

Research article

The Children Left Behind: The Need for Public Policies to Meet the Needs of Children Orphaned by COVID-19

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Abstract.

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the social, cultural, economic, education, tourism, trade and other sectors in Indonesia. Of all of these, health and humanitarian issues are those most highlighted. This research involved a literature search of books, journal articles and manuscripts of government regulations. Discussing the death rate from COVID-19 is not only a question of how many people have lost their lives in Indonesia due to contracting the disease, but also of the conditions and survival of the families left behind, especially children who have lost their parents due to COVID-19. The psychological aspects of the families of COVID-19 victims have often been neglected. As yet, the Government still largely focuses on the sick or dead and has not paid much attention to the bereaved families, especially children, who are in dire need of assistance. In Indonesia, there are 11,045 children who have become orphans, fatherless, or motherless because their parents or caregivers died due to COVID-19.¹ This raises concerns regarding how their clothing, food and shelter needs can be met, along with their needs related to the rights to education, physical and psychological health, and security and safety. Therefore, procedures, coordination, schemes for protecting children's rights, and mitigation actions involving public policies must notice and meet the needs of children who have lost their parents due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19, children, assistance, public policy

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1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia has claimed more than 130,000 lives. As many as 52.5% of them are people of productive age who also have a role as parents. The government have to pay attention to the fate of children who have been abandoned by their parents due to COVID-19. It is estimated that tens of thousands of Indonesian children have become orphans, fatherless, or motherless during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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To date, there has been no official release from the Indonesian government regarding the real number of children being orphaned, fatherless, or motherless. The information that appears is only a prediction and a partial description of some regions and institutions.¹

The Ministry of Social Affairs said, based on the data from the COVID-19 Handling Task Force as of July 20, 2021, there were 11,045 children who were orphaned, fatherless, or motherless.² Meanwhile, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI)³ predicts that there will be more than 40,000 children. Kawal COVID-19 estimates there are more than 50,000 children as of last July. As of September 7, 2021, according to the data from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the children who have become orphaned, fatherless, or motherless increased to 28,088 children.

Using a mortality rate approach, especially productive ages of 31-45 years, Litbang Kompas predicts the number of children who have become orphans, fatherless, or motherless due to the pandemic.

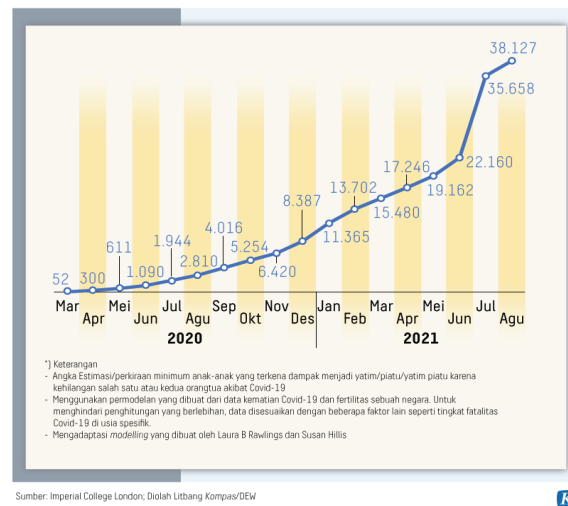


Figure 1: Estimation of Children Becoming Orphans/Fatherless/Motherless due to COVID-19 in Indonesia (March 2020 – 4 August 2021). (Source: Imperial College London, processed by Litbang Kompas).

From the data on the Covid19.go.id page as of August 17, 2021, as many as 12.9 percent of the national death rate (120.034 people) were in the 31- to 45-year-old age group or there were 15,456 deaths.

Assuming the people who died in that age range were married and had 2 children under 18 years old, the estimated children who became orphans, fatherless, or motherless were around 30,912 people. This figure can be less or more because not a few families have only one child or even have more than two children.

This estimate is not much different from the minimum estimation modeling conducted by Imperial College London which was adapted from the research of Laura B Rawlings

and Susan Hillis⁴. Imperial College London estimates that 38,127 Indonesian children have lost their parents due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This figure places Indonesia in the 9th highest rank in the world.

