

The Security Dilemma: Managing Asylum Seeker and Refugee Policies in Response to Social Threats in Jakarta

Sahliah Dita Arzikah¹, Mahpudin²

*¹²Department of Government Science, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University, Serang
Indonesia*

Abstract

The issue of asylum seekers and refugees is a global challenge that has a direct impact on recipient countries, including Indonesia. In DKI Jakarta, the presence of refugees has given rise to social polemics, such as public rejection of illegal refugee tents, which reflects the social impact and pressure on local infrastructure. This study aims to analyze the security dilemma in the management of asylum and refugee immigrant policies based on Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016, with a focus on the human security approach that includes positive (inclusive) and negative (exclusive) dimensions. Through qualitative methods with an instrumental case study approach, this study found that the state's position is not biased between the two sides of human security, namely: Inclusive human security, which is oriented towards refugee protection and Exclusive human security, which places citizens as the main priority. Existing policies have not been able to guarantee the protection of basic refugee rights while maintaining social stability. This study recommends a more holistic and collaborative policy approach and full commitment from the government, by looking at the socio-economic integration model of other countries such as Colombia. The implementation of structured, inclusive, and sustainable handling of asylum immigrants and refugees can not only improve protection for refugees, but also support social harmony and national stability, strengthening Indonesia's position in the international arena.

Keywords: Human Security; Refugees; Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016

Introduction

Indonesia is geographically situated between two oceans—the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean—and flanked by two continents, Asia and Australia. This positioning places Indonesia in a highly strategic location, serving as a hub for international trade, inter-state economic activities, and global transit. Moreover, Indonesia's vast territorial expanse has earned it the designation as the largest archipelagic country in the world (M. Azzam, A. Yudho, 2022). As an archipelagic state, Indonesia possesses

numerous maritime entry points. This geographical reality presents significant challenges to national security and sovereignty, particularly concerning the entry of refugees into Indonesian territory.

Due to its strategic geographical location and suboptimal control over cross-border pathways, Indonesia has become one of the principal destinations for asylum seekers and refugees seeking protection. Although Indonesia is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, the

*) Corresponding Author

Email : Mahpudin.ip@untirta.ac.id

country continues to serve as a major transit point, hosting a substantial number of displaced persons (Situmorang, 2018)

The Special Capital Region of Jakarta (DKI Jakarta), as the capital of the nation, has emerged as one of the areas with the highest concentration of refugees, with 1,442 individuals recorded at the end of 2023 and 1,306 by March 2024. This data is illustrated in the following table:

Table 1. Immigration Detainees and Refugees at the Jakarta Immigration Detention Center, 2023

Month	Detainees	Refugees
March	80	1,786
April	83	1,739
May	84	1,688
June	65	1,673
July	61	1,607
August	59	1,563
September	53	1,535
October	50	1,507
November	51	1,474
December	53	1,442

Source: Jakarta Immigration Detention Center, 2023

Table 2. Immigration Detainees and Refugees at the Jakarta Immigration Detention Center, 2024

Month	Detainees	Refugees
January	82	1,333
February	81	1,318
March	85	1,306

Source: Jakarta Immigration Detention Center, 2024

The number of immigration detainees and refugees in Jakarta throughout 2023 and 2024 has shown a relatively consistent monthly decline. However, this trend does not negate the significant social impact posed by the presence of refugees within the Jakarta. This condition underscores the necessity for a focused and contextualized study in Jakarta, a city characterized by high levels of urbanization, dense population, and diverse socio-economic backgrounds. As one of the most populous provinces in Indonesia, Jakarta is home to a wide array of communities, including indigenous residents, internal migrants from various parts of Indonesia, and foreign nationals. The city's rapid population growth—driven primarily by urbanization and employment opportunities—has contributed to challenges in managing infrastructure, public services, and various aspects of urban life (Oktaviany et al., 2024)

The presence of refugees in Jakarta introduces complex social, economic, and security challenges, especially for local residents who must share their living spaces with asylum seekers. This situation often gives rise to social tensions and can potentially disrupt the stability of local communities. In certain areas designated as refugee shelters—such as in parts of DKI Jakarta—instances of public resistance have emerged, particularly in cases of immigrant overpopulation (CNN Indonesia, 2019). These instances reflect community concerns regarding neighborhood stability, public safety, and the integrity of social activities.

