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FROM STREET CHILDREN TO CHILDREN IN STREET SITUATIONS: REFRAMING LOCAL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH CHARLES O. JONES'S FRAMEWORK IN PALEMBANG, INDONESIA

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ABSTRAK

Fenomena anak yang hidup atau bekerja di ruang publik (children in street situations CISS) merupakan persoalan kebijakan yang melibatkan kemiskinan, kerentanan keluarga, deprivasi sosial, keterbatasan akses terhadap pendidikan dan layanan dasar, serta risiko eksploitasi dan kekerasan. Pergeseran konsep dari "anak jalanan" menjadi CISS menuntut transformasi implementasi kebijakan dari orientasi pengendalian ruang publik menuju perlindungan hak-hak anak. Penelitian ini menganalisis implementasi Peraturan Daerah Kota Palembang Nomor 12 Tahun 2013 tentang Pembinaan Anak Jalanan, Gelandangan, dan Pengemis menggunakan model implementasi kebijakan Charles O. Jones yang mencakup organisasi, interpretasi, dan aplikasi. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif melalui analisis dokumenter terhadap peraturan, dokumen pemerintah daerah, statistik, laporan internasional, dan literatur yang diterbitkan pada 2021–2026. Data dianalisis secara tematik untuk mengkaji kapasitas kelembagaan, interpretasi kebijakan, dan praktik implementasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mekanisme penjangkauan, rehabilitasi, dan dukungan terhadap anak telah tersedia; namun, implementasi masih terkendala fragmentasi kelembagaan, lemahnya tata kelola data, inkonsistensi interpretasi kebijakan, dan keberlanjutan yang terbatas. Ketiadaan data CISS yang konsisten pada 2023–2025 menunjukkan kelemahan dalam pemantauan dan integrasi informasi, bukan penurunan prevalensi. Implementasi yang efektif memerlukan pendekatan berbasis hak, berbasis data, dan tata kelola kolaboratif yang mengintegrasikan penguatan keluarga, reintegrasi berkelanjutan, dan perlindungan anak untuk mendorong tata kelola perkotaan yang inklusif serta pencapaian Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (SDGs).

Keywords:
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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of children living or working in public spaces (children in street situations—CISS) represents a policy issue involving poverty, family vulnerability, social deprivation, limited access to education and services, and risks of exploitation and violence. The shift from "street children" to CISS requires transforming policy implementation from public-space control toward child rights protection. This study analyzes the implementation of Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 on the Guidance of Street Children, Vagrants, and Beggars using Charles O. Jones's implementation model, encompassing organization, interpretation, and application. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed through documentary analysis of regulations, local government documents, statistics, international reports, and literature published between 2021 and 2026. Data were analyzed thematically to

examine institutional capacity, policy interpretation, and implementation practices. Findings indicate that outreach, rehabilitation, and child support mechanisms have been established; however, implementation remains constrained by institutional fragmentation, weak data governance, inconsistent policy interpretation, and limited sustainability. The absence of consistent CISS data for 2023–2025—as verified through administrative record reviews—does not indicate a declining prevalence, but rather reflects structural weaknesses in cross-institutional information integration, the lack of standardized documentation, and the absence of a localized digital case-monitoring system. Effective implementation requires a rights-based, data-driven, and collaborative governance approach integrating family strengthening, sustainable reintegration, and child protection to advance urban governance and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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1. Introduction

Child protection is an integral part of sustainable development because children's living conditions reflect the capacity of public institutions to address poverty, inequality, social exclusion, violence, and limited access to basic services. Children are not merely positioned as beneficiaries of development but also as rights-holders entitled to protection, education, health, participation, and social well-being. Within the framework of the SDGs, child protection is linked to various development goals, particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). This multidimensional perspective is increasingly important in understanding the issues faces by children living and/or working in public spaces, as their vulnerability cannot be explained solely by household economic conditions. Children in street situations (CISS) are one group facing multidimensional vulnerability. A conceptual shift from the term "street children" to CISS is essential because the former tends to define children based on their presence on the streets and risks framing them as a public order issues. In contrast, the CISS concept emphasizes children's relationship with public spaces as well as the social, economic, family, and institutional conditions that shape their situation. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, through General Comment No. 21 (2017) (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2017), affirms that children in street situations are rights-holders and require comprehensive, sustainable, and rights-based protection. CISS encompasses children who rely on the streets for survival and/or work, as well as children who have strong ties to public spaces, making such spaces an integral part of their daily lives (UNICEF, 2020).