Using COVID-19 mortality and fertility data for a country adjusted for the COVID-19 fatality rate at a specific age, we get an estimate of the number of children who have lost one or both parents to COVID-19. From the data obtained after collaborating with UNICEF, nationally in Indonesia 20,887 children must become orphans, fatherless, or motherless during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵

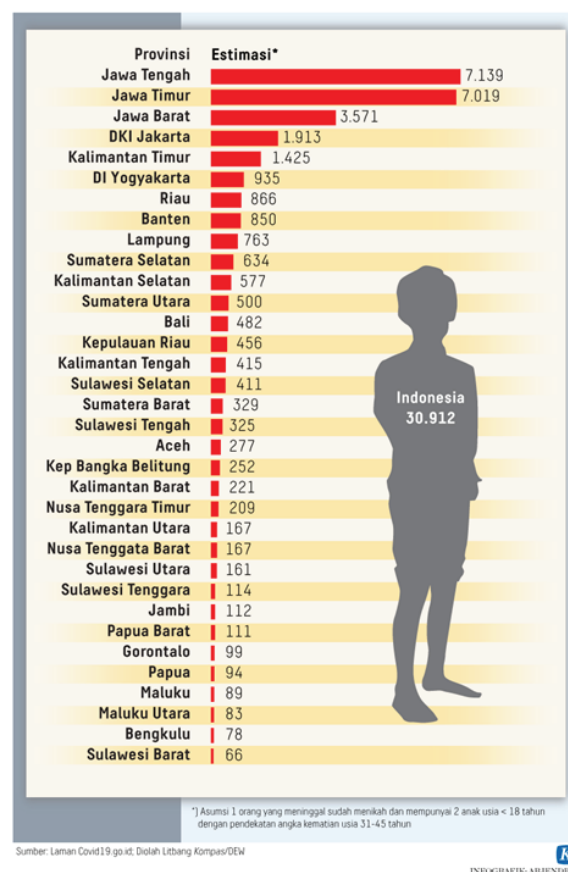


Figure 2: Estimated Number of Children Becoming Orphans/Fatherless/Motherless due to Loss of Parents due to COVID-19 by Province (as of 17 August 2021). (Source: Covid19.go.id, processed by Litbang Kompas).

Based on the Litbang Kompas estimation, the 5 provinces with the highest number of children who have lost their parents are as follows:

1. Central Java (7,139 children)
2. East Java (7,019 children)
3. West Java (3,571 children)
4. DKI Jakarta (1,913 children)
5. East Kalimantan (1,425 children)



Berdasarkan estimasi Litbang Kompas, 5 provinsi tertinggi jumlah anak yang kehilangan orang tua :

- Jawa Tengah (7.139 anak)
- Jawa Timur (7.019 anak)
- Jawa Barat (3.571 anak)
- DKI Jakarta (1.913 anak)
- Kalimantan Timur (1.425 anak)

Figure 3: Provinces in Java Dominate the Number of Children Orphaned due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. (Source: Instagram @pandemictalks).

Research by Rachel Kidman⁶, from the paper entitled “Use HIV’s lessons to help children orphaned by COVID-19”, found out that there are brief evidence-based interventions that could be adapted and scaled up, working through school counsellors could be a feasible way to reach a large population with trauma-informed care since three-quarters of those orphaned by COVID-19 in the United States were adolescents. Also, deliver ‘cash plus care’. This approach aims to strengthen the family’s economic capacity and deliver complementary interventions to improve the quality of care, such as by enhancing parenting skills as well as interventions that provide cash benefits, which have been shown to improve orphans’ health and psychological and educational outcomes, as a result of a study in Tanzania and Kenya.

1.1. Research Aims and Objectives

The research aim is to assess public policy that meet orphans need due to COVID-19. Following research objectives would facilitate the achievement of this aim:

1. Describing the existing regulations concerning children that can also be used for orphaned children due to COVID-19.

2. Identifying the help and assistance needed for these orphaned children.
3. Providing recommendations to Indonesian government in terms of increasing awareness of the orphaned children because their parents or caregivers died due to COVID-19.

