



## Reinforcing Village Apparatus Competence for Effective Development Planning through Village Fund Allocation

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze strategies for enhancing the capacity of village officials in formulating development programs through the Village Fund Allocation in Pesawaran Regency. The research is motivated by persistent challenges in village fund management, including limited human resource quality, inadequate technical skills, and suboptimal program planning. A qualitative approach with a descriptive design was employed, utilizing interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that capacity-building efforts are carried out through education, training, and skill development, which contribute to improving the quality of development planning. However, the implementation of these strategies remains less than optimal due to limited infrastructure, insufficient training opportunities, and low educational attainment among village officials. Therefore, continuous and systematic efforts are required, including expanding access to education, providing inclusive training programs, and improving supporting facilities to achieve effective, transparent, and accountable village fund management.

**Keywords:** Village Fund, Development Planning, Training, Skills.

### Introduction

Village development constitutes a strategic component in promoting equitable national development, particularly in improving the welfare of rural communities (Putra, 2022). One of the key policy instruments employed by the government to support this objective is the Village Fund Allocation, which is derived from fiscal transfers between the central and regional governments (Tarlani & Sirajuddin, 2020). This policy is intended to strengthen the capacity of village administrations in delivering public services, implementing development programs, and empowering local communities (Zhang & Zhang, 2020).

In Pesawaran Regency, the implementation of Village Fund Allocation has demonstrated a consistent increase in budget allocation over time, reflecting the local government's commitment to advancing village-based development. These funds are utilized to finance various programs, including rural infrastructure development, community economic empowerment, and the improvement of public service quality. However, the effectiveness of Village Fund Allocation utilization is highly dependent

on the capacity of village officials to plan, implement, and account for development programs in an effective and accountable manner (Bhattacharyya et al., 2018).

In practice, several challenges in Village Fund Allocation management persist. These include suboptimal program planning, the predominance of administrative expenditures, and the limited capacity of village human resources (Han, 2019). Furthermore, constraints such as low educational attainment, insufficient training opportunities, and inadequate supporting facilities hinder the development of high-quality village development programs (Yu et al., 2024).

These conditions indicate that enhancing the capacity of village officials is a critical factor in ensuring the effective utilization of Village Fund Allocation. Therefore, appropriate strategies are required to improve their capabilities through education, training, and skills development, enabling them to produce participatory, transparent, and community-oriented development planning (Chowdhury & Alzarrad, 2025).

Based on these considerations, this study is essential to comprehensively examine strategies for enhancing the capacity of village officials in formulating development programs through the Village Fund Allocation, particularly in Pesawaran Regency.

## **Literature Review**

### **Concept of Strategy**

Strategy is a fundamental concept in management that refers to a systematic effort to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently (Mutambo et al., 2022). Conceptually, strategy is not merely understood as a long-term plan; rather, it encompasses an integrated pattern of actions that align the organization's vision, mission, and policies (Ghaleb, 2024). In the context of village governance, strategy serves as a crucial foundation for formulating appropriate measures to enhance the capacity of village officials in performing their duties, particularly in the preparation of development programs (Kamal & Nasarudin, 2020).

Furthermore, strategy reflects an organization's ability to adapt to both internal and external environmental changes. This includes identifying opportunities, managing resources effectively, and determining appropriate policy priorities (Hanelt et al., 2021). In the management of Village Fund Allocation, a well-formulated strategy is essential to ensure that available resources are utilized optimally to support village development and community empowerment. Therefore, strategic formulation must be conducted comprehensively by taking into account the actual conditions and needs of the village (Speer, 2012).

In this study, strategy is defined as a planned approach aimed at improving the capacity of village officials through various relevant interventions (Talan & Tyagi, 2020). Such a strategy is expected to generate significant improvements in the quality of village development planning, resulting in programs that are more participatory, transparent, and accountable (Barusman, 2024). Accordingly, strategy is considered a key variable influencing the success of capacity-building efforts for village officials within the context of Village Fund Allocation based development (Franco & Tracey, 2019).

### **Village Fund Allocation Management Policy**

The policy on the management of Village Fund Allocation constitutes a critical component of fiscal decentralization aimed at strengthening the capacity of village governments in delivering development and public services (Purbadharma et al., 2019). Village Fund Allocation represents financial resources derived from the fiscal balance between central and regional governments, which are allocated to villages to support governance, development initiatives, and community empowerment (Barusman & Habiburrahman, 2022). This policy reflects the government's commitment to promoting village-based development by granting greater autonomy to villages in managing their financial resources (Dick-Sagoe, 2020).

