

The Role of the Village Fund Program in Alleviating Poverty in Rural Areas

Jayanti Armida Sari , Amud Sunarya* , Darmanto 

Public Administration Study Program, Universitas Terbuka, Tangerang Selatan, Indonesia

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* Corresponding author:

amud@ecampus.ut.ac.id

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Abstract

Objectives: This study aimed to explore the role of the Village Fund Policy in alleviating poverty in Nagari Lingkuang Aua, Pasaman Barat Regency since poverty in Indonesia represents an urgent issue, particularly in rural areas that tend to exhibit higher poverty rates compared to urban regions. One of the government's policies for poverty eradication is the Village Fund Program.

Methods: The study used the qualitative analytical approach to analyze how the Village Fund Program impacts poverty eradication in Nagari Lingkuang Aua. A case study approach was adopted, focusing on the Village Fund Policy. Primary data were compiled through semi-structured and unstructured interviews using purposive sampling techniques. In contrast, this study used existing literature to obtain secondary data from various sources.

Results: The study results showed that the Village Fund Program played a significant role in reducing poverty levels in Nagari Lingkuang Aua. However, the effects tend to be short-termed, primarily focusing on fulfilling basic needs for families or individuals, such as food, education, or critical healthcare services.

Conclusions: The study highlights the Village Fund Program's impact on reducing poverty in Nagari Lingkuang Aua, but it mainly offers short-term solutions. Sustainable poverty alleviation requires addressing poverty root causes through community-centered initiatives. Emphasizing community participation is indispensable, along with continual evaluation and adjusting fund allocation to align with developmental priorities for rural communities' growth and resilience.

Keywords: Village fund; Poverty alleviation; Rural development; Local community empowerment; Social cash transfer program.

دور صندوق الريف في التخفيف من حدة الفقر في المناطق القروية

ايانتي أرميدا ساري، أمود سوناريا*، دارمانتو
برنامج دراسة الإدارة العامة، جامعة تريبوكا، تانجير انج سيلاتان، إندونيسيا

ملخص

الأهداف: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بيان دور صندوق الريف في التخفيف من حدة الفقر في ناغاري لينغكوأونغ أوا في محافظة باسامان بارات، حيث يمثل الفقر في إندونيسيا مشكلة ملحة لا سيما في المناطق الريفية التي تميل إلى إظهار معدلات فقر أعلى مقارنة بالمناطق الحضرية. ويعد برنامج صندوق القرية إحدى السياسات الحكومية للقضاء على الفقر.

المنهجية: استخدمت الدراسة المنهج النوعي التحليلي لتحليل كيفية تأثير برنامج صندوق القرية في القضاء على الفقر في ناغاري لينغكوأونغ أوا، وكما اعتمد نهج دراسة الحالة، مع التركيز على سياسة صندوق القرية. جُمعت البيانات الأولية من خلال مقابلات شبه منظمة وغير منظمة باستخدام تقنيات أخذ العينات الانتقائي، وفي المقابل، استخدمت هذه الدراسة الدراسات السابقة للحصول على بيانات ثانوية من مصادر مختلفة.

النتائج: كشف التحليل أن برنامج صندوق القرية قد أحدث أثراً كبيراً في الحد من مستويات الفقر في ناغاري لينغكوأونغ أوا. ومع ذلك، تميل الآثار إلى أن تكون قصيرة الأجل، وتركز في المقام الأول على تلبية الاحتياجات الأساسية الإلزامية للأسر أو الأفراد، مثل الغذاء أو التعليم أو خدمات الرعاية الصحية الضرورية.

الاستنتاجات: توصي الدراسة بتبسيط الضوء على التأثير الكبير لبرنامج صندوق القرية في الحد من مستويات الفقر في ناغاري لينغكوأونغ أوا؛ ومع ذلك، فإنه يعالج في المقام الأول الفقر على المدى القصير. ومن أجل التخفيف من حدة الفقر بشكل مستدام، يجب أن تعالج التدخلات الأسباب الجذرية للعجز، حيث إن المساعدة الحالية تظل مؤقتة ولا تعالج القضايا الهيكلية الكامنة التي تديم الفقر. ومن الضروري اتباع نهج شامل ومستدام لتحقيق تغيير دائم. وهو ينطوي على تلبية الاحتياجات الفورية ومعالجة الأسباب الجذرية للفقر من خلال مبادرات تركز على المجتمع المحلي. والتأكيد على أن المشاركة المجتمعية تكثف التدخلات مع الاحتياجات المحلية وكما توصي الدراسة بأن التقييم المستمر، وتعديل تخصيص الأموال، ومواءمة الموارد مع الأولويات التنموية أمور ضرورية لنمو المجتمعات الريفية وقدرتها على الصمود.