The concept indicated that CISS is not a static category of children. A child's relationship with public spaces can change depending on family circumstances,

economic conditions, education, social environment, violence, mobility and the child's survival strategies. Therefore, policies aimed solely at removing children from public spaces risk addressing symptoms without tackling the root causes of vulnerability. An order-based approach can result in children being moved from one location to another without receiving protection, education, health services, family support, or sustainable reintegration. A rights-based perspective requires the government to view children as subjects of policy and ensure that every intervention is oriented toward the best interests of the child. The urgency of this approach is reinforced by recent research on CISS. (Jörgensen et al., 2024) , through a scoping review of 35 studies, demonstrated that children in street situations and working children face various barriers in accessing health care and having their basic rights fulfilled. These barriers include stigma, violence, exploitation, unsafe environments, limited access to services, and documentation issues. The study emphasizes the need for services that are integrated, easily accessible, trauma-informed, and tailored to children's specific needs. These findings indicate that the issue of CISS is not merely about the presence of children on the streets, but is linked to the capacity of public service systems to reach vulnerable groups. This perspective must be complemented by a gender-responsive analysis, as the positions of girls and boys in street-connected situations can be shaped by gender norms, mobility patterns, types of work, and differing risk of violence and exploitation. Studies on street-connected children indicate that gender differences may be linked to children's well-being, resilience, and the forms of vulnerability they experience (Nyumayo et al., 2022; Urgessa Gita & Abeshu Dissasa, 2023). In the Indonesian context, research on street children also indicates that gender constructions are present in daily activities and in how children interpret the roles of men and women (Qosyasih & Fadilah, 2025)

Research by (Matarise & Chibonore, 2025) in South Africa also indicates that the existence of social protection policies does not always result in interventions that are responsive to CISS. Children in street situations tend to be lumped into the general category of children in need of protection and care, meaning their specific characteristics and needs may not be adequately addressed. These findings indicate that the existence of a legal framework and social programs is insufficient if their circumstances. Thus, the effectiveness of policy implementation depends heavily on institutions' ability to translate policy objectives into concrete services. The issue of CISS also holds significant importance within the sustainable development agenda. (Mehta & Sharma, 2026) note that the SDGs do not yet include targets specifically aimed at children in street situations. This situation risks leaving CISS invisible within development planning, monitoring, and reporting systems. They emphasize the importance of governance, advocacy, evidence building, community empowerment, and strengthening service delivery systems in developing sustainable interventions for CISS. These findings indicate that groups that are invisible in data and planning systems are at risk of remaining invisible in the distribution of resources and public services as well.

In this context, data governance is a critical component of CISS policy implementation. Data serves not only as an administrative tool but also determines the government's ability to identify who needs intervention, where they are located, the types

of vulnerabilities they face, and the forms of services required. The nature of CISS, which involves mobility between home, school, public spaces, workplaces, and service institutions, can result in children not being consistently identified through sectoral data-collection systems. The lack of data integration across agencies can also hinder outreach, monitoring, evaluation, and reintegration. Therefore, weak data governance can be understood as one of the challenges affecting policy implementation capacity. A number of studies in Indonesia indicate that challenges persist in the implementation of policies concerning street children. (Maulydina & Jannah, 2023) demonstrate that the effectiveness of policy interventions for street children remains closely tied to behavioral change and the social conditions underpinning children's lives in street situations. (Solong et al., 2023), in a study of policies addressing street children in Makassar, found that the government has carried out outreach, data collection, guidance, rehabilitation, and reintegration activities; however, implementation remains influenced by various enabling and constraining factors. The study shows that the implementation remains influenced by various enabling and constraining factors. The study shows that the implementation of these programs cannot be separated from organizational capacity and children's social circumstances. A study on the implementation of policies for the guidance of street children in Makassar also highlights the relevance of Charles O. Jones's model, which consists of three main activities: organization, interpretation, and application. The "organization" dimension relates to the formation and structuring of implementing organizations, the distribution of authority, and the allocation of resources. "Interpretation" concerns how implementers understand the policy's objectives and substance, while "application" concerns the translation of the policy into concrete activities. This framework is important because it allows implementation to be analyzed not only in terms of program existence but also in terms of the organization's ability to translate policy into practice.