Public apprehension regarding the increasing presence of immigrants and refugees in Jakarta highlights a broader spectrum of issues that extend beyond social relations, encompassing the strain on local infrastructure and the overall sense of community security (Violleta, 2019). One illustrative response to such concerns is the construction of protective fencing around SDH School, which is located near a refugee accommodation facility. This development illustrates the degree to which the presence of immigrants and refugees has begun to influence daily life, especially concerning the safety and learning environment of children (Ardiansyah, 2019).

Within this context, community members emphasize the critical need for security assurances, which must be recognized as an integral component of national resilience. Another prominent issue involves the occupation of sidewalks in the Kuningan area of South Jakarta by asylum seekers and refugees. Since July 2023, refugee tents have been set up along Kuningan's roads, with occupants arriving in waves to draw attention and seek justice from the UNHCR. This phenomenon has generated new layers of complexity in local social and infrastructural dynamics. The emergence of makeshift encampments—comprised of both asylum seekers and illegal refugees—has led to increased concern and discomfort among nearby residents.

The lack of an integrated and comprehensive policy response from both local and national authorities has exacerbated efforts to address the

refugee issue. At the same time, Indonesia's commitment to the principle of non-refoulement significantly limits the options for returning refugees to their countries of origin. Previous research has addressed refugee issues and policy challenges in Indonesia. For example, a study by (Sapada et al., 2023) examined Indonesia's policy under Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016 concerning the handling of refugees from abroad in Makassar. Similarly, (Putri, 2020) analyzed Indonesia's role in dealing with cross-border refugee crises. However, these studies have not adequately explored the emerging social threats posed by refugee presence to local communities.

This study offers a novel contribution by analyzing the security dilemma in refugee policy management in DKI Jakarta, specifically with regard to social threats. It draws upon the theoretical perspectives of Mely Caballero-Anthony and Raquel Freitas, particularly the latter's differentiation of human security into two opposing dimensions: positive and negative. While both dimensions place the individual as the referent object, they represent contrasting poles that expose inherent contradictions within the human security concept (Azis, 2017).

The urgency of this research lies in the increasing number of refugees residing in Jakarta and the escalating potential for social disruption in the absence of comprehensive policy interventions. By employing the human security framework—which considers two referent objects: the security of citizens and the security of asylum

seekers and refugees—this study aims to critically examine how refugee and asylum immigration policies are managed in response to emerging social threats in DKI Jakarta. It emphasizes the importance of achieving a balance between upholding human rights and preserving national stability.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative research method using a case study approach. Specifically, it adopts an instrumental case study, wherein the case of asylum seekers and refugees in DKI Jakarta is selected as an instrument to gain a broader understanding of the wider phenomenon related to social threats and refugee policy management (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The data collection methods utilized in this research include observation (from a middle-ground position), semi-structured interviews, documentation, and audiovisual materials. The research informants consist of refugees, representatives from the Jakarta Immigration Detention Center (Rudenim Jakarta), the Jakarta National Unity and Political Agency (Badan Kesbangpol DKI Jakarta), UNHCR Indonesia, and local community members.