الكلمات الدالة: صندوق القرية، التخفيف من حدة الفقر، التنمية الريفية، تمكين المجتمع المحلي، برنامج التحويلات النقدية الاجتماعية

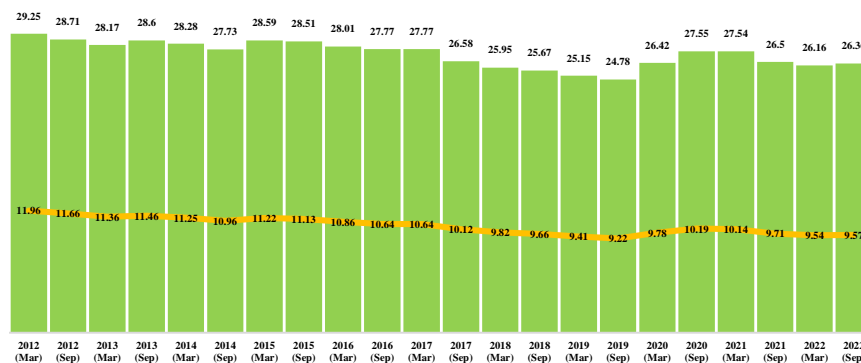


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INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a serious issue faced by many countries worldwide, including Indonesia. Despite notable financial growth over the past few decades, Indonesia still contends with many impoverished people. Data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS), as depicted in Graph 1, in September 2022, the poverty in Indonesia reached 9.57%. It indicates that more than 26 million people live below the national poverty line.



Graph 1. Trends in Poverty Rates from March 2012 to September 2022

Understanding poverty requires recognizing its multifaceted nature, influencing various aspects of societal well-being. Poverty represents the inability of individuals to meet basic needs in line with the average standard of living within that society. In other words, individuals are categorized as poor when their income significantly falls below the regional average, resulting in limited opportunities to improve their well-being (Rahman et al., 2019). Various triggering factors contribute to the phenomenon of poverty. Typically, impoverished communities need more access to essential development resources such as adequate healthcare and education due to limited productivity capacity, affecting their ability to earn sufficient incomes to accomplish basic daily needs (Safitri & Effendi, 2019). Additionally, the environmental characteristics of their domicile play a significant role (Lasaiba, 2022). Furthermore, poverty can stem from natural disasters and limited natural resources, as well as from systemic factors within society that prevent certain members from accessing economic means and other available facilities, thus perpetuating poverty (Alawiyah & Setiawan, 2021). Another contributing factor is the potential causal relationship between higher unemployment rates and poverty (Amani et al., 2020). It suggests that an increase in unemployment rates promotes the probability of poverty.

The multifaceted ramifications of poverty extend deeply into various domains of human life, profoundly impacting the accessibility of critical resources such as education, healthcare, and nutrition (Hasibuan & Hasibuan, 2022). It leads to a lack of skill development and qualifications, limiting job opportunities and individual productivity. Moreover, poverty profoundly affects children, influencing multiple aspects of their well-being. It encompasses various challenges they face in emotional and social aspects, such as mental health issues, chronic stress in daily life, cognitive setbacks affecting brain development, limited educational opportunities, and an unstable environment (Mckenzie, 2019). Furthermore, poverty can have severe repercussions for society, including increased crime, violence, and criminal activities, leading to the creation of social disabilities (Lasaiba, 2022). Economic limitations may drive individuals in poverty to engage in illegal conduct as a means of survival or seeking economic opportunities, while the stress and inequalities experienced by the impoverished can lead to severe mental health issues.

Most of the poverty in Indonesia occurs primarily at the rural level. It is mainly due to limited access to education, job opportunities, healthcare services, and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas, significant factors contributing to the high poverty rates. Bukhari (2021) elucidates that despite a larger urban population, the poverty rate in rural areas is significantly higher, sometimes even double that of urban areas. Appropriate development policy strategies are essential in addressing

the prevalent poverty issues, focusing on enhancing equal distribution of development through cross-sectoral policies, especially in rural regions (Rimawan & Aryani, 2019). Therefore, government and society must collaborate to alleviate poverty (Sopah et al., 2020). One of the initiatives from the central government is through the Village Fund. Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 6 Tahun 2014 specifies the allocation of the Village Fund, conducting it through redistributive and just programs. Additionally, Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia Nomor 60 Tahun 2014 mentions the intention of the funds designated for villages to finance governance, development implementation, community guidance, and empowerment.

The Village Fund represents a key instrument in promoting rural communities' development and strengthening national welfare by engendering employment opportunities, poverty, and income inequality (Bukhari, 2021; Oktavia & Wihastuti, 2020). Empirical evidence suggests a positive correlation between the Village Fund and the reduction of poverty rates (Sigit, 2020). For instance, statistical evidence from Aceh demonstrates that a 1% increase in the Village Fund significantly correlates with a 0.316 reduction in the poverty rate (Putra, 2018). Other studies indicate that the Village Fund has a positive effect in diminishing poverty rates in West Sumatra. However, the impact might be insignificant on a larger scale (Ritonga et al., 2021). Moreover, the allocation of the Village Fund influences economic growth, demonstrating that villages effectively utilize the fund's allocation to support rural development and enhance the Human Development Index through infrastructure development, educational institutions, and healthcare services in each village (Rimawan & Aryani, 2019). The effective utilization of the Village Fund allocation in the local governments of North Sumatra Province has successfully reduced poverty. The allocated funds actively involve the local populace in village development activities, maximizing their utilization not only to expedite infrastructure development but also to enhance community services (Dewi & Irama, 2018).

