and Urban Housing Provision

Public housing policies are widely implemented by governments to address housing shortages among low-income populations. In rapidly urbanizing cities, market-based housing systems often fail to provide affordable housing for vulnerable groups, making government intervention necessary to ensure equitable access to housing (Angel, 2012). Public rental housing, including social housing and subsidized apartments, is considered an important policy instrument to improve housing affordability and reduce informal settlements in urban areas (Scanlon, Whitehead, & Fernández Arrigoitia, 2014).

In many developing countries, the provision of vertical housing has become a strategic solution to limited urban land availability and increasing population density. High-density residential development allows governments to utilize urban land more efficiently while accommodating growing housing demand (UN-Habitat, 2020). In Indonesia, this approach is reflected in the development of Rumah Susun Sederhana Sewa (Rusunawa), which is designed to provide affordable rental housing for low-income communities while supporting urban spatial planning and slum reduction programs.

However, studies on public housing management show that housing provision alone is insufficient to ensure the sustainability of social housing programs. Effective management, maintenance systems, and community empowerment are essential components for maintaining the long-term functionality of public housing (Gilbert, 2016). Without proper governance and institutional capacity, public housing projects

may experience physical deterioration, financial deficits, and social problems among residents.

2. Policy Implementation in Public Administration

Policy implementation is a critical stage in the public policy process because it determines whether policy objectives can be translated into practical outcomes. According to Jeffrey L. Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky, policy implementation often becomes the most challenging stage of policymaking because policies formulated at the central level frequently encounter complex administrative, political, and social obstacles during execution (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984).

One of the most widely used frameworks in policy implementation studies is the model developed by Donald S. Van Meter and Carl E. Van Horn. This model identifies six key variables that influence policy implementation: policy standards and objectives, resources, inter-organizational communication, characteristics of implementing agencies, socio-economic and political conditions, and the disposition of policy implementers (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975). These variables highlight the importance of coordination, institutional capacity, and stakeholder commitment in ensuring policy effectiveness.

In addition, implementation studies emphasize that the attitudes and commitment of policy implementers play an important role in determining policy outcomes. When implementers perceive policies as burdensome or incompatible with local conditions, the effectiveness of policy implementation may decline (Hill & Hupe, 2002). Therefore, understanding the institutional and social context of policy implementation is crucial in evaluating public policies.

3. Challenges in Public Housing Management

Empirical studies have shown that public housing management often faces multiple challenges related to financial sustainability, institutional coordination, and social dynamics among residents. Maintenance and operational funding are frequently limited, leading to the deterioration of housing facilities over time (Gilbert, 2016). Furthermore, public housing residents often face socio-economic constraints that affect their ability to comply with housing regulations, including rental payments and community management rules.

In the Indonesian context, several studies have highlighted similar challenges in Rusunawa management, including limited institutional capacity, weak maintenance systems, and low community participation in housing management (Firman, 2004). These issues indicate that public housing policies require not only physical infrastructure development but also integrated governance systems that combine housing management, social empowerment, and community participation.

Based on these perspectives, analyzing the implementation of Rusunawa management policies requires a comprehensive approach that considers institutional capacity, socio-economic conditions, and the interaction between policy implementers

and beneficiaries. Such an approach allows researchers to better understand the factors that influence the effectiveness of public housing policies in urban contexts.

C. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design to analyze the implementation of the Rental Low-Cost Apartment (Rusunawa) management policy in Bandung City. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore policy implementation processes, institutional dynamics, and stakeholder interactions in depth within their real-life context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The case study design is appropriate for examining contemporary policy implementation phenomena within a specific administrative setting (Yin, 2018).

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with key informants, including officials from the Bandung City Government, managers of the Rusunawa Unit Implementation Technical Unit (UPT), and residents of the Rusunawa. These informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that participants possessed relevant knowledge and experience regarding the implementation of the policy (Patton, 2015). Field observations were carried out to understand the actual conditions of Rusunawa management, including housing facilities, service delivery, and the interaction between policy implementers and residents. In addition, document analysis was conducted by reviewing relevant regulations, policy documents, government reports, and administrative records related to the management of Rusunawa in Bandung City.