Although previous studies have examined street children through various perspectives, important gaps remain in understanding the implementation of local policies for children in street situations (CISS). Previous research in Indonesia has primarily focused on behavioral interventions, program implementation, and the operational challenges faced by local governments (Maulydina & Jannah, 2023; Solong et al., 2023). While these studies provide valuable insights into government interventions, they offer relatively limited discussion of how local policy implementation contributes to the long-term fulfillment of children's rights, particularly through family strengthening, continuous protection, and sustainable reintegration. Furthermore, although international studies have increasingly adopted the CISS perspective to highlight children's multidimensional vulnerabilities and their rights to protection and basic services (Jörgensen et al., 2024; Matarise & Chibonore, 2025), the application of this conceptual framework to the analysis of local policy implementation in Indonesian cities remains insufficiently explored. In particular, the relationship between institutional capacity, policy interpretation, and implementation practices has not been adequately examined in connection with the specific needs and rights of children in street situations. Another important gap concerns data governance. Existing discussions of street-connected children frequently emphasize poverty, social exclusion, access to services, and institutional interventions. However, the

role of integrated data management, continuity of identification, and interagency information sharing as essential components of local policy implementation requires further examination. These aspects are particularly important because the mobility and changing circumstances of CISS may not be adequately captured through conventional administrative and sectoral data systems. Finally, the relationship between local CISS policy implementation and the broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly inclusive urban development and the principle of leaving no one behind, remains relatively underexplored. Consequently, there is a need for an integrated analytical approach that connects policy implementation processes with child rights protection, data governance, sustainable reintegration, and inclusive development.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the implementation of Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 through Charles O. Jones's framework of organization, interpretation, and application. Its contribution lies in integrating the CISS perspective and a rights-based approach into the analysis of local policy implementation, while positioning data governance and sustainable family reintegration as important dimensions of implementation effectiveness. In doing so, the study moves beyond assessing the existence of programs and administrative activities to examining whether local policy implementation can generate sustainable improvements in children's protection and living conditions. Palembang City was selected as the research setting because it provides an analytically relevant case for examining the relationship between local policy commitments and the practical implementation of child protection. The selection is based on three considerations. First, Palembang has an established local regulatory framework, namely Regional Regulation No. 12 of 2013 concerning the Guidance of Street Children, Vagrants, and Beggars, which provides a formal basis for government intervention. Second, the available statistical information indicates that 55 street children were identified in 2022, while consistent official data for the 2023–2025 period remain unavailable. This situation raises important questions concerning the continuity of identification, institutional coordination, and the effectiveness of policy monitoring. Third, the implementation of this regulation offers an opportunity to examine whether local government interventions have moved beyond controlling children's presence in public spaces toward ensuring their rights, strengthening family support, and facilitating sustainable reintegration. Therefore, Palembang is not selected merely as a geographical location but as an information-rich case through which the relationship between regulatory frameworks, institutional capacity, and rights-based policy implementation can be critically examined. The case also provides insights into the challenges of translating local child protection policies into inclusive urban governance and sustainable development outcomes.

2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the implementation of policies for street children in Palembang City in the context of the post-COVID-19 pandemic. The qualitative approach was chosen because the study focuses on gaining a deep understanding of the policy implementation process, institutional capacity, the

interpretation and translation of policies by implementers, and the application of policies in the form of programs and services for street children. This approach allows the policy phenomenon to be understood within the institutional and social context in which the policy is implemented, rather than solely through quantitative measurements of program outcomes. The research design is oriented toward documentary research (document analysis). Document analysis is a highly relevant and rigorous method in qualitative policy research because documents provide objective, stable, and rich historical information regarding the context, objectives, institutional structure, processes, and changes in policy over time (Bowen, 2009; Mogalakwa, 2021). As emphasized by prior methodological literature, document analysis serves not merely as a supplementary technique but as a robust standalone primary source for reconstructing institutional practices, official discourses, and regulatory frameworks when official policy archives are systematically analyzed (Cardno, 2019; O'Leary, 2021). In this study, documents are treated as the primary source for reconstructing how policies concerning the rehabilitation of street children were formulated, organized, interpreted, and applied by the local government. The object of the study is the implementation of Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 on the Guidance of Street Children, Vagrants, and Beggars, specifically provisions related to the guidance of street children.