However, in practice, the funds encounter various challenges in their implementation. For instance, the Village Fund policy, designed during the policy formulation phase, only sometimes aligns with the actual needs or issues within communities, lacking robust monitoring and control mechanisms (Utama et al., 2019). Other limitations include the limited use of Village Fund for community economic empowerment, leading to subpar quality of infrastructure due to inadequate technical management capacity in planning and execution (Sari & Abdullah, 2017). Studies have reported difficulties related to implementing the Village Fund, such as unsynchronized data and undetermined beneficiary selection criteria (Fazriah et al., 2022). Additional research indicates that the Village Fund is ineffective in reducing poverty in various Districts/Cities in East Java Province due to its predominant allocation for physical infrastructure development in rural areas. Meanwhile, its use for community economic empowerment remains relatively low (Susilowati et al., 2017). It corresponds with the findings of Rimawan & Aryani (2019), suggesting that the Village Fund allocation does not significantly impact poverty alleviation because the village government's prioritization of infrastructure development is more significant than implementing community empowerment programs to overcome economic problems, which is one of the causes for the community.

Economic development should address economic issues, particularly poverty, which remains a significant concern in various regions of Indonesia, including West Sumatra. In the province of West Sumatra, the term 'village' is called 'Nagari'. Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Sumatera Barat Nomor 02 Tahun 2007 on the Principles of Nagari Governance in West Sumatra stipulates that a Nagari is a customary legal community unit with specific territorial boundaries and authority to regulate and manage local community interests based on the Minangkabau customary philosophy (Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah) and based on the origin and local customs within the province of West Sumatra (Miranda & Akmal, 2019).

Various issues are associated with the distribution of the Village Fund to the Nagari in West Sumatra, one of which concerns the proportional distribution of the Village Fund concerning the area size. The extensive territorial coverage of certain nagari in West Sumatra results in Jorong, a government level below Nagari, receiving a relatively limited portion when the Village Fund is allocated to the Nagari (Putra, 2021). Other hindrances include the low capacity of nagari government officials to understand existing regulations and the nagari government restricting access to information for the

public to access the accountability reports of the nagari government and the utilization reports of the nagari's finances (Miranda & Akmal, 2019). Additional research identifies issues in managing the Village Fund, such as suboptimal community participation in the planning and execution processes of policy programs and massive institutional structures in several nagari (Afriyanni et al., 2020).

The equitable implementation of the poverty alleviation policy is essential across all regions in Indonesia, encompassing the West Pasaman Regency. The poverty rate in this area remains high, reaching 7.52 percent (Maulana, 2022). Therefore, efforts to stimulate growth and equity in development through the Village Fund will reduce the poverty rate to 6.58 percent by 2026. However, one of the economic improvement policies using the Village Fund in West Pasaman Regency needs help, including in Nagari Lingkuang Aua. Initial observations in Nagari Lingkuang Aua revealed that the Village Fund needs to reach those entitled to receive it. It has implications as the targeted groups for the Village Fund policy cannot benefit from an existing policy. Moreover, the extensive number of administrative areas in this nagari results in a minimal distribution of funds to reach the jorong areas. Here is a comparison of administrative areas in Nagari according to Pasaman District, West Pasaman Regency.

Table 1. Number of Jorong (Sub villages) per Nagari (Villages) in Pasaman District, 2022

Name of Subvillages	Number of Subvillages
Lingkuan Aua	11
Aua Kuniang	6
Aia Gadang	6

Source: (West Pasaman Regency Central Statistics Agency, 2022)

The success of a policy predominantly relies on how effectively it can achieve its set objectives. Therefore, this study aims to assess the implementation of poverty alleviation policies in Nagari Lingkuang Aua, West Sumatra, specifically through the Village Fund Program. Additionally, the study aims to provide recommendations for enhancing the implementation of poverty alleviation policies, particularly focusing on the Village Fund Program, to achieve more sustainable and lasting outcomes in Nagari Lingkuang Aua.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology employed in this study is qualitative, using a case study design. Qualitative research is an approach that aims to explore and comprehend the meaning attributed by individuals or groups to social or human issues (Creswell, 2016). The research process involves emerging questions and procedures, gathering data often in participant settings, data analysis constructed inductively from specific themes to general themes, and the researcher interpreting the data's meaning. The final written report has a flexible structure. The research location is Nagari Lingkuang Aua, Pasaman District, West Pasaman Regency, West Sumatra Province. This study was conducted in Nagari Lingkuang Aua to find solutions to the implementation of targeted and proportional Village Fund policies, considering that Nagari Lingkuang Aua has a large number of jorong (sub-villages), a total of 11 areas compared to other nagari such as Aua Kuniang and Aia Gadang, each of which only has six sub-villages. The objective of this research is to provide insight for the local government to achieve the target of West Pasaman Regency to reduce the poverty rate to 6.58 percent by 2026 due to the disproportionate allocation of funds. The study was carried out from February to November 2023.