The selection of informants follows a purposive sampling technique, targeting individuals with direct relevance and knowledge pertinent to the research topic. The data analysis procedure refers to the stages outlined by (Creswell &

Poth, 2018) which include: organizing the data, reading through all data, coding, generating themes, and interpreting the data.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the study applies source triangulation by cross-verifying data obtained from multiple sources such as interviews, archival records, and relevant documentation. The research was conducted in DKI Jakarta over a period of nine months. This study is focused on uncovering the complex dynamics between policy implementation and human security. Through in-depth analysis, the research aims to make a significant contribution to the literature on asylum and refugee policy management from a human security perspective, while also offering practical insights for policymakers and other relevant stakeholders.

Result and Discussion

The Complexity of Non-Traditional Threats to National Resilience: The Case of Refugees in Jakarta

Threats to national resilience have become increasingly complex in light of evolving global dynamics involving various non-traditional factors. Threats are no longer limited to physical or military attacks from foreign states but now include multiple issues that may disrupt a nation's social, economic, and political stability. One of the most pressing humanitarian concerns in this context is the influx of refugees and immigrants. While refugees often flee from conflict, persecution, or human rights violations in their countries of origin, their presence in host

countries also introduces challenges that cannot be overlooked (Subiyanto et al., 2018).

Since 1975, Indonesia has hosted refugees from war-torn countries such as Vietnam and Cambodia. Initially, the government adopted a humanitarian approach, far removed from security concerns, and refugees were rarely labeled as illegal immigrants or threats. However, during the post-Reformasi era, asylum seekers from the Middle East and South Asia arriving between 1997 and 2013—and continuing to the present—have often been perceived as security threats and labeled illegal immigrants. This shift in perception has led Indonesia to engage in international cooperation to address refugee issues, culminating in the establishment of specific refugee management regulations (Aditya & Pitoyo, 2023).

Although Indonesia has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, it remains committed to humanitarian principles, including the protection of refugee rights. Indonesia's commitment to the principle of non-refoulement is reinforced by various human rights regulations, such as Law No. 5 of 1998, Law No. 39 of 1999, and Law No. 12 of 2005. These laws provide a legal basis for recognizing the right to asylum and accommodating refugees, even in the absence of specific provisions for long-term protection (Situmorang, 2018)

In line with these commitments, refugee management is conducted through systematic stages. A critical initial stage involves the registration and identification of individuals. According

to Ms. Ana, Head of the Registration, Administration, and Reporting Division at the Jakarta Immigration Detention Center (Rudenim Jakarta), this process begins with data collection from various sources, including reports from maritime security and the police. She explained:

"The first step is to conduct data collection to determine the status of the foreign individual—whether they possess a passport or visa. Initial registration involves coordination with maritime security or the police, based on incoming reports. Maritime security personnel will then coordinate with local government authorities."

The registration and identification process is fundamental to determining the legal status of foreign nationals, assessing their basic needs, and verifying their identity, country of origin, reasons for seeking asylum, and documentation, such as passports or visas. This stage involves multiple stakeholders, and each report serves as the basis for determining whether the individual qualifies as an asylum seeker or refugee entitled to protection under international and national law. The results of this assessment then guide subsequent steps, such as temporary placement or refugee status determination by international organizations.

After registration, refugees are placed in temporary accommodation facilities. In cases where immigration detention centers lack sufficient

capacity, local governments are responsible for providing alternative shelters. DKI Jakarta plays a central role in Indonesia's refugee situation. As a transit country that also frequently becomes a temporary place of residence for refugees, Jakarta faces considerable threats to its social and economic resilience. Poorly managed refugee populations can strain relations between local communities and refugees, undermining social cohesion and exacerbating economic inequality. For instance, the presence of refugee tents along the sidewalks of Kuningan, South Jakarta, not only affects the refugees themselves but also the surrounding community, which must share public spaces with them. One complaint comes from sanitation workers who struggle to maintain cleanliness and order in these areas. According to Mr. Jaya, a municipal sanitation worker:

"If possible, they should be relocated off the sidewalks. We're often disturbed when cleaning in the morning and evening, as many immigrants sleep and live here. It makes our job difficult to maintain cleanliness and comfort in the area. There's even unrest among residents. One of my colleagues was scolded by a refugee because the sound of sweeping disturbed their sleep."

