

Implementation of Child Led-Advocacy in Limbangansari Village, Cianjur Regency, West Java, Indonesia

Dede Kuswanda¹, Dela Vinka Ariska², Nisa Almalia Nurfauziah³, Susilawati⁴, Tuti Kartika⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5}Politeknik Kesejahteraan Sosial Bandung, Indonesia

Email: dede_stks@yahoo.co.id

Copyright © 2024 Kuswanda et al. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Abstrack. Basically, children's needs are different from those of adults. It is important for children to voice and advocate for their needs. Children who are able to voice their opinions to fulfill their rights and needs can be referred to as a form of advocacy. Therefore, it is important that advocacy is carried out by children. This study aims to obtain an overview of the Implementation of Advocacy Led by Children in Limbangan Sari Village, Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency. This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Primary data sources in this study are children who are informants in this study. Secondary data sources come from books, articles, and research related to child-led advocacy. The data collection techniques used were Focus Discussion Group (FGD), interview, observation, and documentation study. Data validity checking is done through credibility test, transferability test, reliability test, and objectivity test. Data analysis techniques used are data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of this study are that there are four stages of advocacy led by children, namely identification of problem issues, discussion of problem solving issues, solutions to problem solving issues, and delivery of advocacy. The problem issues of children in Limbangansari Village are the lack of involvement of children in community activities and village organizations; there is no reading corner for children; and the lack of activities that can improve the skills of children in Limbangansari Village. Then, the solutions that have been prepared are delivered by the children directly to the stakeholders of Limbangansari Village.

Keywords: *Advocacy, Children, Child-Led Advocacy.*

A. INTRODUCTION

All people under the age of 18 can be referred to as children (UNICEF, 2018). Children are vulnerable to physical, psychological, sexual, exploitation, and neglect. Therefore, the problem of children in Indonesia continues to increase. West Java Province in Indonesia occupies the second position as a province with cases of violence against children after North Sumatra Province. One of the areas in West Java with quite a lot of cases of violence against children is in Cianjur Regency. Based on data from the Regional Technical Implementation Unit for the Protection of Women and Children (UPTD PPA) of Cianjur Regency, there was an increase in the number of cases of violence against children from 2022 to 2023. In 2022, there were 29 cases of violence against children. This number increased to 55 cases in 2023. This number can be categorized as high and requires handling cases against children.

Children have the right to protection and security from violence and discrimination. The Indonesian government's efforts to provide protection and security to children are evidenced by ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Undang-Undang Nomor 35 Tahun 2014 tentang Perubahan atas Undang-undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2002 tentang Perlindungan Anak (concerning Child Protection). Of course, children have a strategic role and special nature so that they must be protected from all forms of treatment that could potentially violate their rights. The role of children in development is one way to ensure that children's rights are fulfilled in the development process based on the child's perspective.

Basically, children's needs are different from those of adults. It is important for children to voice and advocate for their needs. Children who are able to voice their opinions to fulfill

their rights and needs can be referred to as a form of advocacy. Advocacy is a form of systematic and organized effort to influence and urge a change by providing support and defense for the vulnerable. Barker (2003) defines advocacy as an action that helps and enforces the rights of individuals or communities. Advocacy is often carried out by adults, but it does not rule out the possibility if advocacy is carried out by children in the context of simple advocacy according to children's abilities. The purpose of advocacy is to uphold rights in gaining access or resources, services, and active support for policy changes that have a negative impact on both individuals and groups (Sheafor & Horejsi, 2006).

Children are a group that is rarely heard and often ignored, especially in decision-making processes at the local level. Indeed, children have unique perspectives and needs that need to be considered, particularly when it comes to exercising their rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Child-led advocacy is an approach that takes an active role in identifying problems faced by children, designing solutions, and involving stakeholders in the process, with the support of facilitators and support organizations. Child-led advocacy not only raises awareness of children's rights, but also strengthens children's active participation in social life, in accordance with the principle of child participation included in children's rights.

Involving children as leaders in advocacy provides opportunities to develop social, leadership, analytical and communication skills, however, there are still challenges in implementing child-led advocacy activities in many areas, one of which is in Limbangasari Village, Cianjur District, Indonesia. These challenges include lack of adult support, lack of facilities and programs that support children's skills development, and low awareness of the importance of children's participation in the community development process.