Data analysis followed an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, which allows researchers to systematically interpret qualitative data and identify patterns related to policy implementation (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). To ensure the credibility and validity of the findings, this study applied data triangulation by comparing information obtained from different sources and data collection techniques.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Implementation of the Rusunawa Management Policy in Bandung City

The implementation of the Rental Low-Cost Apartment (Rusunawa) management policy in Bandung is formally guided by local regulations governing public housing management and rental tariffs. Administratively, the policy is implemented by a technical management unit responsible for operational activities, tenant administration, and facility maintenance. From a regulatory perspective, the existence of these institutional arrangements demonstrates that the local government has established a formal framework to manage Rusunawa as a public housing program intended for low-income communities.

However, the findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the policy has not yet achieved its intended objectives. Rusunawa was designed as

transitional housing for low-income households (Masyarakat Berpenghasilan Rendah/MBR), allowing residents to improve their economic conditions before eventually moving to independent housing. In practice, many residents remain in Rusunawa for extended periods because their economic conditions do not improve significantly. This situation indicates that the policy has not fully functioned as a transitional housing mechanism.

The management of Rusunawa also tends to emphasize administrative procedures, particularly related to tenant registration and rental payment collection. While these administrative functions are necessary for maintaining operational order, the policy implementation has not been sufficiently supported by integrated programs aimed at improving residents' socio-economic capacity. As a result, Rusunawa functions primarily as rental housing rather than as a comprehensive social housing program that integrates housing provision with community empowerment.

This condition reflects a common challenge in public housing programs where policy success depends not only on infrastructure provision but also on effective governance and social development programs (Gilbert, 2016). Without such integrated approaches, public housing may fail to achieve its broader social objectives.

2. Obstacles in the Implementation of Rusunawa Management Policy

The study identified several obstacles that influence the effectiveness of Rusunawa management in Bandung. These challenges can be categorized into structural, administrative, and socio-economic factors.

First, there is a mismatch between the normative objectives of the policy and the socio-economic conditions of residents. The Rusunawa policy assumes that residents will be able to improve their economic conditions during their stay in the housing complex. However, many residents have unstable incomes and limited employment opportunities, making it difficult for them to transition to independent housing. This mismatch illustrates the importance of aligning policy objectives with the actual socio-economic conditions of beneficiaries.

Second, financial constraints represent a significant barrier to effective housing management. Operational funding for Rusunawa largely depends on the regional government budget, while rental revenues must be transferred to the local treasury. As a result, the management unit has limited financial flexibility to conduct routine maintenance and infrastructure improvements. This financial arrangement often delays maintenance activities and contributes to the gradual deterioration of housing facilities.

Third, institutional capacity remains limited. The management of Rusunawa is often handled by administrative personnel whose responsibilities focus primarily on technical and bureaucratic tasks. Limited managerial capacity in community development, conflict resolution, and housing management reduces the ability of implementing agencies to address complex social issues within the housing environment.

Fourth, broader socio-economic conditions also influence policy implementation. Low-income residents frequently face economic pressures, such as unstable employment and limited access to social services. These conditions affect their ability to comply with housing regulations, including timely rental payments and participation in community management activities. Such socio-economic constraints often lead to rental arrears and social tensions within the housing complex.

These findings support the argument that policy implementation is strongly influenced by contextual factors, including institutional capacity, financial resources, and social conditions. According to the policy implementation framework developed by Donald S. Van Meter and Carl E. Van Horn, the effectiveness of policy implementation depends on the interaction of multiple variables such as policy standards, resources, and socio-economic conditions (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975). The case of Rusunawa management in Bandung illustrates how weaknesses in several of these variables can limit policy effectiveness.

3. Analysis of Policy Implementation Based on the Van Meter and Van Horn Model

To better understand the implementation dynamics of Rusunawa management policy, this study analyzes the findings using the six dimensions of the policy implementation model proposed by Donald S. Van Meter and Carl E. Van Horn.