Methodologically, while this study relies primarily on secondary documentary sources such as regional regulations, institutional reports, official statistics, and academic literature this design is deliberately chosen to systematically map formal institutional structures, policy mandates, and documented administrative actions. Nevertheless, relying exclusively on documentary evidence presents inherent boundaries regarding the direct observation of frontline practices and the lived experiences of children and families. As noted by contemporary qualitative researchers (Bowen, 2009; Tight, 2019), documentary data primarily reflect institutional perspectives, formal mandates, and official reporting structures, which may not fully capture informal implementation dynamics or the subjective realities of target beneficiaries. To mitigate this limitation, this study employs triangulation across diverse documentary sources cross-checking local government reports with independent academic studies, national statistical publications (BPS), and international reports (such as UNICEF and Bappenas) to ensure the internal validity and credibility of the findings. Furthermore, this documentary-based approach lays a solid foundational mapping of structural and governance gaps, while explicitly pointing to the necessity of future empirical fieldwork involving direct interviews with children, families, and street-level bureaucrats.

This analysis is guided by Charles O. Jones's policy implementation framework, which conceptualizes implementation through three interrelated activities: organization, interpretation, and application (Jones, 1994). This framework was chosen because it enables the study to examine how policy provisions move from formal regulations to institutional organization, operational understanding, and practical application. The first dimension, organization, concerns the establishment or reorganization of the resources, implementing units, and methods necessary to operationalize the policy program. In this study, organization encompasses the institutional structure of implementing agencies, the

division of responsibilities and authority, human resources, budgetary resources, facilities, operational procedures, interagency coordination, and information-management capacity. The second dimension, interpretation, concerns how implementing actors understand and translate policy provisions into operational guidelines. Accordingly, the analysis examines consistency in policy understanding, communication among implementing agencies, the translation of regulations into programs, and the relationship among different policy orientations particularly child protection, social welfare, rehabilitation, and public order. The third dimension, application, concerns the actual execution of policies through routine services and program activities. This study examines outreach, identification and registration, social rehabilitation, guidance, empowerment, reintegration into families or communities, monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up interventions. Recent empirical studies applying Jones's framework also demonstrate the continued use of these three dimensions in research on contemporary public policy, including studies based on secondary data and qualitative approaches. This operationalization ensures that the theoretical framework is directly linked to documentary evidence and that the analysis goes beyond general descriptions of policy programs.

Table 1. Operationalization of Analytical Dimensions

Dimension	Analytical Focus
Organization	Institutional structure, authority, human resource, budget, facilities, procedures, interagency coordination, and data management capacity
Interpretation	Policy understanding, communication, consistency of interpretation, integration of regulations into programs, and coordination among implementing actors
Application	Outreach, data identification and collection, rehabilitation, guidance, empowerment, reintegration, monitoring, evaluation, and program sustainability

Source: Summarized by Author, 2026.

This study relies entirely on secondary documentary data. The collection of documents consists of legal and policy documents, government and institutional reports, official statistical publications, international development reports, and peer-reviewed scientific literature. Legal and policy documents include Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 as well as relevant Indonesian laws regarding child protection and social welfare. These sources were used to identify formal objectives, institutional responsibilities, policy instruments, and implementation provisions. Government and institutional documents include reports and publications from the Palembang City Social Services Agency and other relevant local government agencies. These documents were used to examine organizational structures, resources, outreach activities, rehabilitation programs, coordination mechanisms, and monitoring practices. Official statistical and development sources include publications from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, UNICEF, Bappenas, and the SMERU Research Institute (Bappenas, 2025a). These sources are used to situate the implementation of policies for street children within the broader context of child poverty, multidimensional deprivation, socioeconomic vulnerability, and post-pandemic recovery. The analysis also considers a

gender perspective by examining whether available policy documents and reports contain disaggregated data by sex, forms of vulnerability, access to services, and protection needs. When disaggregated data is not sufficiently available, the study does not make inferences regarding differences in the conditions of girls and boys but identifies these limitations as part of broader issues related to data governance and implementation capacity (Bappenas, 2025b) .