1.2. What is the role of the state?

Based on the results of the Litbang Kompas' poll⁷, the government is expected to provide education, care and guarantees of a decent life for orphans who are victims of the pandemic. In terms of education, namely providing scholarships until college. In terms of care, namely ensuring that children receive good family care, finding foster parents if there are no other families, reviving the National Movement for Foster Parents – Gerakan Nasional Orang Tua Asuh (GNOTA), and finding care in orphanages. In terms of guaranteeing a decent life, the government is expected to guarantee a life or provide a job if someone is an adult.

However, the state must be present to the children who have lost their parents so that they do not lose their present and future life even more.

In 2021, the government issued Government Regulation (PP) No. 78/2021 concerning Special Protection for Children.⁸ This indicates that the Government has affirmed the state's presence in protecting children, including children affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A child, in this rule, is defined as someone under 18 years old, including those who are still in the womb. The PP on Special Protection for Children was signed by Indonesian President Joko Widodo on August 10, 2021 and issued on the basis of two needs, namely empirical sociological needs and juridical needs.⁹

From an empirical sociological perspective, there are certain situations and conditions that endanger the lives of children, where the state needs to be present to ensure their future. This includes children in emergency situations, children in conflict with the law, children who are exploited both sexually and economically, children who are victims of trafficking, and other special conditions.

As for emergency situations where children need special protection, for example, such as Article 1 paragraph 2 of PP 78 of 2021, namely when children need a guarantee of security against threats that endanger themselves and their lives in their growth and development.

The form of Special Protection for Children provided is rapid treatment including treatment and rehabilitation, psychosocial assistance, providing social assistance for children from underprivileged families, as well as protection and assistance in every judicial process.

From a juridical perspective, this PP is a mandate from Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, which mandates further regulation on special protection for children through the establishment of a PP.

The issuance of this PP was an affirmative form of the state's commitment to serving special protection needs for children, considering that this protection issue cannot be solved separately. The issuance of this PP also clarifies the duties and authorities of the central government, the local governments, and institutions in ensuring the comprehensive protection of children.

There is room for the wider community to participate in providing protection. People who have information regarding the whereabouts of orphans who have been abandoned or separated from their parents due to COVID-19 can also report to local officials or social services. These children are the responsibility of the state. We must prevent children together from becoming victims in emergency situations, because they are Indonesia's future.

During the National Coordination Meeting (Rakornas) for the Fulfillment and Protection of the Rights of Children Victims of Losing Parents in the COVID-19 Pandemic, organized by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), Thursday (12/8), the National Coordination Meeting resulted in a number of recommendations, including that the local government should educate the public so that families report every incident of a child who has lost a parent to government officials in stages, through the neighborhood association (RT), community unit (RW), and village or kelurahan. Interventions also need to be carried out, in the form of social assistance for children and families.¹⁰

Additionally, by providing support for the fulfillment of children's basic rights related to clothing, food and housing through the support of the surrounding community and other social assistance.

Some areas that have already started to assess children whose parents died of COVID-19 and are mapping the help needed by these children, including Jakarta Provincial Government¹¹, Provincial Government of East Java⁵, Yogyakarta², Lampung Provincial Government¹², Government of Pekanbaru¹³ and other areas.

In addition to efforts to collect data and respond to cases for children who have lost their parents due to COVID-19, the Ministry of Social Affairs has also provided direct support through the Social Rehabilitation Assistance Program (ATENSI)¹⁴ which

includes the fulfillment of children's basic needs such as assistance with medicines, vitamins, swab tests/PCR, vaccinations and other basic needs of children, including providing counseling to children and their families.

Furthermore, to prevent children from losing their right to care, the Ministry of Social Affairs has also reunified children with their extended families, facilitating alternative care through foster care/guardians/child adoption and child care through orphanages.

Other support provided by the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs is helping large families of children to overcome difficulties in raising children. In addition, therapy services through ATENSI in the form of physical, psychosocial and mental spiritual therapy are also provided to children to overcome feelings of sadness due to the loss of their parents due to COVID-19 and revive their enthusiasm to continue their life.

Finally, the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs also seeks to provide accessibility support to help children access other needs.