The management of Village Fund Allocation must be conducted in an orderly, transparent, accountable, and participatory manner in accordance with the principles of good governance. In practice, the management process encompasses several stages, including planning, implementation, administration, reporting, and accountability. Each of these stages requires adequate administrative and technical competencies among village officials to ensure that the allocated funds are utilized effectively and appropriately. Furthermore, oversight from local governments, along with active community participation, plays a crucial role in ensuring that the implementation of Village Fund Allocation complies with established regulations (Harun et al., 2021).

Within this study, the policy on Village Fund Allocation management is conceptualized as a contextual factor influencing the quality of village development planning. Clear policies and effective implementation are expected to encourage village officials to adopt more systematic approaches in designing development programs. Conversely, inadequate managerial capacity and weak supervisory systems may lead to inefficiencies and potential misallocation of funds. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of Village Fund Allocation management policies is essential for enhancing the quality and sustainability of village development (Diansari et al., 2023).

### **Improvement of Village Apparatus Skills**

The enhancement of village officials' capacity constitutes a systematic process aimed at strengthening individual abilities in carrying out governmental duties and responsibilities (Sofyani et al., 2022). Such capacity extends beyond mere knowledge to include technical skills and professional attitudes that support effective performance. In the context of rural development, competent village officials are better equipped to plan, implement, and evaluate development programs in an efficient and accountable manner (Liu et al., 2020).

The process of capacity building is generally pursued through various human resource development initiatives, including formal education, technical training, and practical skill development. Education provides a solid foundation of knowledge, while training serves to enhance job-specific technical competencies aligned with organizational needs. Meanwhile, practical skills are essential for addressing real-world challenges in the field, particularly in program planning and village administrative management (Danquah et al., 2023).

In this study, the capacity enhancement of village officials is considered a critical variable influencing the quality of village development management. Competent officials are more capable of understanding regulations, identifying community needs, and designing targeted development programs. Therefore, improving the capacity of village officials not only enhances individual performance but also contributes directly to the overall success of village development (Arifin et al., 2020).

### **Preparation of Village Development Program**

The formulation of village development programs constitutes a systematic planning process aimed at determining the direction and priorities of development at the village level (Carrick et al., 2023a). This process involves several stages, including the identification of community needs, the formulation of development objectives, and the establishment of programs to be implemented. Effective planning should be grounded in participatory principles, ensuring that community members are actively involved in decision-making processes through forums such as village development planning meetings (Sisto et al., 2018).

In practice, the preparation of village development programs is closely linked to the role of village officials as the primary actors in the planning process (Li et al., 2019). These officials are responsible for collecting relevant data, analyzing community needs, and preparing planning documents in accordance with applicable regulations. Consequently, the competence of village officials becomes a critical factor in producing

development programs that are both high in quality and responsive to community needs (Carrick et al., 2023b).

Within the context of this study, the formulation of village development programs is positioned as an output of efforts to enhance the capacity of village officials. Well-prepared programs reflect the level of officials' competence in understanding local conditions and managing available resources, including the Village Fund Allocation. Therefore, the quality of village development program formulation serves as an important indicator in assessing the effectiveness of strategies aimed at improving the capacity of village officials (Harsanto & Wahyuningrat, 2024).