Such testimonies highlight how the occupation of public spaces by refugees disrupts daily operations and causes anxiety among local residents. Sanitation workers have reported

difficulties maintaining public hygiene and have even faced verbal confrontations with refugees. These interactions reflect the social friction that can emerge when public infrastructure is overburdened and not designed to accommodate displaced populations.

The refugee issue in Jakarta presents a clear example of a non-traditional threat—one that affects not only social aspects but also critical sectors that support national resilience. These threats may manifest as social instability, inter-group tensions, or the misuse of limited resources. Moreover, insufficient protection for refugees may also lead to diplomatic strains with countries of origin and destination (e.g., Australia), thereby damaging Indonesia's international reputation with regard to human rights obligations and its role in global refugee protection.

Human Security Analysis: Theoretical Framework of Mely Caballero-Anthony and Raquel Freitas

This study provides an in-depth analysis of the concept of *human security* within the context of security dilemmas arising from the management of asylum seekers and refugees in response to social threats in DKI Jakarta. The analysis adopts the theoretical approach developed by Mely Caballero-Anthony and Raquel Freitas, which offers a comprehensive perspective on human security, including its core dimensions (Azis, 2017).

1. Postive Dimension of Human Security

The positive dimension of human security emphasizes the concept of inclusive security—security provided to individuals regardless of their citizenship status, where security is based not on nationality but on the inherent dignity and universal human rights of the individual (Abubakar, Agus, 2023). This positive dimension also stresses the importance of expanding the concept of security beyond the traditional state-centered approach.

Within this positive (inclusive) dimension, the referent object is the refugee individual themselves, viewed as a human being entitled to universal human rights. Refugees are prioritized as subjects of protection due to their vulnerable position facing threats both in their countries of origin and in places of transit or destination. This includes international efforts to protect them from persecution in their home countries, provide safe shelter in host countries, and promote inclusive and sustainable social integration (Azis, 2017). The positive dimension of human security focuses on protecting individuals without discrimination based on citizenship or legal status, which is realized through:

First, Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016, which acknowledges the existence of refugees and regulates mechanisms for their protection. This regulation stipulates that refugees entering Indonesia are to be registered, provided with temporary shelter, and assisted in the resettlement process to third countries through coordination with the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The regulation covers various aspects of protection, ranging from housing, healthcare services, to education for refugees. This policy demonstrates Indonesia's recognition of refugee rights despite not having ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol (Salmadianka Kusnadi, 2021).

Second, the establishment of the Task Force for Handling Foreign Refugees. Following the Presidential Regulation, the local government of DKI Jakarta issued Governor's Decree No. 1550 of 2021, which created the Task Force for Handling Foreign Refugees. This Task Force was mandated by the Circular Letter of the Minister of Home Affairs No. 300/2308/SJ, instructing the formation of task forces at the regency/city level to manage refugees in a more structured manner. The Task Force's role is to implement central government policies at the local level, ensuring that refugees receive proper protection and maintaining social stability within its jurisdiction through coordination with various stakeholders, including international organizations such as UNHCR and IOM (Governor's Decree of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta No. 1550 of 2021).

The Government of DKI Jakarta, in coordination with UNHCR and IOM, provides temporary shelters for refugees in several areas such as South Jakarta, West Jakarta, and Tangerang Regency. This initiative aims to protect refugees from inadequate living conditions, such as residing on sidewalks or in public spaces. However, the shelter capacity

remains limited, and the available facilities do not fully meet acceptable living standards. Regarding access to education, according to Ms. Sisca, Head of the Foreigners Monitoring Vigilance Division,

"There are some refugee children who have enrolled in schools; however, the use of DKI local government funds for their education is prohibited. This is due to budget allocation priorities that should focus on local residents, who in some cases have yet to receive adequate support. Nonetheless, the local government does not forbid refugee children from attending school, provided that the operational education costs are not charged to the regional government's budget."