Children are capable of becoming social activists who make social change for themselves (McMellon & Tisdall, 2020). One way to fulfill children's participation rights is to involve children in the Development Planning Conference (Musrembang). Musrembang can be a medium for children to voice and fight for their rights and needs to be heard and followed up directly by stakeholders. Based on the problems, needs, and fulfillment of children's rights, researchers are interested in researching "Implementation of Child-Led Advocacy in Limbangan Sari Village, Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency". The purpose of this research is to examine how child-led advocacy practices can have a positive impact on the realization of children's rights, especially those related to participation, protection and self-development. By understanding this research, we hope to develop effective strategies to strengthen the role of children in advocacy and encourage more inclusive and sustainable social change in the community.

B. METHOD

This research is located in Limbangansari Village, Cianjur District, Cianjur Regency. Limbangansari Village was chosen as the location for the research because children in Limbangansari Village are often the least heard and ignored group in the decision-making process, especially at the community level. In addition, Limbangansari Village is the location of the community practicum, so there has been cooperation with local stakeholders.

This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is research used to examine natural objects where the researcher acts as a key instrument, data collection techniques are triangulated, analysis is inductive, and research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization (Abdussamad, 2021). The qualitative approach is used in this research in order to get a comprehensive picture of the activities, behaviors, and backgrounds of the participants through their direct and active involvement to

jointly determine and design a technology engineering design that is applicable and in accordance with the needs of the technology problem that is the focus of the research.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The Preparation Stage of Child-Led Advocacy

The preparation stage in this research involved several activities. On July 28, 2024, the researchers coordinated with the Head of Limbangansari Village, Achmad Sudrajat, to obtain permission for research activities on the implementation of child-led advocacy in Limbangansari Village. The village head provided full support and high enthusiasm. The researchers also collected information about children's participation in discussion forums or local organizations. Next, the researchers conducted trust building with the children of Limbangansari Village to build relationships, introduce each other, and explain the aims and objectives of the research. The children welcomed the researcher warmly and friendly.

After establishing a good relationship with the children, researchers together with the children arranged a series of activities to be carried out with the aim that the implementation of advocacy activities could run well and effectively. Researchers and children then agreed to carry out advocacy training for children so that children can learn how to deliver advocacy well. At the next meeting, researchers and children gathered according to the predetermined time and place to carry out advocacy training for children. The advocacy training was held on July 29, 2024. The advocacy training materials included public speaking skills, advocacy materials and children's rights, advocacy strategy development, and skills to interact with stakeholders, in this case the Limbangansari Village officials. This training aims to prepare the children to carry out their role as advocates in voicing their voices and rights.

After conducting the advocacy training, researchers and children in Limbangansari Village formed an advocacy group team that has the same interest and vision to fight for the rights and wishes of children in Limbangansari Village. Child-led advocacy teams or groups play an important role in ensuring that children's voices and rights are heard and considered in decision-making processes that affect their lives. The children's advocacy team in Limbangansari Village plays an active role in expressing their opinions, aspirations and fighting for their rights in front of stakeholders so that policies made by stakeholders are in line with the current needs of children. Children who are members of the child advocacy group that has been created are also informants in this research.

2. The Problem Issue Identification Stage of Child-Led Advocacy

The problem issue identification stage in advocacy activities led by children is a stage to clearly understand the problems that will be raised and voiced. In addition, at this stage researchers and children ensure that the advocacy to be carried out is truly relevant to the needs of children in Limbangansari Village so that advocacy are effective in achieving the desired goals. Based on the results of problem identification conducted by Limbangansari Village Child Advocacy Group team and researchers, the problems that became the main issues were related to the lack of fulfillment of children's rights in Limbangansari Village. The problems of the lack of fulfillment of children's rights that arise include the lack of children's participation in community or youth activities, no play facilities for children, lack of facilities to channel children's hobbies, and lack of capacity building and character building activities.

3. Problem Solving Discussion Stage of Child-Led Advocacy

The problem-solving discussion stage is where children discuss the previously identified problems with the aim of finding various alternative solutions to overcome the problems. At this stage, the children of Limbangansari Village who are formed into child

advocacy groups determine the priority issues that need to be addressed, dig deeper into the impact of the problem, and determine the potential and resources that can be utilized to overcome priority issues. The following are the priority issues chosen by the children of Limbangansari Village:

- a. Lack of children's participation as organizers in Indonesia's Independence Day activities on 17 August.