The standards and objectives of Rusunawa management policy have been clearly defined in local regulations. The policy aims to provide affordable housing for low-income communities while functioning as transitional housing. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that these objectives have not been fully achieved due to the limited economic capacity of residents and the inadequate physical condition of several housing facilities.

Resource limitations constitute one of the most significant challenges in policy implementation. Financial resources for maintenance and operational activities are limited, and the rigid financial management system reduces managerial flexibility. Human resources are also limited in terms of expertise in housing management and community empowerment.

Coordination among local government agencies involved in Rusunawa management generally functions relatively well. There are established mechanisms for communication and task division among relevant institutions. However, the effectiveness of coordination has not been sufficient to overcome structural problems related to resource limitations and socio-economic constraints.

The implementing agency responsible for Rusunawa management operates within a hierarchical bureaucratic structure, which restricts decision-making autonomy. The limited authority of the management unit reduces its ability to introduce innovative approaches in housing management, such as community-based maintenance systems or integrated social programs.

External environmental conditions significantly influence the effectiveness of policy implementation. The economic vulnerability of Rusunawa residents, combined

with limited urban infrastructure and employment opportunities, creates challenges for achieving policy objectives. These conditions demonstrate that housing policies cannot be separated from broader socio-economic development strategies.

The attitudes of policy implementers also affect policy outcomes. In many cases, implementers tend to prioritize administrative compliance with formal procedures rather than focusing on achieving substantive policy goals. This cautious administrative orientation may reduce innovation and adaptability in addressing emerging challenges in Rusunawa management.

The findings of this study highlight the need for a more integrated approach to public housing management. Housing policies should not be limited to the provision of physical infrastructure but must also incorporate socio-economic empowerment programs for residents. Strengthening institutional capacity, improving financial management systems, and promoting community participation are essential steps to improve the sustainability of Rusunawa programs.

Furthermore, the concept of Rusunawa as transitional housing requires complementary policies that support residents' economic mobility, such as employment assistance, skills training, and micro-enterprise development programs. Without such integrated policies, the objective of creating transitional housing for low-income households may remain difficult to achieve.

Overall, the case of Rusunawa management in Bandung demonstrates that effective public housing governance requires coordinated institutional arrangements, sufficient resources, and policies that address both housing provision and the socio-economic conditions of residents. These findings contribute to the broader discussion on the governance of public housing in rapidly urbanizing cities and highlight the importance of comprehensive policy implementation strategies.

E. CONCLUSION

This study examines the implementation of the policy on the management of Rental Low-Cost Apartments (Rusunawa) in Bandung City. The findings indicate that although the policy has been implemented in accordance with existing regulations, particularly Bandung Mayor Regulation No. 6 of 2022 concerning Rusunawa service tariffs, its implementation has not yet achieved the intended policy objectives. In practice, the policy implementation tends to focus primarily on administrative management and rent collection, while aspects related to building maintenance, improvement of housing quality, and socio-economic empowerment of residents have not been carried out in an integrated and sustainable manner. As a result, the role of Rusunawa as a transitional housing facility for low-income communities (MBR) toward economic independence has not been fully realized.

Several structural, administrative, and socio-economic constraints were identified as key factors affecting policy implementation. These include the mismatch between policy objectives and the socio-economic conditions of residents, limited and inflexible financial resources due to centralized revenue management, insufficient managerial and community empowerment capacity among policy implementers, and

unfavorable socio-economic conditions surrounding the housing environment. These challenges collectively reduce the effectiveness of policy implementation and hinder the achievement of long-term policy outcomes.

Furthermore, analysis based on six dimensions of policy implementation reveals that most dimensions have not been fulfilled optimally. Although coordination and communication among implementing organizations function relatively well, other dimensions such as policy resources, implementer capacity, socio-economic context, and implementer disposition remain limited. Consequently, the current model of Rusunawa policy implementation in Bandung City requires significant strengthening across these dimensions to improve effectiveness, encourage innovation in management practices, and ensure that the policy can achieve its intended social and housing objectives in a sustainable manner.

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