Although there are no explicit regulations guaranteeing formal education for refugee children, some efforts have been made through informal schools established by refugee communities themselves, such as the Refugee Learning Center in Tebet, an initiative supported by UNHCR. This approach does not involve government or official institutional assistance but is purely driven by the refugee community.

In the context of healthcare services for refugees, they can access basic healthcare through public health centers (puskesmas) and government hospitals; however, they do not have access to the BPJS Health insurance scheme, making financing for further medical treatment a challenge. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the local government demonstrated a commitment to human security by

providing healthcare services to refugees as part of public health policy. Ms. Sisca explained:

"There was assistance during COVID-19, where the local government provided healthcare services, food, electricity, and facilitated shelter. Health centers and any healthcare services are certainly open to them, but they are not given BPJS because the regional budget cannot be used for this. Therefore, their coverage depends on self-funding or personal means, but healthcare costs at puskesmas are not very expensive—usually about two thousand rupiah, which is not significant."

Despite the implementation of these policies, the reality on the ground shows various challenges: many refugees feel they have not fully received their rights, especially in access to adequate housing, education, healthcare, and employment. They still struggle to meet basic needs such as food and clean water, with limited access to formal assistance. Many refugees are unaware that they are entitled to basic healthcare and informal education services, which often hinders their utilization of available facilities. Moreover, the local government does not allocate specific funds within the regional budget (APBD) for refugee management. Most assistance continues to rely on international organizations such as UNHCR and IOM, resulting in gaps in meeting refugees' needs. Additionally, coordination among the central government, local authorities, and

international agencies remains suboptimal, leading to policy overlaps and inefficiencies in service implementation

The positive dimension of human security received by refugees in this context is limited to the enactment of Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016 and the establishment of the Task Force for Handling Foreign Refugees in DKI Jakarta. The Indonesian government's position on refugees and asylum seekers tends to focus mainly on fulfilling protection through the implementation of Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016 as a domestic legal framework in place of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol to guarantee refugee protection and rights (Wiguna, W., 2018). However, the conditions and rights of refugees and asylum seekers in DKI Jakarta have yet to be fully realized or addressed under this regulation.

The theoretical approach by Caballero-Anthony and Freitas emphasizes that human security should not merely be a normative discourse but must be operationalized by considering the interactions among individuals, society, and the state. Therefore, the shortcomings in refugee policy in DKI Jakarta indicate that the concept of human security in its positive dimension remains inadequately realized. Consequently, there is a need for policy reformulation that is more inclusive and grounded in a sustainable human security approach, including enhanced inter-agency coordination and optimal resource utilization to ensure comprehensive fulfillment of refugees' rights.

This dimension not only serves to protect refugees but also aims to create a

more just and responsive global system that addresses the needs of vulnerable groups such as refugees and asylum seekers (Abubakar, Agus, 2023). Emphasizing the positive dimension of human security is crucial to ensuring that refugees in DKI Jakarta are not merely seen as a burden but as individuals deserving protection to uphold their dignity and fundamental rights. By adopting this approach, refugee management policies can become more humane and inclusive.

2. Negative Dimension of Human Security

The negative dimension of human security emphasizes an exclusive concept of security—security granted only to individuals who hold recognized citizenship status or national identity by a given state. From this perspective, the state is considered responsible for the security of its own citizens, and individuals who do not belong to that state's nationality may be deemed undeserving of protection by the state. This concept asserts that the state has an obligation to safeguard the security and welfare of its citizens, while those outside the state's citizenship are often marginalized or even neglected (Purwanti, 2024).