The information gained comprises primary and secondary data. Primary data was from informants selected through the purposive sampling technique. The primary data collection contains observations where the researcher records the behavior and activities of individuals in the research location. Data primer also includes unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Unstructured interviews occur spontaneously on certain occasions, while in semi-structured interviews, researchers follow interview guidelines but allow questions to naturally evolve regarding how village funds contribute to reducing poverty. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain primary data with a total of 12 respondents, including one head of Lingkuang Aua Nagari, one head of the community welfare department in the Nagari, three heads of Simpang Ampek and Katimaha Jorong

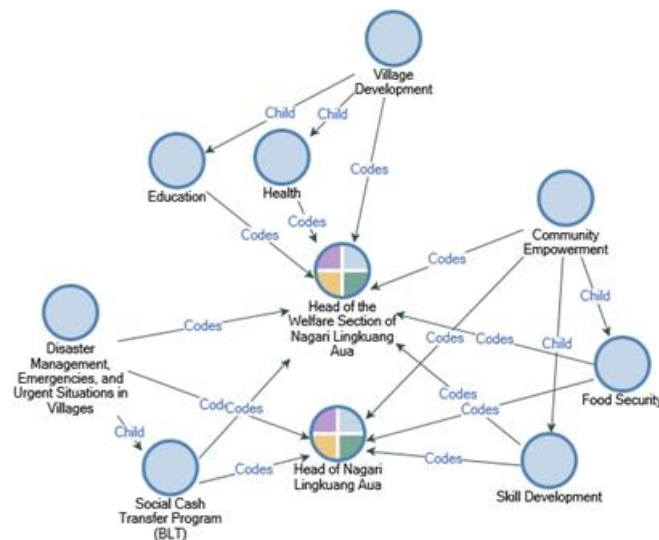
(sub-village), and one member of the food security team. This sample was made because these parties understand village funds and their implementation in reducing poverty. Subsequent interviews were conducted with six Simpang Ampek and Katimaha Nagari community members as targets of the poverty eradication policy program. The secondary data comprised information not directly gathered in the field, such as from the village's monograph. The analysis of qualitative research data involves several stages: data reduction, data display using NVIVO, and conclusion (Creswell, 2016).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The significant allocation of funds to each village from both the central government and local authorities stands as a crucial step in building and advancing rural areas. The Village Fund is a sturdy foundation for bridging gaps and addressing issues that sometimes hinder underprivileged villages from achieving autonomy. Sustainable development is an approach that balances economic growth, environmental protection, and social justice (Natalia & Maulidya, 2023). However, rigorous oversight and proper regulation in the allocation of the Village Fund are crucial to achieving the developmental objectives of villages to the fullest each year. Prioritizing the usage of the Village Fund must be done meticulously, considering urgent needs and potential developmental areas that can significantly impact rural communities (Syarifuddin et al., 2021). Therefore, the allocation of the Village Fund should prioritize aspects that have substantial and noteworthy effects on the welfare and progress of the village.

Comprehensive and accurate analyses determine the prioritization of Village Fund usage in Nagari Lingkuang Aua concerning the region's social, economic, infrastructure, and environmental conditions. The NVIVO software was used to visualize the findings from the interview, displayed in Graph 2.



Graph 2. Distribution of Village Funds in Nagari Lingkuang Aua for Poverty Alleviation

Graph 2 provides information regarding the collaboration among village apparatus, including the village head and the head of community welfare, in decision-making concerning utilizing the Village Fund for poverty alleviation in Nagari Lingkuang Aua. The interviews' findings indicate the allocation of the Village Fund for various primary sectors, including infrastructure development and community empowerment, likewise, the allocation includes programs focusing on disaster awareness and emergency initiatives. and urgent village needs. The allocation is adjusted to the needs of the Nagari, identified through a consultative process involving active participation from the local community and thoughtful considerations from relevant parties. This decision-making process aims to ensure the efficient and targeted use of the Village Fund to support the development of the Nagari and enhance the overall welfare of the community, including poverty

alleviation programs.

The condition of extreme poverty in Nagari Lingkuang Aua reached a total of 14,181 in 2022. It highlights the urgency for the Nagari Lingkuang Aua government to formulate and implement targeted poverty eradication policies and programs. Table 2 details the poverty profile in Nagari.