The Ministry of PPPA has collected data through an application, and as of August 25, around 8,396 orphans have been registered due to COVID-19. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Social Affairs through the Director General of Rehabsos has recorded "by name by address" orphans due to COVID-19. Currently, 8,274 children have been registered. The data is still fluctuating and continues to grow.¹⁵

Related Ministries and Institutions have also followed up on data collection issues. For example, the PPPA Ministry has coordinated with the PPPA Office in all provinces to collect data on orphans.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Social Affairs has also asked the provincial government to register orphans in stages, starting from the lower level in the kelurahan or village to regencies and cities. For this data collection, continuous synergy and coordination between Ministries and Institutions is needed so that there is no overlapping data.

Furthermore, it is necessary to synchronize with the Disdukcapil data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs so that the child's data is also based on the Population Identification Number (NIK) in order to receive special attention and the government's social assistance scheme. At this time, the attention of the President and the general public are children whose parents died due to COVID-19 who urgently need assistance from the state and government.

Moreover, one of the Member of the Commission for Social Affairs at the Indonesian House of Representatives, encouraged the existence of a special assistance scheme for orphans affected by COVID-19. They asked the government to provide educational assistance and a special assistance scheme for orphans. From the existing data, there

is data on additional assistance for daily needs, because not all families who care for these children are in good condition. The government has access to health. For example, BPJS registration and school education guarantees. Everything must be realized immediately.¹⁶

They also asked the role of local governments to collect data and provide comprehensive assistance to orphans. Including orphans who are left alone because they have no relatives, the government must ensure its protection so that no orphans are neglected.

The Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) also has a program to help students from underprivileged families who have lost their parents due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Director General of Early Childhood Education, Basic Education and Secondary Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, Jumeri said, students who fall into that category will be included in the data for recipients of the Program Indonesia Pintar (PIP).

Data collection of PIP recipients for children who have lost their parents due to the COVID-19 pandemic is the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs (Kemensos).

PIP is a tuition assistance program for school-age children from underprivileged families. Later, they can use the assistance to pay for education and other needs.

The nominal received will be adjusted to the level of education of each. Quoted from the Ministry of Education and Culture's website, students at the elementary level or the equivalent will receive assistance of 450,000 rupiah per year, students at the junior high school level 750,000 rupiah per year, while senior high school students will receive 1,000,000 rupiah per year.

2. method

The methodology we used here is literature studies. Literature study is a series of activities related to the methods of collecting library data, reading, taking notes, and managing research materials¹⁷ (Judithia, 2019). Literature Study is research conducted by collecting a number of books, magazines related to the problem and research objectives. This technique is carried out with the aim of revealing various theories that are relevant to the problem being faced/researched as reference material in discussion of research results. Literature Study is looking for theoretical references that are relevant to the cases or problems found. In general, the study of literature is a way to solve problems by tracing sources previously written posts. Literature Study is also very familiar with the term study References.

Another methodology we use is qualitative studies. A study is classified as qualitative if the purpose is primarily to describe a situation, phenomenon, problem, or event.¹⁸ (Trochim, W. M., & Donnelly, J. P., 2001). Qualitative studies tend to be more in-depth, focusing on a smaller population but probing deeper into a given problem than quantitative studies. Qualitative studies often produce descriptive, rich information that allow for deeper insight, including understanding why and how certain phenomenon exist.

The source of data in this article comes from secondary data from books, journals, articles, internet data, government regulations, and other relevant reading sources. The collected data is then analysed by using qualitative descriptive analysis.

2.1. Literature Studies

1. Recommendations from the Think Policy Studies¹⁹

The Think Policy Studies, along with Knowledge Sector Initiative (KSI) gave several recommendations about women and children affected by COVID-19. The most related recommendation is that KPPPA along with other institutions, including NGOs, should provide hotline due to violence obtained during the COVID-19 pandemic. The hotline can be reached via telephone, WhatsApp, or other social medias. This hotline can also be used by orphaned children due to COVID-19.

1. Recommendations from Bappenas²⁰

Bappenas also recommend providing hotline during the COVID-19 pandemic that can be reached through telephone, social media, email, and website. Other than that, Bappenas also recommend an accompaniment service, such as psychological and law accompaniment run by several organisations. Other than that, they also recommend strengthening the child protection system.