### Research Framework

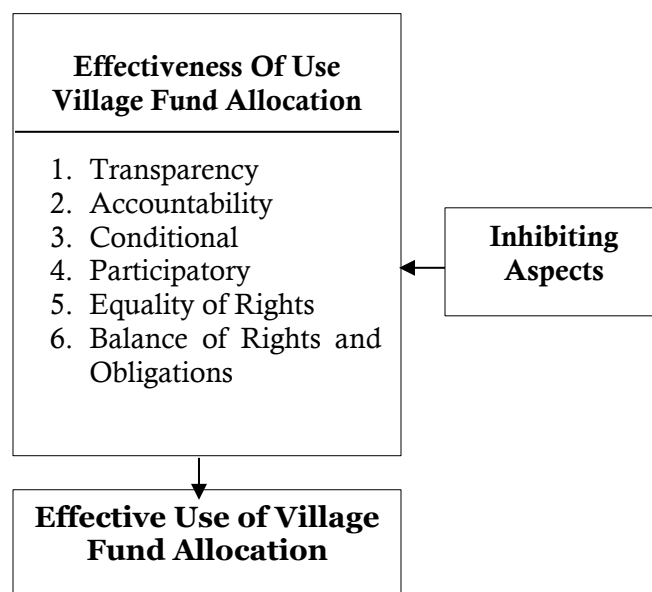


Figure 1. Research Framework

### Metode

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design to provide an in-depth understanding of strategies for enhancing the capacity of village officials in formulating development programs through the Village Fund Allocation. This approach is selected because it enables a comprehensive exploration and description of the phenomena based on actual field conditions (Lochmiller, 2021). By applying qualitative methods, the researcher is able to examine the processes, dynamics, and challenges encountered by village officials in managing the Village Fund Allocation in a holistic manner, thereby generating a more nuanced and contextual understanding.

The research was conducted in Pesawaran Regency, with informants selected purposively based on their direct involvement in the management of the Village Fund Allocation. The informants include the Head of the Community and Village

Empowerment Office, sub-district heads, and village heads representing areas located both near to and distant from the administrative center. This selection aims to capture diverse perspectives and to obtain accurate and in-depth data regarding strategies for improving the capacity of village officials in development planning.

The data utilized in this study consist of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with informants, conducted flexibly using interview guidelines to ensure the richness and contextual relevance of the information obtained (Babchuk, 2019). In addition, observations were carried out to gain a direct understanding of field conditions. Secondary data were obtained through document analysis, including official reports, government documents, academic journals, and other relevant written sources that support the research (Syahputra et al., 2023).

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive model comprising three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction involved selecting and simplifying relevant information in accordance with the research objectives. The reduced data were then systematically presented in the form of narratives and categorizations to facilitate interpretation. Finally, conclusions were drawn continuously throughout the research process and verified against the collected data to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings (Humphreys et al., 2021).

## **Result And Discussion**

### **Strategy for Enhancing Village Apparatus Capacity in Developing Development Programs Thru Village Fund Allocation**

The strategy for enhancing the capacity of village officials in formulating development programs through the Village Fund Allocation constitutes a critical component of public policy implementation aimed at ensuring the success of rural development initiatives. This strategy represents a series of systematic and coordinated activities carried out after policies have been clearly formulated, including the development of derivative regulations, the provision of necessary resources, and the designation of responsible implementing actors. Furthermore, the strategy involves translating policy directives into concrete actions at the operational level to ensure that development programs deliver optimal benefits to the community.

Within this context, strengthening the human resource capacity of village officials emerges as a key determinant of effective policy implementation. This process encompasses the appropriate placement of personnel based on their competencies, as well as the continuous development of their capabilities through education, training,

and skills enhancement. Consequently, village officials are expected to perform their duties in a professional, effective, and efficient manner, thereby supporting the optimal achievement of village development objectives through the utilization of Village Fund Allocation.

### **Education**

Education is no longer perceived solely as an individual or family matter; rather, it has become an integral part of a broader social system with a strategic role in development. It functions not only to enhance individual capacities but also to shape character and support the advancement of organizations and society. Consequently, the provision of education requires structured management, encompassing both internal aspects such as curriculum, human resources, and financing—and external dimensions related to social and economic demands.

In the context of village governance, education serves as a critical factor in improving the capacity of village officials, particularly in planning development programs funded through Village Fund Allocations. Findings from interviews indicate that some officials still possess limited educational backgrounds, which constrains their ability to design programs effectively and leads to reliance on external consultants. This condition adversely affects the quality of planning and implementation, resulting in suboptimal utilization of village funds and the incomplete achievement of development objectives.

To address these challenges, efforts to enhance the capacity of village officials have been undertaken through continuous coaching, education, and training programs. These initiatives aim to improve knowledge, skills, and professionalism, enabling officials to perform their duties more effectively and efficiently. In this regard, support from local governments, sub-district authorities, and village leaders is essential to encourage officials to pursue higher educational qualifications and actively participate in capacity-building programs as part of human resource development.

Therefore, education and training should be regarded as strategic investments in improving the quality of village officials. Strengthening their capacity is expected to enhance both technical and administrative competencies in managing Village Fund Allocations, improve organizational performance, and support the realization of effective, transparent, and sustainable village development. Accordingly, sustained commitment from all stakeholders is required to advance human resource development in line with the evolving demands of science and technology.