Table 2. Profile of Extreme Poverty in Nagari Lingkuang Aua 2022

Name of Jorong	Profile of Extreme Poverty
Jambak	1.596
Padang Durian Hijau	545
Bandarjo	1.091
Rimbo Binuang	1.029
Kampung Cubadak	664
Rimbo Janduang	485
Pasaman Baru	1.354
Simpang Empat	3.424
Katimaha	852
Batang Biyu	944
Tanjung Pangka	2.197
Total	14.181

Source: Peraturan Nagari Lingkuang Aua Nomor 01 Tahun 2023

Table 2 depicts the extreme poverty profile in Nagari Lingkuang Aua for the year 2022, indicating that 14,181 individuals were living in extreme poverty across the 11 villages in Nagari Lingkuang Aua. The data reveals an unequal distribution of extreme poverty among the villages, with some portraying higher numbers of individuals living in extreme poverty compared to others. Simpang Empat Jorong exhibited the highest number of individuals living in extreme poverty, totaling 3,424. At the same time, Rimbo Janduang had the lowest count, with 485 individuals. Moreover, the information within the table helps to identify the villages that most need assistance in poverty alleviation programs.

Various poverty alleviation programs have been designed and executed in Nagari Lingkuang Aua. These initiatives include the Direct Cash Assistance Program, offering financial aid directly to individuals in need, efforts to address stunting issues focusing on child nutrition and growth, food security programs to ensure sufficient access to food, the establishment of the Nagari-Owned Enterprise for local economic development, and community empowerment through activities enhancing skills, knowledge, and community involvement in decision-making. All these programs are part of a comprehensive effort to reduce poverty rates and improve the community's well-being in Nagari Lingkuang Aua. The Village Fund allocation 2022 amounted to Rp 2,296,519,000, documented in Table 2.

Table 3. Village Fund Allocation in Nagari Lingkuang Aua in 2022

Description	Total (IDR)
Rural development	835.759.200
Community empowerment	704.698.750
Disaster awareness, emergency, and urgent village programs	576.000.000

Source: Nagari Lingkuang Aua (2023)

The allocated Village Fund reached Rp 2,296,519,000 and was documented in Table 3 in 2022. The fund was allocated across various sectors, including village governance, village development, community empowerment, and disaster awareness, emergency, and urgent village programs. Among these allocations, the development sector received the most significant sum of Rp 835,759,200, followed by the community empowerment sector with Rp 704,698,750. Meanwhile, the smallest allocation was directed to disaster awareness, emergency, and urgent village programs, amounting to Rp 576,000,000. These three sectors form part of the strategy to reduce poverty in Nagari Lingkuang Aua.

Discussion

Rural Development

In the process of rural development, active engagement is required not only from the village government but also from the entire village community. According to Telaumbanua & Ziliwu (2022), the village government is responsible for providing guidance, direction, and necessary assistance and facilities in the development efforts. Active participatory roles of the community not only involve decision-making in every development program but actively engage them in identifying existing problems and potential developments within their environment. Atiningsih (2019) asserts that the failure of any development effort poses a significant risk if the community actively participates.

The Village Fund allocated for development activities in Nagari Lingkuang Aua amounts to Rp. 835,759,200, focusing on supporting cross-sector strategic development to enhance the quality of life and infrastructure in the region. This fund allocation primarily aims at the development of education, health, public works, and spatial planning. The distribution of funds in the development field mirrors the commitment of Nagari Lingkuang Aua in advancing crucial aspects to improve the welfare and sustainable development of the village.

Education Sector

The Village Fund allocation in Nagari Lingkuang Aua is strategically directed towards early childhood education, with a specific allocation of Rp 48,700,000. This allocation signifies more than just a financial investment; it represents a crucial step in prioritizing education within the community and underscores a long-term commitment to enhancing the quality of life for villagers. By focusing on early childhood education activities, including kindergarten and non-formal madrasas, these funds serve as a cornerstone for fostering essential socio-emotional competencies in children, laying a solid foundation for their future success (Sulyman et al., 2022). Moreover, the allocation is earmarked for compensating educators and for developing, rehabilitating, and enhancing educational facilities and resources, including providing learning materials. This strategic investment supports the immediate needs of the education sector and contributes to the community's sustainable development and advancement.

Studies carried out in multiple villages have highlighted that the educational segment of the Village Fund is customized to align with the needs of each village. Research by Faturohman et al. (2019) illustrates that in Cinanas Village, the Village Fund was focused on implementing policies supporting underprivileged children and assisting kindergarten teachers. Similarly, in Karangpari Village, policy implementation prioritized supporting underprivileged children and constructing Early Childhood Education facilities. In Pengarasan Village, the policy implementation encompassed aiding underprivileged children, supporting the Package A, B, and C education programs, and acquiring educational tools for PAUD. It resonates with Antou et al. (2019) research, asserting the emphasis of the Village Fund on educational facilities and the cultivation and administration of early childhood education. This aim is to decrease the poverty rate in the village through targeted development and utilization that fits the community's needs. However, in the context of Lasara Sowu, the Village Fund allocation in education has yet to impact the local community due to minimal fund allocation significantly (Telaumbanua & Ziliwu, 2022).