This dimension refers to a security approach based on the state-centric international system, where local citizens are regarded as the primary referent object. In this context, refugees are frequently viewed as external threats that could affect social, economic, or national security stability (Azis, 2017). Receiving countries, including Indonesia,

often face a dilemma between fulfilling their humanitarian obligations toward refugees and maintaining domestic order and the welfare of their own citizens. Accordingly, the negative dimension of human security focuses more on managing the perceived threats posed by the presence of refugees, who are often considered a burden to countries lacking adequate immigration management systems.

Therefore, host countries tend to treat refugees as potential threats to be controlled by limiting their rights to work, reside, and engage in public activities. In DKI Jakarta, this negative dimension is reflected in policies that restrict refugees' and asylum seekers' mobility, both through formal regulations and local community attitudes, which tend to be resistant. Protecting citizens remains the primary priority, as seen in the following:

First, Regulation of Refugees on Sidewalks. The Refugee Task Force (Satgas Penanganan Pengungsi) enforces public order as an effort to protect citizen interests. This step responds to local community complaints regarding refugees' use of public spaces, especially sidewalks and other public facilities. Besides the physical aspect, this regulation includes administrative data collection and directing refugees to official shelters. However, due to limited shelter capacity, many refugees return to the streets after some time. This indicates that the policy is more of a temporary control rather than a long-term solution to refugee issues.

Second, Restrictions on Refugees' and Asylum Seekers' Access to Employment. In Indonesia, refugees do not have the right to work because the country has not ratified the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Domestic regulations, including Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016, do not grant refugees the right to employment, thus preventing them from accessing formal jobs. Furthermore, the Directorate General of Immigration Regulation No. IMI-0352.GR.02.07 of 2016 explicitly prohibits refugees from paid work, with legal consequences for violations (Pratomo et al., 2024). Additionally, Article 2 of the 1951 Convention mandates refugees to obey the laws and regulations of the country where they reside (Syahrin & Saputra, 2019). Hence, refugees in Indonesia who work are considered to be violating applicable laws. Nevertheless, despite this prohibition, some refugees still engage in informal sector work such as trading or casual labor. This has caused social conflict with local communities who perceive refugees as receiving special treatment or taking away job opportunities from Indonesian citizens.

Third, Control or Surveillance of Refugees' Activities. Monitoring of refugee activities is carried out administratively by Immigration Detention Centers (Rudenim), involving data verification and on-site supervision at shelters. This negative dimension approach is rooted in efforts to manage perceived threats stemming from refugees' presence, particularly

concerning social stability and public security. According to Ms. Ana, a source:

"At several shelters, Rudenim supervises the comings and goings of residents, matching them against official registration to ensure that they are registered and residing at the facility legitimately."

In the negative dimension of human security, protection of citizens is the top priority. This concept focuses on domestic security, often prioritized by refugee-receiving states. Here, refugees are viewed as external threats that may disrupt social, economic, and national security stability. Consequently, policies tend to favor protecting local citizens' interests (Saripah, 2020). In Jakarta, policies restricting refugees' movement—such as regulating refugees living on sidewalks, limiting their access to employment, and monitoring their activities—reflect this approach.

This approach aims to manage the perception of threats caused by refugees' presence and maintain public order. Overall, the negative dimension of human security in this context positions citizens as the primary object of protection. The state seeks to ensure social, economic, and national security stability, even if such policies often sacrifice refugees' rights. Refugees are regarded as non-traditional threats that must be carefully managed so their presence does not disrupt local communities' lives. The state's preferential treatment of citizens in these policies reflects an approach that

prioritizes domestic interests when addressing refugee management challenges. However, this still raises challenges as local communities feel that the continued presence of asylum seekers and refugees in Indonesia, especially in DKI Jakarta, means the threats and security issues will never be fully resolved.

Contested Security: The Dilemma of Human Security in the Immigration Issue

From the concept of human security in Freitas' approach regarding negative and positive dimensions, which reflect the tension between two sides of human security, the concept of security is often contested by various interests. The tension between these two dimensions causes the concept of security to become a complex arena of debate. In this context, contested security emerges as an idea that illustrates how the concept of security is disputed by conflicting interests.