This study also reviewed peer-reviewed literature published primarily between 2021 and 2025 on street children, child protection, social rehabilitation, policy implementation, and social governance. This literature was used to establish an empirical context and situate the Palembang case within existing academic frameworks. Documents were selected purposefully based on four criteria: relevance, credibility, temporal appropriateness, and substantial adequacy. A document was included if it directly addressed the research topic, originated from an identifiable and credible institution or scientific source, contained evidence relevant to at least one analytical dimension, and provided sufficient contextual information for interpretation. Following (Bowen, 2009), the literature review considers not only the content of each document but also its institutional origins, purpose, context, and potential limitations. This is particularly important because government reports and statistical publications may reflect differing institutional mandates and reporting systems. When consistent annual official data on the number of street children in Palembang for the 2023–2025 period were unavailable, this study did not estimate or extrapolate the missing figures. Instead, the absence or inconsistency of data was treated as an empirical finding regarding information management and policy monitoring capacity at the local level.

This study employs thematic analysis to organize and interpret documentary evidence. (Braun & Clarke, 2006) describe thematic analysis as a flexible method for identifying, examining, and reporting patterns in qualitative data. In this study, thematic analysis was combined with a theory-based coding strategy, in which the three dimensions of Jones's framework served as initial analytical categories while allowing additional themes to emerge from the documentary evidence. The analysis was conducted iteratively. First, the researcher became familiar with the document collection and identified information relevant to the research objectives. Second, relevant evidence was coded into the categories of organization, interpretation, or application. Third, the coded evidence was compared across documents and institutional sources to identify recurring patterns, similarities, contradictions, and implementation gaps. Fourth, the resulting themes were interpreted in relation to the formal provisions of Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 and the broader child-protection framework. For example, evidence related to limitations in human resources, budgetary support, facilities, institutional structures, or interagency coordination was analyzed within the organizational dimension. Evidence related to differences in policy understanding, communication, and the translation of regulatory provisions into operational programs was analyzed within the interpretive dimension. Evidence related to outreach, rehabilitation, data collection, reintegration, monitoring, and follow-up services was analyzed within the application dimension. The analysis then examined the interactions among these three dimensions. Therefore,

organization, interpretation, and application were not treated as separate variables but as interrelated components of implementation. For example, inadequate organizational capacity can limit implementers' ability to consistently interpret policy objectives, while inconsistent interpretation, in turn, can affect the quality and sustainability of policy application. This relational analysis was used to identify gaps between formal regulatory commitments and actual implementation practices.

3. Results and Discussion

Children in Street Situations: From a Social Problem to a Child – Rights Issue

The results of the documentary analysis indicate that the implementation of policies for street children in Palembang City has a formal regulatory foundation and operational intervention mechanisms, yet a persistent gap remains between the existence of policies and the substantive achievement of child protection. Available official records indicate that in 2022, 55 street children were identified in Palembang City, whereas consistent annual official data for the 2023–2025 period are absent. This structural data absence is not merely a technical administrative limitation; rather, it serves as a critical empirical indicator of broader governance issues affecting the government's capacity to identify, reach, monitor, and evaluate children in street situations. To systematically link these empirical realities with public policy theory, this study evaluates the implementation of Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 through Charles O. Jones's policy implementation framework, which categorizes implementation into three interdependent activities: organization, interpretation, and application. Evaluating the empirical findings through Jones's framework reveals how institutional structures, operational understandings, and practical service delivery interact to shape policy outcomes. Conceptually, this analysis is grounded in the "children in street situations" (CISS) paradigm, which marks a vital shift from viewing children through a narrow public-order lens toward recognizing them as rights-holders whose relationship with public spaces is dynamic, multidimensional, and influenced by structural vulnerability.

Organization: Institutional Capacity and the Problem of Fragmented Data

In Charles O. Jones's model, the organization dimension concerns the formation of implementing structures, the distribution of authority, resource allocation, interagency coordination, and administrative capacity. Empirically, the Palembang City Government possesses a formal implementing structure through the Social Services Agency and allied social institutions; however, organizational capacity remains severely constrained by limitations in human resources, operational budgets, guidance facilities, and most critically—integrated information systems. The absence of consistent CISS data for the 2023–2025 period directly reflects an organizational governance gap. As (Jörgensen et al., 2024) demonstrate, street-connected children face profound barriers in accessing health and social services due to systemic invisibility. When an implementing organization lacks a unified digital information system, it cannot systematically track children's vulnerability profiles, family backgrounds, educational statuses, or post-intervention progress. This organizational failure results in reactive responses rather than structured case management. Furthermore, this aligns with SDG 16 regarding effective, accountable, and

inclusive institutions, where data governance serves as a prerequisite for the "leave no one behind" principle (Mehta & Sharma, 2026). Thus, under Jones's organizational dimension, institutional capacity in Palembang must be understood not just through administrative existence, but through its structural capacity to manage interagency coordination and data-driven monitoring.