Health Sector

The Village Fund allocated for developing the health sector in Nagari Lingkuang Aua signifies a strategic step towards enhancing the rural community's health to reduce poverty levels. This approach reflects concrete efforts to address the health challenges faced by the rural community. The allocation for health sector development amounts to Rp. 786,979,000. Specifically, the health programs conducted by Nagari Lingkuang Aua include organizing integrated health service posts (posyandu) aimed at addressing stunting issues, holding village health alertness programs to increase community health awareness, joint childcare practices, or toddler family development programs aimed at providing families with knowledge and skills related to toddler care and nurturing. Therefore, rehabilitation of health post facilities to ensure the availability of adequate health facilities. The use of these funds is directed not only towards improving health facilities, health programs, and preventive efforts but also considers the social and economic impacts associated with health to create a change in the quality of life for the rural community and play a role in breaking the cycle of poverty, often closely linked to health issues in Nagari Lingkuang Aua.

The research in several villages indicates that the allocation of the Village Fund in the health sector caters to the specific needs of each area. For instance, in Lasara Sowu Village, the health program focuses on posyandu activities with training for posyandu cadres, providing nutrition for pregnant women and toddlers to address stunting issues, and constructing sanitation infrastructure to improve community health (Telaumbanua & Ziliwu, 2022). Moreover, allocating village funds in Sudirman Village also concentrates on drainage development and housing rehabilitation for residents (Sakiran, 2022). The allocation of village funds toward infrastructure and housing demonstrates the community's efforts to improve the quality of life and preparedness for environmental issues commonly encountered in rural areas.

Community Empowerment

The program review in empowering rural areas, as suggested by Muafani (2021), emphasizes the importance of identifying the potential within villages and aligning empowerment programs with the current conditions that have entered a phase of disruptive change. This emphasis signifies the need to adapt rural empowerment programs to significant changes occurring in the social, economic, and technological contexts. In the context of implementing community-based rural community empowerment, an essential factor highlighted by Firman (2021) is the village's potential and the active participation of the residents in every phase of planning and executing programs. Additionally, Arfiansyah (2020) explains that through active engagement, communities can develop their capacities and utilize available potential to mitigate incapacity, thereby paving the way for success in combating poverty and enhancing welfare at the village level.

The allocation of Rp 704,698,750 from the Village Fund for empowerment in Nagari Lingkuang Aua is a strategic step toward addressing inequality issues and improving the well-being of the local community. The allocated Village Fund covers a range of activities, from food security programs to business skills training for impoverished communities, depicting an inclusive approach to addressing various aspects of village life.

Food Security

Utilizing the Village Fund to fortify food security aims to enhance institutions' ability to distribute and store food reserves while maintaining food price stability (Taryani et al., 2022). The food security program in Nagari Lingkuang Aua is an initiative that aims to address fundamental issues linked to food access, food security, and the food sovereignty of the village community. The program aims to ensure the availability, accessibility, quality, and sustainability of food sources to create an environment where individuals can access adequate, nutritious, safe, and affordable food. The Village Fund allocated for the food security program can be observed in Table 3.

Table 4. Nagari Lingkuang Aua Food Security Program in 2022

Item	Description
Design of activity	Cage Construction
Location	Jorong Simpang Empat
Quantity	3 units
Funding Source	Village Fund
Physical Funds	Rp. 213.260.000
Operational Funds	Rp. 17.291.000
Number of Seeds	30.000 pieces
Number of Seeds	9.000 kg
Total	Rp. 230.551.000

Source: Nagari Lingkuang Aua (2023)

Table 4 presents information regarding the food security program in Nagari Lingkuang Aua in 2022. The initiative involves the construction of three fishponds/cages in Simpang Empat Hamlet, with a total cost of Rp. 230,551,000 funded by the Village Fund. The program aims to produce 30,000 fish seeds from 9,000 kg of fish feed. This step is intended not only to enhance local fish farming but also to strengthen the overall food security framework by significantly contributing to adequate fish seed and feed production, which will ultimately impact the food supply chain and nutritional needs of the community.

In determining the location of the fish cages, environmental conditions are a primary consideration. The placement of the fish cages is selected based on evaluating conditions that support optimal fish growth. The decision to position the fish cages adjacent to the river is due to the need for smooth water circulation, essential for the healthy growth of the fish. Implementation of this activity involves recruiting members of the Activity Implementation Team, chosen through a profit-sharing system after the harvest. The profit-sharing concept is the basis for cooperation among the team members, where each contributes to achieving optimal harvest results to gain fair profits.

Efforts to enhance fish cage production require continuous monitoring and improvement of water quality and feed supply. These measures are crucial in supporting increased fish production from the fish cages. Periodic monitoring of water quality involves measuring parameters such as temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and water clarity. Maintaining these parameters at optimal levels is crucial for the growth and health of the fish. Additionally, managing the feed supply is a critical aspect of increasing fish production from the cages. Ensuring that the fish receive balanced and quality feed supports optimal growth. All these efforts aim to optimize the environmental conditions and fish nutrition within the cages, ultimately leading to a significant increase in fish production.