In security studies, there are two main approaches contributing to the debate about the meaning of security. The structural realism approach, according to Walt (1991), emphasizes that security primarily concerns the protection of the state from external threats. Meanwhile, the critical security studies approach, particularly developed by the Welsh School, rejects this limited view and proposes a broader concept of security. This approach considers security not only in terms of military threats but also includes the protection of individuals and communities from various non-military threats such as

poverty, social injustice, and environmental threats (Booth, 1991; McDonald, 2012).

The tension between these two perspectives reflects how security is contested. If security is understood only within the realist framework, then the state may adopt restrictive policies toward immigrants in order to protect sovereignty. However, if security is understood within a critical theory framework, policies should focus on protecting the human rights of refugees and asylum seekers (Bhal, 2014). According to Buzan (1991) and McDonald (2012), security is often used to set priorities and create responses considered politically legitimate. In this context, government approaches can be seen as manifestations of security, where refugee issues are represented as potential threats requiring control measures. Although these policies aim to maintain stability, in practice, societal discomfort remains. Refugees and asylum seekers living among local communities are often perceived as social threats, triggering anxiety and insecurity among citizens. As McDonald explains, security is a high-level political issue involving debates about who is protected and how (Bhal, 2014).

The position of the state here reflects neutrality toward both sides, that is, the positive and negative dimensions. Contested security in the immigrant issue shows that there is no fixed definition of security. Although from a realist perspective, the Jokowi administration tends to view refugees as threats (Wahyuni et al., 2022). Moreover, the presence of refugees

brings significant socio-political costs for Indonesia. However, despite the tendency to see refugees as threats, Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016 should have brought important changes. Nevertheless, government policy steps, although aiming to balance protection for refugees and stability for citizens, actually result in significant negative consequences.

One impact is the increasing difficulty for refugees to meet their basic needs due to various imposed restrictions. Restrictions on economic activities, such as the prohibition on working, worsen their living conditions. This affects not only their physical well-being but also the mental health of refugees, who are already vulnerable from the outset. The irony emerges when refugees or asylum immigrants continue to face threats in Indonesia, as this can create a domino effect that also impacts citizens. The refugees' inability to meet their basic needs not only worsens their own lives but can also create social and economic pressures on local communities, such as competition for resources or increased tension in residential areas.

This situation highlights the security dilemma faced by the state regarding refugees: how to ensure protection for refugees without sacrificing the stability and welfare of citizens. When refugees remain threatened in Indonesia, essentially, the position of citizens also becomes vulnerable. Human security protection in Indonesia focuses more on two main components: economic and political. The refugee issue is not a main focus of

human security approaches in Indonesia because the government prioritizes domestic challenges that are considered to have direct and broad impacts on society, such as poverty, economic inequality, and political stability. Although refugee issues are acknowledged as humanitarian problems, the main focus of human security in Indonesia remains on fundamental domestic needs—economics and politics—which are considered to have broader impacts on national stability and societal welfare (Elpeni Fitrah, 2016).

In the context of human security in Indonesia, individuals or citizens are understood as social beings rooted in their communities, differing from the concept of individuals in liberal traditions which emphasize independence and personal autonomy. This understanding reflects strong collectivist values in Indonesian culture, where individuals are seen as an integral part of interdependent and connected communities (Mukhtar, S, 2011). Therefore, the human security approach in Indonesia emphasizes collective welfare rather than isolated individual interests. Individuals or citizens in Indonesia's human security concept are interpreted as social beings tied to their communities, differing from the liberal individual notion. The focus of human security protection in Indonesia centers on two main components: Economic and Political (Elpeni Fitrah, 2016).

The fundamental reason is that the economy becomes a main component because economic stability directly affects community welfare.