Interpretation: Policy Meaning and the Shift from Control to Rights

The second dimension in Jones's framework is interpretation, which examines how implementing actors understand, communicate, and translate policy goals into operational guidelines. Empirically, Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 has been interpreted primarily as a legal mandate for conducting outreach, social raids, temporary shelter, and public-space control. This reveals a significant "policy interpretation gap": because the regulation historically groups street children alongside vagrants and beggars, implementers frequently interpret their presence through a social control lens rather than a child-rights framework. Systematically applying Jones's interpretation dimension shows that how an organization defines a public issue dictates its operational response. If street children are interpreted merely as a public order disruption, enforcement measures and spatial removals are evaluated as successes. Conversely, adopting the CISS perspective reframes the interpretation: the presence of children in public spaces is recognized as a symptom of structural, familial, and economic vulnerability rather than individual deviance (Weatherill et al., 2024). Consequently, aligning empirical implementation with Jones's interpretive dimension requires active harmonization among implementing actors to ensure that policy guidelines consistently prioritize the best interests of the child as mandated by international standards (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2017).

Application: Limitations of Short-Term Interventions

The third dimension, application, concerns the actual execution of policies through routine services, programs, and concrete activities. Document analysis reveals that policy application in Palembang is manifested through outreach, social sweeps, temporary rehabilitation, and brief counseling. However, these applications tend to be short-term outputs rather than sustainable outcomes, lacking robust longitudinal monitoring after children return to their communities. When examined systematically through Jones's application framework, a distinct discrepancy emerges between policy outputs (number of children swept or placed temporarily) and policy outcomes (reduced vulnerability and permanent exit from street situations). International empirical evidence indicates that short-term shelter interventions fail if they operate in isolation from family and community contexts (Greeson et al., 2024). Without continuous case management, educational reintegration, and economic support for vulnerable households, children inevitably return to the streets. Therefore, evaluating application under Jones's model demonstrates that program execution must transition into an integrated continuum of care that addresses gender-specific risks and ensures sustainable family reintegration (Nyumayo et al., 2022; Subedi et al., 2025).

Cross-Sectoral Collaboration and Sustainable Reintegration

Bridging the dimensions of organization and application requires examining inter-agency collaboration. The empirical findings indicate that limited cross-sectoral coordination acts as a major barrier, as CISS issues intersect simultaneously with education, health, poverty alleviation, and legal protection. Within Jones's systemic model, organization cannot remain confined within a single bureaucratic silo (the Social Services Agency). To resolve this limitation, institutional arrangements must adopt a collaborative governance framework, as highlighted by the Pentahelix model applied in similar municipal contexts (Wijaya et al., 2026). In alignment with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), integrating local government agencies, educational institutions, civil society organizations, and communities ensures that the application of CISS policies supports broader sustainable development targets, including SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities) (Mehta & Sharma, 2026). By systematically synthesizing these dimensions, this study demonstrates that organization, interpretation, and application are deeply interdependent: institutional capacity directly shapes policy interpretation, which in turn dictates the quality and sustainability of practical application outcomes.

Children in Street Situations and the Sustainable Development Goals

Research findings indicate that the implementation of policies for street children in Palembang has a multidimensional relationship with the SDGs. CISS can be positioned as a cross-cutting policy issue because their vulnerability stems from the interplay of poverty, inequality, education, employment, health, protection, and urban conditions. When analyzed through Charles O. Jones's framework, aligning local policy with the SDGs requires strengthening the organizational and interpretative dimensions. SDG 1 (No Poverty) is relevant because poverty and economic vulnerability are among the factors that can drive children into street situations. However, poverty should not be treated as the sole cause. The CISS literature indicates that while poverty is a key factor, it is insufficient to explain the complexity of children's connection to the streets. SDG 4 (Quality Education) relates to the need to ensure that children continue to have access to education. Research on street-connected children in Kuala Lumpur shows that living conditions on the streets can be a barrier to accessing educational services; therefore, education policies must take into account the specific characteristics of this group. SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) relates to protecting children from hazardous work and economic exploitation. A scoping review by (Jörgensen et al., 2024) indicates that street and working children face various risks of violence, exploitation, hazardous environments, and rights violations. SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) addresses efforts to reduce disparities in access to basic services. Children in street situations are a group at risk of marginalization due to limited access to education, health care, social protection, and participation. SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) places children's issues within the context of urban development. An inclusive city is characterized not only by orderly public spaces but also by the government's ability to create safe spaces for all groups, including children who interact with public spaces. SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) is one of the most critical linkages, reflecting the organizational capacity required to build accountable

