



Implementation of Central Government Policy on Priority for the Use of Village Funds in Makartitama and Ulak Mas Villages, Lahat Regency, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia (Kementerian Desa, PDT, dan Transmigrasi) Number 11 of 2019 concerning Priorities for the Use of Village Funds in 2020, in Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village, Lahat District, Lahat Regency. The Ministerial Regulation stipulates that the priority of using village funds must provide maximum benefit to the village community in the form of improving life quality, increasing welfare, poverty alleviation, and accelerating public services. Unfortunately, the situation of each village is complex, that is, the policy implementation needs further investigation. The present study used qualitative research approach. The focus was the implementation aspects such as the compliance level of the implementor, how routine functions ran, and performance and impact. Data were collected using interviews and policy documents analysis. The results showed that the Minister's policy could not be fully implemented. Of the four priorities, only three aspects were implemented. The priority that had not been implemented was the program to improve public services. The socio-economic situation of the community was the main reason for the village government to focus more on the first three priorities, namely improving life quality, improving welfare, and alleviating poverty. The external aspect affected the implementation of this regulation was the budget reduction from the central government due to the impact of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Pandemic. This study suggests the need for an in-depth evaluation of prioritizing the use of the village budget by considering the local needs. There is the need for anticipatory steps to deal with force major conditions such as Covid-19 that reduces the amount of village fund allocations and affects the implementation of village programs.

Keywords: policy implementation, village funds, priority of village funds

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pelaksanaan Peraturan Menteri Desa, Pembangunan Daerah Tertinggal, dan Transmigrasi Republik Indonesia Nomor 11 Tahun 2019 tentang Prioritas Penggunaan Dana Desa Tahun 2020, di desa Makartitama dan Desa Ulak Mas, Kecamatan Lahat, Kabupaten Lahat. Peraturan Menteri tersebut mengatur bahwa prioritas penggunaan dana desa harus memberikan manfaat sebesar-besarnya bagi masyarakat desa berupa peningkatan kualitas hidup, peningkatan kesejahteraan, pengentasan kemiskinan, dan percepatan pelayanan publik.

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Sayangnya, situasi masing-masing desa sangat beragam, sehingga implementasi kebijakan perlu diselidiki lebih lanjut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif. Fokusnya adalah aspek implementasi seperti tingkat kepatuhan implementor, bagaimana fungsi rutin dijalankan, serta kinerja dan dampaknya. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan wawancara dan studi dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kebijakan Menteri tersebut belum dapat dilaksanakan sepenuhnya. Dari empat prioritas tersebut, hanya tiga aspek yang dilaksanakan. Prioritas yang belum terlaksana adalah program peningkatan pelayanan publik. Situasi sosial ekonomi masyarakat menjadi alasan utama pemerintah desa untuk lebih fokus pada tiga prioritas pertama, yaitu peningkatan kualitas hidup, peningkatan kesejahteraan, dan pengentasan kemiskinan. Aspek eksternal yang mempengaruhi penerapan peraturan ini adalah pengurangan anggaran dari pemerintah pusat akibat dampak Pandemi Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19). Kajian ini menyarankan perlunya evaluasi mendalam dengan memprioritaskan penggunaan anggaran desa dengan mempertimbangkan kebutuhan lokal. Aspek penting lainnya adalah perlunya langkah antisipatif untuk menghadapi kondisi force major seperti Covid-19 yang mengurangi jumlah alokasi dana desa dan mempengaruhi pelaksanaan program desa.

Kata kunci: implementasi kebijakan, dana desa, prioritas dana desa

INTRODUCTION

One of the important things in Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government is the effort to improve the quality of governance at village level as the smallest autonomous region in Indonesia. Village has a different role from *kelurahan* (sub-district). Article 18 of Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning villages explains that village authority includes authority in village administration, implementation of village development, village community development, and village community empowerment based on community initiatives, origin rights, and village customs.

One of the important policies to support the implementation of village governance is about village funds. The village fund policy is considered to have a tremendous impact on rural communities in Indonesia. Table 1 depicts village fund policy data.

Table 1 shows that village fund policy does not only have an impact on accelerating infrastructure development, but also triggers economic movement and community empowerment.

However, previous studies on the implementation of village funds showed interesting findings. In their study on the implementation of village fund policies in managing and increasing village potential, Ramly et al., (2017) showed that village fund policies and *gampong* fund allocations in the case of Kuala Subdistrict, Nagan Raya Regency, were still unable to increase village potential, which is very promising. The phenomenon occurred because the village fund allocation policy was still directed at infrastructure development or physical potential. Besides, there were still human resource constraints in managing village funds. Independent