During the 17th of August activities, children in Limbangansari Village never participated as a committee, they never felt how to run activities in a community, even though it was an opportunity for them to improve their communication skills, leadership skills, relationship skills, time management skills, etc. The lack of children's participation as a committee for the 17th of August activities has an impact on the non-implementation of children's expectations and needs regarding the competitions they want. Without children's involvement, the planning and implementation of competition activities are determined by adults who do not fully understand the interests and needs of children, as a result the competitions or events organized are not in accordance with the expectations and desires of children so that the 17th of August activities are less interesting for children in Limbangansari Village.

- b. There is no reading corner for children in Limbangansari Village

Many children in Limbangansari Village have an interest and hobby in reading, but unfortunately there are no facilities such as libraries or reading corner rooms that can be used by children to read books, novels, or comics. The children want a special room that they can use to read books, borrow books, and study together. This issue is important to advocate because in addition to matching the children's interests, Limbangansari Village has resources and potential that can be utilized to realize this idea, for example in the village office there is an empty room that is no longer used and can be converted into a reading corner. In addition, resources such as village officials, local communities and children can be involved in the process of managing and procuring books. This reading corner can become a literacy center for children in Limbangansari village. With a book corner, children have a safe and comfortable place to increase their knowledge and develop positive habits such as reading and learning together.

- c. Lack of children's participation in Islamic Day Commemorations such as Maulid of The Prophet Muhammad

The lack of children's participation in celebrations of Islamic days, such as Maulid of The Prophet Muhammad, became a key issue in advocacy in Limbangansari village, given that the majority of villagers are Muslims. The celebration of the Prophet's birthday, which is an important moment for the Muslim community in the village, often involves various competitions and activities that can be a learning opportunity for children. However, according to statements from informants, children in Limbangansari Village are still not actively involved, especially as organizers in these activities. This is a problem because children do not get the opportunity to learn how to plan, organize and run events. Without participation, children miss opportunities to develop important skills such as leadership, cooperation and time management. This issue is a priority for advocacy because children's participation in religious activities such as Maulid Nabi is not only about physical involvement, but also about learning religious values, togetherness, and social responsibility that they should gain when involved in these activities. Involving children as organizers can help them understand the significance of religious celebrations and feel a stronger attachment to the culture and traditions that exist in Limbangansari Village. In addition, by giving children a role

in this activity, the village also demonstrates a commitment to support the fulfillment of children's rights, especially the right to participate and learn in an environment that respects their diversity and beliefs. Children's participation in Islamic Day celebrations can also be a means to instill positive religious and social values from an early age, so advocacy to increase their involvement is essential.

d. Lack of children's participation in community activities

The lack of children's participation in community activities in Limbangansari Village is a problem that needs attention. Although Limbangansari Village has various community activities and organizations such as youth organizations (Karang Taruna), children have not been fully involved. The members and administrators of the youth organization in Limbangansari Village are mostly men, not teenagers or youth as they should be. Children in Limbangansari Village hope to be part of the youth organization so that they can improve their skills and abilities, learn to voice their opinions, socialize with their peers, and contribute to society.

From these priority issues, the children as informants who are members of the child advocacy group in Limbangansari Village identify sources and potentials that can be of assistance in problem solving. After digging deeper into the problem and identifying potentials and sources for problem solving, the advocacy group led by the children in Limbangansari Village planned the next meeting to formulate solutions to the problem issues that were prioritized by the children to be advocated to stakeholders. The children determined the venue, date, and equipment needed for the next meeting to formulate solutions.

4. The Formulating Problem-Solving Solutions of Child-Led Advocacy

The next stage is to formulate problem-solving solutions. Based on the priority issues that have been identified, the children formulated problem-solving solutions according to their ideas. Based on the research results, the problem-solving solutions can be seen in the table below:

Table 1 The Problem-Solving Solutions

No.	Problem Solving Solutions	Research Results
1.	Lack of children's participation as organizers in Indonesia's Independence Day activities on 17 August.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form a committee consisting of the children of Limbangansari Village 2. Competitions are combined from all hamlets (RW) in Limbangansari Village. 3. The type of competition is adjusted to the interests and talents of the children such as badminton, volleyball, e-sports, and tumpeng decoration.
2.	There is no reading corner for children in Limbangansari Village	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The PKBM room nar the Village Office can be used as a reading corner. 2. Books can be obtained from donations or in collaboration with the Regional Library. 3. The reading corner is open every Saturday and Sunday 4. Children can be the guardians of the reading corner with a rotating system according to the schedule.
3.	Lack of children's participation in Islamic Day Commemorations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form a committee consisting of children from Limbangansari Village.