Moreover, marketing activities within the Nagari Lingkuang Aua region are pivotal. Marketing constitutes a planned or comprehensive activity conducted to meet market demand (Nofiani & Mursid, 2021). Collaboration with local vendors becomes the primary focus in marketing the fish products. It aims to ensure the availability of fish for the local community according to their needs. Following the harvest, restocking the fish cages is carried out to maintain the sustainability of the food security program. This step is essential to ensure ongoing fish production and food security in the Nagari Lingkuang Aua region.

With the successful implementation of the inland fisheries program in Nagari Lingkuang Aua, the supply of fish has been effectively ensured and made available to the local community. This program has established a reliable provision of fish in the rural setting, significantly contributing to food security in the region. Its success reflects the efficient management of inland fishery resources and the appropriate strategies to address local food availability. Thus, the implementation of the inland fisheries program in Nagari Lingkuang Aua stands as a successful example of ensuring the fish supply for community needs. Unlike the successful implementation of the inland fisheries program in Nagari Lingkuang Aua, the study conducted by Ningtas et al. (2022) found that the community development strategy through the inland fisheries program in Desa Sepakat Bersatu has not optimally progressed due to several unmet conditions in the development strategy, such as alignment with basic needs, natural characteristics, self-reliance, and ecology.

Business Skills Training for the Underprivileged Community

Training in business skills for the underprivileged community is an initiative explicitly aimed at enhancing economic capacity and enriching financial aspects within the local community (Wadu et al., 2018). Skill training in rural areas plays a significant role in stimulating the community's self-reliance, substantially increasing daily income, and reducing unemployment levels in the village environment (Wibowo & Lestari, 2021). With the acquisition of these skills through training, rural communities become more economically independent, creating opportunities for better income, and reducing unemployment in the region. Empowering the village through business skill training provides opportunities for the impoverished to develop sustainable skills and knowledge to manage their businesses.

The village allocates a budget of Rp 243,791,750 specifically for skill training programs in the culinary arts and barista skills. The selection of training participants is precisely regulated, following the population in each community unit, with the primary goal of producing skilled and trained labour tailored to the respective fields. In the barista training, some participants successfully secured positions as baristas in local cafés, applying the coffee-making skills they acquired during the training.

Culinary activities focus on traditional food with an emphasis on learning and mastering cooking techniques and the development of regional food recipes. This training will empower participants to initiate their culinary enterprises and possess the expertise to oversee and extend their culinary endeavours. The training involves a group of participants provided with learning materials and education over a specific period to enhance their knowledge and skills in starting businesses in

the culinary and traditional food industry. These training activities not only empower economically but also provide access to essential skills for the less fortunate, enabling them to improve their quality of life.

Economic growth is challenging in swiftly reducing poverty rates, promoting sustainable development, and enhancing welfare for marginalized communities. The proficient allocation of resources and a commitment to trade openness are recognized as indispensable preconditions for fostering enduring economic growth trajectories (Ilyas et al., 2023).. Moreover, targeted interventions such as Business Skills Training for the Underprivileged Community emerge as instrumental strategies in empowering individuals with the requisite tools and competencies to participate in and benefit from burgeoning economic opportunities actively.

Disasters and Emergency Relief in The Village

Social Cash Transfer Program

Disaster management, emergency response, and emergency resolution are essential for community preparedness. Direct cash assistance is structured to aid individuals impacted by disasters or emergencies, guaranteeing access to necessities like food, clothing, healthcare, and post-disaster recuperation. According to Regulation No. 8 of 2022 of the Minister of Villages, Poor Areas and Immigration of the Republic of Indonesia, direct cash assistance to villages includes providing direct cash assistance to beneficiary households from village funds determined through village meetings following the criteria established by the legislation. This funding enables villages to identify and classify groups in need, allocate resources accurately and transparently, and ensure equitable and measured distribution of resources. The number of people receiving direct cash assistance in each village is shown in Table 4.

Tabel 4. The Number of Direct Cash Assistance Recipients in Nagari Lingkuang Aua in 2022

Item	Description
Jambak	25
Padang Durian Hijau	10
Bandarjo	25
Rimbo Binuang	25
Kampung Cubadak	25
Rimbo Janduang	25
Pasaman Baru	26
Simpang Empat	30
Katimaha	25
Batang Biyu	25
Tanjung Pangka	25
Total	266

Source: Nagari Lingkuang Aua (2023)

Table 4 visually shows the distribution of direct cash assistance (Bantuan Langsung Tunai) to Nagari Lingkuang Aua in 2022. The total number of direct cash assistance recipients amounts to 266 people, with the most recipients reaching 30 individuals and the lowest at 10 individuals in a jorong. The village fund distributed is Rp 300,000 per month, constituting part of the fund distribution scheme carried out in a three-month cycle. It means beneficiaries receive Rp 900,000 each time the fund distribution period occurs. The selection process for beneficiaries is based on proposals from each "jorong" deemed suitable to receive assistance. Following the assessment, funds are channeled to the jorongs meeting the criteria to receive aid.