### **Training**

Village officials in Pesawaran Regency play a strategic role in implementing the

Village Fund Allocation program, requiring them to effectively manage the increasing complexity of rural development. Consequently, the local government must ensure the availability of competent human resources through systematic management and continuous capacity-building efforts. Strengthening the capabilities of village officials is essential, as it directly influences the quality of public services and the effectiveness of development implementation at the village level.

Findings from interviews with the Head of the Community and Village Empowerment Office of Pesawaran Regency indicate that the local government actively encourages village officials to participate in various training programs, particularly technical training such as financial computerization and the preparation of Village Fund Allocation programs. These initiatives are designed to ensure that development programs are more targeted and aligned with the priority needs of the community. This evidence highlights that human resource development is a critical factor in the successful management of village funds.

From a conceptual perspective, human resources remain the central element within any organization, despite rapid advancements in science and technology. Sophisticated technologies cannot deliver optimal benefits without the capability of personnel to operate and adapt to such changes. Therefore, enhancing the competencies of village officials through education and training has become an urgent necessity to enable them to perform their duties in a professional, effective, and efficient manner.

The implementation of training programs for village officials in Pesawaran Regency has been carried out continuously by both local and central governments, with materials tailored to job-related needs, particularly in managing Village Fund Allocation. These programs have demonstrated positive impacts in improving knowledge, skills, and professionalism, which can be directly applied in daily tasks. However, participation in training remains limited to certain officials, indicating the need for more inclusive and sustained efforts to ensure that all village personnel possess adequate capacity to support rural development.

### **Skills**

Skills refer to an individual's ability to utilize intellect, ideas, and creativity to produce valuable outcomes in the workplace. In the context of village governance, skills constitute a crucial element in the planning and implementation of Village Fund Allocation programs. This capability extends beyond technical proficiency to include creative and innovative thinking in aligning development programs with community needs. However, skill development often encounters challenges, particularly due to the

tendency of some village officials to remain confined to routine tasks without fully leveraging opportunities for capacity enhancement.

Based on interview findings, skills serve as a fundamental asset for village officials in performing their duties effectively. Those who have participated in education and training programs generally demonstrate improvements in knowledge, technical abilities, and work attitudes. These improvements contribute to their capacity to design and implement village development programs that are more responsive and aligned with community priorities. In addition, work experience plays a significant role in strengthening skills, as increased experience is associated with better capability in managing Village Fund Allocation programs.

Nevertheless, not all village officials possess an optimal level of skills. Challenges persist, particularly in mastering technical competencies such as financial management and development planning. Skills should not only be assessed based on the speed of task completion but also on the accuracy and quality of outputs. Therefore, continuous self-development through learning, training, and adaptation to technological advancements and evolving work demands is essential.

In conclusion, the enhancement of village officials' skills must be carried out in a sustainable manner through formal education, technical training, and practical experience. The findings indicate that, although the overall skill level of village officials in Pesawaran Regency is relatively adequate, it has not yet reached an optimal level. Consequently, capacity-building strategies that emphasize the integration of knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes are critical to supporting the effective management of Village Fund Allocation and improving the performance of village governance in development processes.

### **Aspects That Hinder**

Several factors hinder the effective implementation of strategies aimed at enhancing the capacity of village officials in formulating development programs through the Village Fund Allocation. First, the quality of human resources remains suboptimal, as reflected in the educational background of some village officials, which is limited to senior high school or equivalent (Package C), as well as their low motivation to pursue higher education. Second, inadequate supporting facilities such as limited availability of computers and frequent electricity disruptions constrain the smooth execution of tasks related to Village Fund management. Third, the limited provision of training programs by both district and provincial governments has resulted in uneven capacity development among village officials, leaving many without the necessary competencies to manage Village Fund Allocation effectively and optimally.

## Conclusion

Based on the research findings, efforts to enhance the capacity of village officials in preparing development programs funded through the Village Fund Allocation have been carried out through education, training, and skills development; however, their implementation remains suboptimal due to limited educational backgrounds, insufficient mastery of technical skills particularly in information technology and various constraints such as inadequate facilities, limited internet and electricity access, and lack of support for further education. Therefore, it is recommended that village governments and policymakers strengthen capacity development in a continuous and systematic manner through relevant education and training programs, supported by adequate infrastructure and financial assistance, in order to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of Village Fund management.

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