institutions. Implementing CISS policies requires institutions capable of protecting children from violence, exploitation, discrimination, and criminalization, while also providing access to services and justice. (Mehta & Sharma, 2026) offer the latest theoretical support, noting that the SDG agenda lacks specific targets for CISS, meaning this group risks being overlooked in the development process. They recommend strengthening governance, advocacy, evidence-building, community empowerment, health systems, nutrition, and mental health, as well as recognizing CISS in development monitoring and reporting. Thus, within Jones's implementation framework, the execution of Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 must shift from a narrow sectoral policy of the Social Affairs Department toward a collaborative organizational arrangement that localizes the SDGs through rights-based child protection.

Family Reintegration as the Primary Policy Outcome

One important implication of the research findings, viewed through the application dimension of Charles O. Jones's model, is the urgent need to redefine indicators of policy success. Until now, administrative application has often measured success by the number of children reached, placed in temporary care, or participating in short-term guidance programs. However, the CISS perspective indicates that these short-term operational outputs are insufficient to guarantee substantive protection. True policy success within the application stage must be assessed based on whether children achieve a safer, more sustainable life following the intervention. Thus, family strengthening and sustainable reintegration must become the primary policy outcomes. This approach is consistent with the research by (Greeson et al., 2024), which highlights the importance of family strengthening in supporting the reintegration of street-connected children. Additionally, the study by (Subedi et al., 2025) underscores the importance of understanding the lives of street-connected children from their own perspective. The study found that activities on the street cannot always be understood solely as negative behavior; the street can also serve as a space for play, building social relationships, and fostering solidarity. These findings have important implications for the practical application of Palembang's policies: reintegration should not simply mean "returning children home" through administrative coercion, but must ensure that the home and community are indeed safe environments that support education and are capable of meeting the children's multidimensional needs.

Toward a Rights-Based and SDG-Oriented Implementation Model

Based on the overall results of the analysis, this study proposes a reinterpretation of Charles O. Jones's model in the context of children in street situations (CISS). This framework demonstrates that Charles O. Jones's model remains relevant for analyzing the implementation of Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013, but the CISS perspective provides a stronger normative dimension regarding what the goals of implementation should be. Thus, organizations must build institutional capacity; interpretation must foster a shared understanding grounded in children's rights; and application must bring about sustainable improvements in children's living conditions.

Table 2. Reinterpretation Charles O. Jones's Model in CISS

The Charles O. Jones Model	Findings from Palembang	Reorientation CISS	Relevant SDGs
Organization	Limited human resources, budget, facilities, and data	Integrated child protection system and cross-sector collaboration	SDGs 1, 10, 16, 17
Interpretation	The interpretation of policies has not yet been fully uniform	Shift from social control to a child-rights approach	SDGs 10, 16
Application	Outreach, raids, rehabilitations, and guidance still tend to be short-term	Continuum of care and sustainable reintegration	SDGs 1,4,8,10,11,16
Outcome	Success is still largely measured by program outputs	Reducing vulnerability and fulfilling children's rights	Cross-sectoral SDGs

Source: Summarized bye the Author, 2026.

Theoretical Contribution and Policy Implications

Theoretically, this study expands on the use of Charles O. Jones's model by integrating three perspectives: policy implementation, child rights, and sustainable development. Jones's model explains how policies are organized, interpreted, and implemented, while the CISS perspective is used to assess whether these processes result in substantive protection for children. The conceptual contribution of this study lies in the argument that policy implementation cannot be assessed solely based on the existence of programs and administrative compliance, but also on changes in conditions and the fulfillment of the rights of the target group. The findings also reinforce the argument that children in street situations cannot be understood as a static social category. The CISS literature emphasizes that children can enter and exit street situations at different times, while their vulnerability is influenced by a combination of individual, family, economic, social, and institutional factors. Therefore, the policy implications for the Palembang City Government include four priorities. First, establishing an integrated digital database for CISS that can be updated periodically. Second, strengthening case management and post-rehabilitation monitoring. Third, developing family-based and community-based reintegration rather than relying solely on institutional interventions. Fourth, building multi-stakeholder governance that connects the government, civil society, the education sector, the business sector, academia, the media, and communities. This approach aligns with the latest findings on CISS, which identify governance, evidence-building, community empowerment, and service systems as critical components of sustainable interventions. The inclusion of a gender perspective strengthens the conceptual contribution of this study by demonstrating that rights-based implementation is not sufficient merely to ensure general protection for CISS, but must also be capable of recognizing gender-based inequalities and differing needs.