1. Recommendations from Rachel Kidman⁶

Rachel Kidman studied those recommendations for orphaned children by HIV can also be applied to orphaned children by COVID-19, but is still inclusive. Most studies take part in the US and several African countries. She recommended cash benefits plus care. Cash, in Tanzania and Kenya, shown to improve orphans' health and psychological and educational outcomes. Furthermore, it reduced anxiety and trauma symptoms among orphans. Meanwhile in the US, temporary expansion of the child tax credit raises some families out of dire poverty. But also in the US, bereavement is not yet covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act.

In terms of care, there is positive parenting programmes. It helps carers form a strong, nurturing relationship with a child who has experienced difficulties and grief.

These recommendations may apply not only to orphans but to a wide range of children affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as well.

3. Results and Discussion

Starting from the anxiety about orphans whose parents died due to COVID-19, a number of philanthropic parties such as kitabisa.com, Warga Bantu Warga, and Kawal COVID-19 formed an initiative called "Kawal Masa Depan."³ The team of Kawal Covid have data that is different from the data from the Ministry of Social Affairs. The initiative, which was launched on kitabisa.com on August 4, has raised more than 1 billion rupiah in donations. This donation will be distributed in the form of compensation and education funds.

Currently the Kawal Masa Depan team is still collecting data online on orphans through individual reports, from the children concerned, their families, and residents. On August 11, more than 415 data on Covid orphans had been collected; with the most domiciles in the Bangka Belitung Islands and the Riau Islands. After the data is collected, the Kawal Masa Depan team will verify and distribute aid according to conditions and needs.

For example, for the first batch the Kawal Masa Depan team will close at 500 first, so then they can read what the needs are, the categorization; high school, junior high, elementary, or a toddler. The community's enthusiasm to help is also reflected in the 130 percent increase in donations for various initiatives with the keyword 'covid orphans' on kitabisa.com. The Kawal Masa Depan team hopes that their initiative can be right on target and even reach families who do not have internet access and have not yet received assistance.

Furthermore, currently the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Finance are formulating the form and amount of assistance to be given to these orphans. It is estimated that the discussion will only be completed by the end of 2021.²¹

Even so, we hope stakeholders can accelerate a number of policies so that the handling of orphans can be carried out immediately. Efforts to deal with orphaned children can be accelerated if the stakeholders apply the recording of disaggregated data on children in each of their work plans.

Various efforts to assist the handling of these orphans must be carried out immediately by involving all parties, while waiting for the realization of assistance from the

government which is being formulated.²² Building community awareness around the orphanage's residence must be done so that at least the initial steps for handling the orphans can be realized immediately.

The initial assistance could be in the form of helping to meet daily needs physically and psychologically or contacting relatives and extended families of the orphaned children. Because the loss of both parents is a very heavy burden for children during the pandemic, which has an impact both physically and psychologically. Moreover, if the extended family, which is expected to be a support for life after their parents died, also cannot afford it because it is affected by the COVID-19 control policy. If the relatives of the orphans are not able to support their lives efforts to adopt the orphans can be carried out by a caring community. Of course, it must comply with the applicable adoption rules.

The realization of assistance for orphans during the pandemic is expected to be carried out immediately in any form, involving all parties. The involvement of all elements of the nation in dealing with orphans during the COVID-19 pandemic can save the nation's hope in the future.

On August 10, 2021, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, issued Government Regulation (PP) No. 78 of 2021 concerning Special Protection for Children.⁸ In general, this regulation mandates the Central Government, the Local Government (Pemda), and other state institutions to be responsible for special protection for (1) children in emergency situations, (2) children in conflict with the law, (3) children from minority groups and isolated, (4) children who are exploited economically and/or sexually, (5) children who are victims of abuse of narcotics, alcohol, psychotropics, and other addictive substances, (6) children who are victims of pornography, (7) children with HIV and AIDS, (8) children who are victims of kidnapping, selling, and/or trafficking, (9) children who are victims of physical and/or psychological violence, (10) children who are victims of sexual violence, (11) children who are victims of terrorist networks, (12) children with disabilities, (13) children who are victims of abuse and neglect, (14) children with deviant social behavior, and (15) children who are victims of stigma from labeling related to the condition of their parents.