Interview results have indicated that the community utilizes Direct Cash Assistance to fulfill basic needs such as purchasing rice soap and covering house rent. Furthermore, a portion is utilized for children's school expenses and as business capital. According to the interviews, the assistance is used by the community to cover basic needs, such as buying rice soap and paying house rent. Some assistance is also directed towards children's education expenses and business capital. It demonstrates that the social cash transfer program significantly contributes to helping the community meet its

primary needs and supports educational efforts and economic empowerment in Nagari Lingkuang Aua. It shows that Direct Cash Assistance not only positively impacts fulfilling the basic needs of the community but also aids in improving access to the economy.

In Nagari Lingkuang Aua, Direct Cash Assistance provides short-term benefits, such as aiding families or individuals with urgent basic needs, such as fulfilling urgent food, education, or health needs. However, for long-term benefits, more than this aid may be needed to solve the fundamental problems causing the inability of these individuals or groups, as it is temporary and does not offer a sustainable solution to poverty or other structural issues. It aligns with a study conducted by Dewi & Andrianus (2021), which suggests that Direct Cash Assistance has not been able to resolve poverty issues sustainably and does not stimulate the productivity of the poor people as this program only restrains the purchasing power and consumption levels of people experiencing poverty. Therefore, a more holistic approach is necessary by combining Direct Cash Assistance with other social safety net programs. Through this combination, social safety net programs can provide access to resources, nutritional education, and skills training, collectively enhancing the ability of poor households to sustainably meet their food needs rather than merely offering temporary assistance.

The active participation of the rural community ensures the development designated for the targeted group. It aims to achieve village self-reliance as village development activities are mandated to be self-managed by utilizing the human and natural resources within the village sustainably (Raharjo, 2020). To empower villages to carry out their mandates, including the self-management of rural development, villages are entitled to have their own sources of income. The government's objective in directly allocating the Village Fund to villages is to empower them in governing and managing the prioritized areas of development and community empowerment within the village. The Village Fund, derived from the State Budget, is part of the village's revenue.

The Village Fund constitutes a portion of the State Budget allocated annually for villages and transferred through the Regional Budget of the District/City. It prioritized financing the implementation of the village's authority based on the village's origin rights and local authority as stipulated in Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 6 Tahun 2014, Article 72, paragraphs (1) letter b and paragraph (2) (Oktara, 2019). Furthermore, Oktara explicates that the purpose of providing the Village Fund is to strengthen the financial capabilities of villages, grant autonomy for villages to autonomously manage their socio-communal and local governance without waiting for orders from above, promote the establishment of village democracy by involving community participation in local decision-making, and enhance the income and equitable distribution among the village populace by fostering economic growth in villages.

This study's findings emphasize the Village Fund program's significant impact in alleviating Nagari Lingkuang Aua's poverty levels. However, the effects are short-term, primarily addressing families' and individuals' immediate and essential needs. The program effectively caters to pressing necessities, including vital aspects such as food, education, and essential healthcare services, which are crucial for improving the prevailing conditions of daily life. These findings, in line with studies from Hilmawan et al. (2023), indicate a positive correlation between Village funds and rural development in Indonesia. However, it is noteworthy that the analysis results do not align with the policy hypothesis suggesting that allocating more funds invariably leads to enhanced development outcomes. Another study by Rammohan & Tohari (2023) states that the Village Fund Program implementation has impacted rural poverty reduction by approximately 1.7 percent and the enhancement of welfare among residents in recipient villages.

CONCLUSION

The Village Fund is one of the essential instruments in the national budget and plays a vital role in supporting rural progress and reducing inequalities in rural areas. This study centers on village funds and focuses on village development, community empowerment, and poverty alleviation efforts such as village disaster, emergency, and emergency relief. The allocation of these funds will be based on priorities identified following extensive analysis and active consultation with local stakeholders.

The study's findings highlight that the Village Fund program has significantly impacted reducing poverty levels in

Nagari Lingkuang Aua. However, the observed effects tend to be short-term, primarily focusing on urgent basic needs for families or individuals. The program accommodates pressing needs such as food, education, and critical health services essential in addressing daily life conditions. Its impact is limited as it is tempo-rary, failing to provide sustainable solutions to the underlying structural issues causing poverty.

For the Village Fund program to make a positive change in addressing daily needs, handling the structural issues of poverty requires a more holistic and sustained approach for affected communities. Continuously tailoring the implementation of the Village Fund to local needs is essential, with a significant emphasis placed on community participation in every phase of program planning and execution. Moreover, this research underscores the importance of continual evaluation and adjustment concerning the Village Fund allo-cation, aligning it with the developmental potential crucially needed by rural communi-ties.

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