Poverty and hunger remain serious challenges to this day. Data show that extreme poverty often has tragic consequences. For example, in 2008, several heartbreaking cases occurred: an elementary school child in Magetan committed suicide due to hunger, a heavily pregnant mother and her child died from malnutrition in Makassar, and five residents of East Nusa Tenggara died from starvation. Although such cases may not always be reported, the reality on the ground highlights that hunger and poverty are very serious problems in Indonesia (Heru Susetyo, 2008).

Even in the Human Development Index (HDI) report 2023-2024 issued by UNDP, Indonesia is ranked 112th with an index of 0.713. This position still lags behind neighboring countries like Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam. As of March 2023, the number of poor people in Indonesia reached 25.90 million or 9.36 percent of the total population (Satiti, 2024). This indicates a need for greater focus on poverty alleviation, job creation, and fulfillment of basic needs such as food, education, and health. Economic inequality often triggers social tension, so the government emphasizes the importance of inclusive economic growth as part of human security protection (Heru Susetyo, 2008).

The political component is also an important focus in Indonesia's human security approach. This includes protection of human rights, participation in democratic processes, and efforts to prevent political threats such as discrimination, repression, or horizontal conflicts. Indonesia's history of internal

conflicts, social pluralism, and political dynamics makes political security a crucial aspect to maintain harmony among groups. Political protection ensures that every individual, as part of a community, can enjoy their rights without threats from structural injustice or political violence (Salsabiil et al., 2019). In this context, strengthening democracy and protecting minority rights become priorities, alongside the need to ensure political stability supports social and economic welfare. By emphasizing economy and politics, Indonesia strives to integrate a human security approach relevant to its societal needs. This focus reflects a response to real challenges faced, such as poverty, inequality, social conflict, and the need to strengthen democracy (Armida Salsiah & Murniningtyas, 2021).

Thus, although the refugee issue in Indonesia is recognized as a humanitarian problem, it does not receive primary priority from the government. This reflects the government's limitations in integrating human security principles comprehensively into policies that cover all groups, including refugees. The Indonesian government tends to adopt a pragmatic and selective approach in handling refugees, citing limited resources and national priorities. As a result, although Indonesia is known as a country that supports human rights in global forums, its minimalist refugee policy reveals contradictions in practice. This contestation leads to reactive rather than proactive policies. Ultimately, the uncertainty in these policies creates a security dilemma both in terms of

protecting refugees and national interests, which remains a debated issue without a clear solution.

Conclusion

The issue of asylum seekers and refugees is a global social challenge that also impacts Indonesia, particularly in DKI Jakarta. The presence of refugees has sparked social controversy. This shows that social impacts and pressure on local infrastructure are factors triggering public unrest. In addressing this issue, Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016 serves as the domestic legal framework for refugee management. However, the implementation of this policy still faces major challenges, as basic rights of refugees, such as access to essential needs, education, and health services, have not been fully fulfilled.

From a human security perspective, the security dilemma involves two main dimensions: the Positive Dimension (Inclusive Human Security) and the Negative Dimension (Exclusive Human Security). The Indonesian government has not explicitly sided with either of these two approaches. The securitization approach applied by the government, where refugees are represented as threats, worsens public perceptions of refugees and creates significant social tensions. Furthermore, policies aimed at balancing refugee protection and national security are often not effectively implemented, which worsens the physical and mental conditions of refugees.

Therefore, efforts to address the issue of refugees and asylum seekers in

Indonesia require full commitment from the government. The existence of policies such as Presidential Regulation No. 125 of 2016 must be matched with consistent implementation and cross-sector collaboration, both nationally and internationally, to ensure that the human security approach can be applied in a balanced, fair, and sustainable manner. With a more coordinated and inclusive approach, Indonesia will not only be able to protect refugees but also ensure that their presence benefits society as a whole, while strengthening Indonesia's position on the international stage as a country capable of managing migration issues wisely and humanely.

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