4. Conclusions

This study demonstrates that the implementation of Palembang City Regulation No. 12 of 2013 on the Guidance of Street Children, Vagrants, and Beggars has established several intervention mechanisms, including outreach, rehabilitation, and social guidance. However, the existence of these mechanisms has not yet ensured the achievement of sustainable child protection for children in street situations (CISS). The analysis using Charles O. Jones's implementation model identifies interconnected challenges in the dimensions of organization, interpretation, and application. In the organizational dimension, the local government has established implementing institutions, but their capacity remains constrained by limitations in resources, institutional coordination, facilities, and data management. The absence of consistent official CISS data for the 2023–2025 period does not indicate a decline in the number of children in street situations. Rather, it reflects structural weaknesses in information integration and policy monitoring. In the interpretation dimension, policy implementation needs to move beyond an orientation toward controlling children's presence in public spaces and adopt a more comprehensive child-rights approach. Through the CISS perspective, children must be recognized as rights-holders whose situations are shaped by interconnected social, economic, family, and institutional factors. In the application dimension, existing interventions remain predominantly short-term and require stronger continuity through individualized case management, family support, and post-intervention monitoring.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in extending the application of Jones's implementation model to the context of local child protection policy. The findings demonstrate that organization, interpretation, and application should be understood as interdependent dimensions rather than isolated implementation stages. Institutional capacity and coordination influence the consistency of policy interpretation, while the interpretation adopted by implementing actors shapes the nature and continuity of interventions. Furthermore, this study highlights data governance, family strengthening, and sustainable reintegration as important considerations for assessing the substantive outcomes of policy implementation in the CISS context. This application does not replace Jones's original model; instead, it provides a rights-based and sustainable development perspective for examining whether implementation processes lead to meaningful improvements in children's protection and well-being.

Based on these findings, four policy priorities are recommended for the Palembang City Government. First, institutional coordination should be strengthened through clearer divisions of responsibilities, joint operational procedures, and regular coordination among the Social Services Agency, education and health agencies, child protection institutions, local authorities, schools, and relevant civil society organizations. Second, the government should develop an integrated and gender-responsive CISS database that records children's vulnerability characteristics, family conditions, educational status, service needs, intervention histories, and follow-up progress. Such a system should support coordinated case management while ensuring data confidentiality and the protection of children's identities. Third, family-based interventions should be expanded through family assessments, parenting support, psychosocial assistance, and access to relevant social

protection programs, particularly for families experiencing economic and social vulnerability. Fourth, sustainable reintegration mechanisms should be established through individualized case plans, continued access to education and basic services, periodic monitoring, and follow-up assessments to ensure that the family and community environments are safe and supportive. These recommendations should be implemented as an integrated continuum of care rather than as separate short-term programs. These policy priorities also reinforce the contribution of CISS protection to the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDGs 1, 4, 8, 10, 11, 16, and 17, through poverty reduction, access to education, reduced inequalities, inclusive urban development, accountable institutions, and collaborative partnerships. Accordingly, the success of local policy should not be measured merely by the number of children reached, removed from public spaces, or enrolled in rehabilitation programs. More importantly, it should be assessed through improvements in children's safety, fulfillment of their rights, access to essential services, family conditions, and the sustainability of their reintegration.

This study is based on documentary analysis and secondary data; therefore, its findings primarily explain institutional arrangements, policy interpretation, and documented implementation practices rather than directly measuring children's experiences or the effectiveness of individual interventions. Further research involving interviews with children, families, service providers, and implementing agencies is needed to examine how policies are experienced at the individual and community levels. Nevertheless, this study emphasizes that children in street situations must be positioned within the local government's child protection and urban development agendas as rights-holders, not merely as a public order concern. Ultimately, policy transformation requires a shift from controlling children's presence in public spaces toward creating sustainable institutional, social, and family conditions that enable every child to live safely, access essential services, participate, and develop.

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