	such as Maulid of The Prophet Muhammad	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The competition is combined from all hamlets in Limbangansari Village. 3. The type of competition is adjusted to the ability of the children of Limbangansari Village such as Adhan, Takbir Parade around, Quiz competition about Islam, da'wah/religious speech competition
4.	Lack of children's participation in community activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children are involved as members of the Limbangansari Village Youth Organization. 2. Children are included in meetings, especially Karang Taruna Desa Limbangansari meetings.

5. The Advocacy Delivery Stage

The last stage carried out in the Advocacy Implementation process led by children in Limbangansari Village is the advocacy delivery stage. In this stage, children deliver the results and the solutions based on problem issues to stakeholders. Children deliver problem-solving solutions to Limbangansari Village stakeholders. The purpose of the advocacy delivery stage is that the solutions they compile can be heard and followed up directly by Limbangansari Village stakeholders. Based on the informants' statements, it can be concluded that the priority issues concerning children in Limbangansari Village are lack of children's participation as organizers in Indonesia's Independence Day activities on 17 August, lack of children's participation in Islamic Day Commemorations such as Maulid of The Prophet Muhammad, there is no reading corner for children, and children are not involved in community activities such as youth organizations, and existing competitions are not tailored to the interests and abilities of Limbangansari Village children. The parties involved in this stage were the village head, village officials, and representatives of the village community. The implementation time was at 09.00 am in the upper hall of the Village Office. The implementation process was carried out face-to-face with the children's representatives presenting directly.

The problem analysis in the study of the Implementation of Child-Led Advocacy in Limbangansari Village, Cianjur Regency, includes a comprehensive analysis based on data collected through interviews, observations, and document studies. The findings indicate that the implementation of child-led advocacy follows four stages. However, during these stages, several obstacles emerged, leading to less-than-optimal advocacy efforts by the children. These challenges constitute the core issues in the implementation of child-led advocacy. Based on in-depth interviews and observations, the following is an analysis of the problems encountered in the process of implementing child-led advocacy:

a. Unstructured Problem Solving Solutions

Based on the research findings, obstacles emerged during the problem-solving stage, particularly the lack of structure in the proposed solutions. Unstructured solutions prevent ideas from being effectively communicated to stakeholders. Although guidance has been provided to the children, it is important not to impose adult perspectives, as child-led advocacy should remain uninfluenced by external direction. The outcomes of such advocacy should authentically reflect the children's own thoughts. Therefore, a method is needed to make the problem-solving process more structured.

b. There is no regular monitoring of the problem-solving solutions that have been presented

After the problem-solving solutions were presented, there was no regular monitoring to assess whether the solutions developed by the children were being followed up by the stakeholders in Limbangansari Village. This lack of monitoring raises concerns that the

solutions proposed by the children may be disregarded or not taken seriously. Therefore, regular monitoring is essential to ensure that the solutions proposed by the children are implemented and supported by the Limbangansari Village stakeholders.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of problem identification conducted by researchers and the Limbangansari Village Child Advocacy Group team, the problems that became the main issues were related to the lack of fulfillment of children's rights in Limbangansari Village. Problems related to the lack of fulfillment of children's rights include: lack of children's participation in community activities, absence of facilities or places for children to play, lack of facilities and activities to channel hobbies, and lack of capacity building activities and youth character building. In the problem-solving discussion stage, children determine priority issues based on their expectations, needs, and issues that have a great opportunity to be realized by children when carrying out advocacy. The priority issues chosen by the children of Limbangansari Village to be the main issues to be advocated to the stakeholders of Limbangansari Village are: 1) lack of children's participation in Indonesia's Independence Day activities on 17 August, 2) lack of children's participation in Islamic Day Commemorations such as Maulid of The Prophet Muhammad, 3) absence of reading corners, 4) lack of children's participation in community activities. From these priority issues, children as informants who are members of child advocacy groups in Limbangansari Village identify sources and priorities that can be of assistance in problem solving.