Special protection for these children is given in technical implementing units/institutions, local apparatus organizations, and/or local technical implementing units that have been established with reference to the service standards that have been set. Special protection is carried out through (1) handling, treatment, and/or physical, psychological, social rehabilitation, and prevention of diseases and other health disorders, (2) psychosocial assistance from the period of treatment to recovery,

(3) providing social assistance to children from poor families, and (4) providing protection and assistance in every judicial process.

Special protection efforts for children from these conditions must be carried out quickly, comprehensively, and integrated. From all these and related to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are important questions about the concrete actions of the Central Government, the Local Governments, and other state institutions in carrying out the mandate of PP No. 78 of 2021. For example, has each local government officially determined and implemented its regional efforts in providing special protection for children from the categories mentioned? Or for example, are the Central Government, the Local Governments, and other state institutions only focus on collecting data on how many children have become orphans, fatherless, or motherless due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

The concrete actions of the Central Government, the Local Governments, and other state institutions in implementing PP No. 78 Year 2021 is very important. As stated by Deputy V of the Presidential Staff Office (KSP), Jaleswari Pramodhawardani, in responding to socio-empirical needs, Indonesian children must be protected, the government must be able to provide easily accessible complaint services, and there must be extra steps for protection from the government to children and children from situations/conditions that threaten their growth and development. Jaleswari said that PP No. 78 of 2021 regulates the prevention and handling of 15 (fifteen) types of children who require special protection, including the current contextual one, which is to provide special protection for children who are the victims of non-natural disasters, including those caused by disease outbreaks. The Central Government, the Local Governments, and other state institutions need to take the necessary concrete steps and provide space for the community to participate in providing special protection for children.⁹

Another statement came from the Coordinating Minister for Human Development and Culture (Muhadjir Effendy) who explained that the government through the relevant ministries (Kemensos, KemenPPPA, and Kemendagri) was collecting data on children who were abandoned by their parents due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This data collection process requires the role of the whole community, such as reporting to government officials if there are children who have become orphans, fatherless, or motherless due to COVID-19. The plan is that the collected data will be tidied up and rechecked with data from the Department of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Home Affairs and matched with NIK and DTKS to get assistance from the government.²²

At the regional level, the Rembang Regency Government (Pemkab)²³ through the Social Service for Women's Empowerment and Family Planning (Dinsos PPKB) distributed assistance to 2,750 orphans in Rembang Regency, some of which were orphans whose parents died because of COVID-19. The data on the number of orphans is claimed to be in accordance with the results of the verification and validation of the updated data in early June 2021. However, there is an age limit for orphans who receive assistance of Rp. 400 thousand from the Rembang Regency Government, which is a maximum age of 15 years. The assistance was transferred through PT. BKK Lasem to the beneficiary's account.

Still at the regional level, the Local Government of West Java Province officially launched the program for the Protection and Empowerment of Orphans, Fatherless, or Motherless Children Affected by COVID-19 on September 28, 2021.²⁴ In addition to coming from the Provincial Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD), this program also garnered assistance from various philanthropic institutions and individuals. Based on the latest data, there are 7,222 orphans, fatherless, or motherless children due to COVID-19, spread across 27 districts/cities in West Java Province. Several philanthropic institutions that participated in this program, including the Zakat Forum (FoZ), Bank BJB, BRI Bank, Yayasan Rumah Yatim, ASN Peduli Jabar, Yayasan Pikiran Rakyat, Asosiasi Pengusaha Sahabat Anak Indonesia (APSAI), Baznas Provinsi Jawa Barat, Kita Bisa Indonesia, Forum CSR Jawa Barat, Yayasan Kawal Masa Depan, PT Taspen, BUMD Forum, ITB Alumni Association, Unpad Alumni Association, Young Entrepreneurs Association, and PT Pos Indonesia. This program is claimed to seek to ensure the basic needs of children, such as education, health, and short-term compensation. Empowerment will be adjusted to the age range of children starting from elementary, junior high, and high school. In addition, later for those aged 18 years and over, the child will be endeavored to continue their education to the tertiary level or will be given skills if they do not go to college.