At the problem-solving stage in Limbangansari Village, the children engaged in discussions and developed solutions for each prioritized issue. To address the low participation of children in the Independence Day (17th August) activities, they proposed forming a committee consisting of children, combining competitions between neighborhoods in hamlets (RWs), and tailoring the types of competition to their interests, such as badminton, volleyball, e-sports, and "hias tumpeng" (rice cone decoration). To solve the issue of the lack of reading corners, they suggested utilizing the PKBM Room, organizing book donations, and opening the reading corner every Saturday and Sunday with children taking turns as volunteers. For participation in Islamic Day celebrations, a children's committee was formed, inter-neighborhood competitions were organized, and events such as the call to prayer (adzan), parades, islamic quizzes, and religious speeches (pildacil) were adapted to their abilities. Participation in community activities was improved by involving children in the Karang Taruna (youth organization) and related meetings. At the advocacy delivery stage, the implementation of child-led advocacy in Limbangansari Village involved presenting solutions for the identified issues to stakeholders, such as the village head, village officials, and community representatives, to ensure follow-up actions. This activity took place face-to-face at the village hall at 9:00 am, with children's representatives presenting the solutions directly.

REFERENCES

- Abdussamad, Z. (2021). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Makassar: Syakir Media Press.
- Afiyanti, Y. (2008). Focus group discussion (diskusi kelompok terfokus) sebagai metode pengumpulan data penelitian kualitatif. *Jurnal Keperawatan Indonesia*, 12(1), 58-62.
- Alhamidi, R. (2023). *Anak Ditenggelamkan Ibu tambah Catatan Hitam Kekerasan Anak di Jabar*. Retrieved from: <https://www.detik.com/jabar/berita/d-6972257/anak-ditenggelamkan-ibu-tambah-catatan-hitam-kekerasan-anak-di-jabar>
- Barker, C. (2003). *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practices*. UK: Sage Publications.
- Dubey, S. N. (1979). Social planning process steps and considerations. *International Social Work*, 22(3), 3-10.

- Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2020). *Para Orang Tua Harus Pahami 3 Kebutuhan Dasar Anak: Asuh, Asih, dan Asah*. Retrieved from: <http://pauddikmassulteng.id/berita/detail/para-orang-tua-harus-pahami-3-kebutuhan-dasar-anak-asuh-asih-dan-asah>
- McMellon, C., & Tisdall, E. K. M. (2020). Children and young people's participation rights: Looking backwards and moving forwards. *The International Journal of Children's Rights*, 28(1), 157-182.
- Petr, C. G. (2003). *Social Work with Children and Their Families: Pragmatic Foundations*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Pujileksono, S., Abdurahman, S. M., Yuliani, D., & Wuryantari, M. (2018). *Dasar-Dasar Praktik Pekerjaan Sosial*. Malang: Intrans Publishing.
- Pusiknas Bareskrim Polri. (2023). *Anak Perempuan Lebih Banyak Jadi Korban Kekerasan*. Retrieved from: https://pusiknas.polri.go.id/detail_artikel/anak_perempuan_lebih_banyak_jadi_korban_kekerasan
- Sheafor, B. W., & Horejsi, C. R. (2003). *Technique and Guidelines for Social Work Practice*. USA: Pearson Education.
- Sofyan, I. (2023). *Tren Kasus Kekerasan Anak Perempuan di Cianjur Meningkat*. Retrieved from; <https://www.rri.co.id/daerah/363790/tren-kasus-kekerasan-anak-perempuan-di-cianjur-meningkat>
- Sugiyono. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Suharto, E. (2014). *Membangun Masyarakat Memberdayakan Rakyat: Kajian Strategis Pembangunan Kesejahteraan Sosial dan Pekerjaan Sosial*. Bandung: Refika Aditama.
- Suyanto, B. (2013). *Masalah Sosial Anak*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Group.
- Unicef Indonesia. (2018). *Konvensi Hak Anak: Versi Anak-Anak*. Retrieved from: <https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/id/konvensi-hak-anak-versi-anak-anak>
- Undang-Undang Nomor 39 Tahun 1999 tentang Hak Asasi Manusia.
- Undang-Undang Nomor 35 Tahun 2014 tentang Perubahan atas Undang-undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2002 tentang Perlindungan Anak.
- Widya, D., Eva, N. H., & Santoso, T. R. (2019). *Advokasi Sosial terhadap Anak Korban Kekerasan Seksual: Kajian Pustaka*. Bandung: Universitas Padjadjaran.
- Yusri, M. (2021). *Kebijakan & Perencanaan Sosial di Indonesia*. Medan: UMSU Press.