Before PP No. 78 of 2021 is stipulated, there are several things that have been done by the Central and the Local Governments in an effort to help orphans, fatherless, or motherless children who have lost their parents or main caregiver due to COVID-19. The Ministry of Social Affairs through the Social Rehabilitation Center/Loka and Social Rehabilitation Facilitator has obtained data on children (by name by address) whose parents died due to exposure to COVID-19. Data by name by address compiled by the Social Work Service Unit (Sakti Peksos) of East Java Province shows that there are 166 children who have lost their parents due to COVID-19, of which 12 children have become orphans, 58 children have been motherless, 89 children have been fatherless, and 8 children is under confirmation. Meanwhile in Yogyakarta², there were 19 children who

lost both their parents, 92 children lost their fathers, and 31 children lost their mothers. So far, data by name by address regarding children whose parents died due to exposure to COVID-19 are still being collected in the field. The Ministry of Social Affairs also claims that the facilitators in the field have carried out case responses for these children.²⁵

Previously, ATENSI support for orphaned children by COVID-19 had also been given in several areas, such as in Sragen, Central Java as many as 200 children and in Serang, Banten given to 5 children, both in the last week of August 2021.¹⁶ This ATENSI support is for the fulfillment of basic needs such as basic necessities and nutrition.

The Ministry of Social Affairs has proposed a budget for the handling of 4,043,622 orphans, fatherless, or motherless, both those whose parents died due to COVID-19, those in the Child Welfare Institutions (LKSA)²⁵ or those who are cared for by poor families.

The index of assistance for children who have not gone to school is Rp. 300 thousand/child/month and children who are already in school are Rp. 200 thousand/child/month. The period of this assistance is 12 months.

In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs also reunifies children with their extended families, facilitates alternative care through foster parenting, and child care through orphanages. Responses to children whose parents died from COVID-19 have been carried out, including in Kutai Kartanegara, Samarinda, Sukoharjo, Purwakarta, Bekasi²⁶, and Muna Regency. The Minister of Social Affairs, as quoted from the official website of the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs, explained that his ministry plans to carry out handling activities for children who have lost their parents by COVID-19. This activity is planned to involve the collaboration of related institutions/agencies including non-profit organizations (Non-Governmental Organizations/NGOs).

In connection with PP No. 78 of 2021 concerning Special Protection for Children, actually it is very necessary to have clear directions or guidelines related to the technical implementation of the PP. Of course, this includes technical or concrete steps for handling or protecting children (orphans, fatherless, and motherless children) due to COVID-19. There are many things that must be considered, anticipated, and carried out by the Central Government, the Local Governments, other state institutions, and the role of the community which is also felt to be very important.

The Ministry of PPPA and the Ministry of Social Affairs have each collected data on children who have become orphans due to COVID-19. For data collection, continuous synergy and coordination between Ministries and Institutions is needed so that there is no overlapping of data. In addition, synchronization with the Disdukcapil data of the Ministry of Home Affairs is needed so that children's data is also based on the

Population Identification Number (NIK) so that they can get special attention and the government's social assistance scheme. The Ministry of Health should be able to present data on parents who died due to Covid-19 and coordinate with the Disdukcapil Ministry of Home Affairs to ensure their data is based on the NIK. After collecting NIK-based data, then assistance interventions for children can be provided. Each relevant Ministry and Institution can integrate the data and can be completed immediately. This is so that interventions for children can be given immediately. Not only assistance in the form of logistics, but what children need is the protection and fulfillment of their rights. Fulfillment of children's rights, their care and protection. After the data is available, then intervention will be carried out.

Currently the data collection technique is in the form of submitting data from below (from kelurahan to subdistrict then to province and finally to the Ministry of Social Affairs), making sure there is no data overlap. It is necessary to crosscheck the data with the Disdukcapil through the NIK.¹⁶

Recommendations: for progress by name by address to be delivered openly and transparently (e.g., how many orphans were there as of that date in which province) and to properly document the delivery of these aids (have provided assistance to how many children and collaboration with any institution). For example, how many children are given in the form of family reunification, how many children are cared for in an orphanage, how many children gets a scholarship, and so on.

There are several types of assistance that can be given in general to all children, such as basic food programs, psychological services, education/scholarship funding assistance, and health insurance (BPJS).

The business process of distributing aid is from bottom to top: from RT to RW to kelurahan to sub-district to province then reported to the Ministry of Social Affairs. For data collection, it is centered on the Ministry of Social Affairs so that it does not overlap.

The provision of assistance must be accountable in a budgetary manner. As for the mechanism of monitoring and evaluation of aid distribution, the child who is the recipient of the assistance should submit reports periodically to the donor, for example quarterly, as a form of monitoring and evaluation.

In an emergency, monitoring and evaluation of social assistance and social security programs can be carried out by telephone, online, or by using digital data to support evidence-based policy making.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services need to provide psychological and legal assistance (either offline or online).

In the framework of providing and increasing service effectiveness, in May 2020 KPPPA prepared six protocols related to preventing the spread of COVID-19. These six protocols have been approved by the Task Force for the Acceleration of COVID-19 Response and followed up with the preparation of implementation guidelines by the respective ministries/agencies (K/L), where one of the protocols is a protocol for caring for asymptomatic children, children under monitoring, patients children under supervision, confirmed cases, and children with parents/caregivers/guardians under monitoring status, patients under supervision, confirmed cases, and parents who died due to COVID-19.

4. Conclusions

In addition to assistance, children's rights must be immediately considered starting from welfare until they get special scholarships. The government must be obliged to provide assistance to orphans due to COVID-19 because they are victims who must receive full attention from the state, and the law is obligatory for the state to be present to ensure the sustainability of its life.

The assistance provided by the government was not only in the form of scholarships or food assistance. More than that, they must be accompanied mentally to rebuild their motivation. The state must ensure and oversee the continuation of their life, the continuation of their schooling, there must be psychological and motivational assistance and of course pay attention to the environment. So, it's not just food aid, it's overall aid.

KPPPA as the coordinator of child protection providers, also ensures that the referral system and services for children provided by Ministries/Agencies can be connected to various protocols for handling COVID-19.

To strengthen child protection services, in April 2020 the government also launched the Mental Health Psychology Service (SEJIWA).¹⁹ Through cooperation with PT. Telkom, Tbk – which provides the hotline – and the Indonesian Psychological Association (HIMPSI) – which provides professional psychologists and assists and strengthens the capacity of volunteers at the national and regional levels. SEJIWA provided initial psychological support for the Indonesian people during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of these services is to provide assistance for children affected by COVID-19 and children who need special protection.

SEJIWA's service mechanism is adjusted to the procedures and protocols for preventing the spread of COVID-19. The public can consult with psychologists through the complaint unit hotline, web browser, or KPPPA's e-mail. This service will be integrated

with the regional working group (pokja) of the BERJARAK Movement. The SEJIWA service hotline is also connected to UPTD PPA/P2TP2A, Child Protection Institutions, and FPL in all provinces and districts/cities, according to the reporting location. All Heads of the PPPA Service assign the Head of Service Units at the provincial and district/city levels to receive and follow up on any complaints that come in, as well as ensure that all complaints are properly served and monitored until the termination process.

The government must ensure that children who are orphaned by COVID-19 received assistance and they must be ensured that starting from the 2022 APBN and APBD²⁷, they must be included or receive all assistance.

In the short-term treatment, what the government had to do was to provide assistance with daily food needs, and to conduct psychological assessments to restore the child's psychological condition.

The medium-term treatment is to protect children from the potential of not getting proper care, being adopted not in accordance with the provisions of the legislation, the potential for experiencing violence, being married off at a child's age, and even potentially becoming victims of human trafficking.

Furthermore, children whose parents left their property and other inheritance need to be accompanied and protected. This is done so that the assets left by their parents, including securities and account balances, can be used by the children for their future. Don't let them fall into the hands of irresponsible people, considering that these children are still minors.

The long-term solution is to include children who have lost their parents in a number of government programs, such as the Program Indonesia Pintar (PIP), Program Indonesia Sehat, and Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH). Through the Kartu Indonesia Pintar to guarantee the fulfillment of the rights to education of these children in order to continue their education, at least up to high school level or equivalent.

Meanwhile, the Kartu Indonesia Sehat is to guarantee the fulfillment of their right to health, because it is impossible for these children to have to pay BPJS every month.

Children are also prone to falling ill during their growth period. While PKH is a guarantee of meeting the needs of daily life, namely nutritious food for the growth and development of these children.

Village or kelurahan officials, RT/RW must also move to assist in the administration and data collection of these children.

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