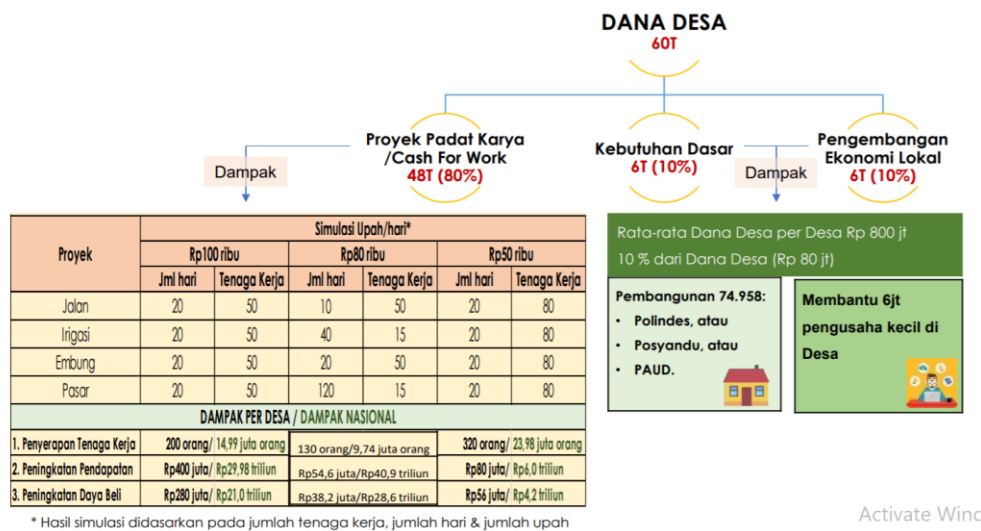
gampong included Simpang Peut *gampong* that had successfully managed its business through a *gampong*-owned business entity.

In other locations, such as Seppong Village, Tammerodo Sendana District, Majene Regency, the implementation of village funds does not function properly (Akbar and Prabawati, 2018). Akbar and Prabawati (2018) showed that village programs in education and health development sectors did not go hand in hand with the very backward economic sector, where basic needs such as water were still difficult and roads were still damaged. This was also due to a lack of financial resources that had hampered the development programs. Moreover, the village did not have its own income that could support the administration of the village government.

The compliance level of fund management with laws and regulations is also still in question. In his study in Nagari Bukit Bual, Sijunjung Regency, Noverman (2019) showed that the implementation of village fund management in Nagari Bukit Bual was not successful. Its management had not been in accordance with the laws and regulations that governed it. The unsuccessful implementation of village fund management was caused by the communication factor that was still not good and the human resource factor of the village apparatus was still not good either.

These studies appear to be representative of the situation in other villages. The situation in villages in Indonesia is complex. Hence, in 2019, the minister (PDPT) issued Regulation Number 11 of 2019 concerning the Priority of the Use of Village Funds in 2020.

Table 1: Village Fund Distribution Simulation



Source: <https://www.kemenkeu.go.id/media/6750/buku-saku-dana-desa.pdf> (retrieved on 11/09/2020)

The village fund policy emphasizes the principle of self-management so that autonomy and independence grow well within the village community itself. However, the Ministry of the PDPTT provides implementation rules for the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. Implementation instructions are made with the aim of ensuring that village funds are utilized according to their objectives and prevent potential irregularities. The DPDTT Ministerial Regulation Number 11 of 2019 concerning Priorities for the Use of Village Funds in 2020 stipulates four priorities for the use of village funds, including:

- 1) Improvement of life quality
- 2) Welfare improvement
- 3) Poverty alleviation; and
- 4) Improvement of public services

In this context, the study of the implementation of village fund policy is very necessary. According to Anderson in (Wahab, 2012), public policy is defined as an action that is intentionally carried out by an actor or a number of actors regarding the existence of certain problems faced. Meanwhile, Nugroho (2011) states that public policy refers to every decision made by the state as a strategy to realize the national goals. Public policy is a strategy to lead society at the beginning, put society into transition, get into society's expected model/condition.

The village fund policy certainly requires an implementation process. Policy implementation is basically a multi-organizational change or transformation, where changes implemented through this policy implementation strategy link various layers

of society (Mulyadi, 2015). The concept based on the implementation of public policy refers to actions to achieve goals that have been predetermined. So that, the implementation of public policy is one of the important stages in overall public policy cycle.

The implementation of Ministerial Regulation Number 11 of 2019 concerning the priority of the use of village funds is interesting to study considering that Indonesia has 34 provinces with thousands of villages. In South Sumatra Province, there are 13 regencies and 4 municipalities and oversees 212 sub-districts, 354 sub-subdistricts, and 2,589 villages. One area that implements the village fund policy in South Sumatra region is Lahat Regency, an area with the greatest potential.

In Lahat district (Kecamatan) as the central area of Lahat Regency, there are still villages that should have turned into Kelurahan. Another interesting fact about this district is that there are still transmigration villages. In accordance with the researcher's initial observation, there are three transmigration villages located in Lahat District, namely, Makartitama Village, Ulak Mas Village, and Girimuliya Village. These three villages are the most distant from the center of the capital.

In addition, Head of Lahat district shows that Ulak Mas Village and Makartitama Village are areas that are still lagging behind. So far, village programs have focused on improving the life quality, increasing welfare, and reducing poverty. The programs implemented in the two villages included Community-Based Drinking Water and Sanitation Provision

Program (PAMSIMAS), the village road access development program, and the village fund direct cash assistance program (BLT-DD). In addition, malnutrition is an indicator of poverty in both villages.

Therefore, the present study is to examine how the implementation of the Minister of Village Regulation Number 11 of 2019 concerning the Priority of the Use of Village Funds in 2020 in Makatitama Village and Ulak Mas Village is conducted. In a book entitled Policy Implementation and Bureacracy, Randall B. Repley and Grace A. Franklin (1986: 232-33 in Alfatih, 2010), there are three measures to determine the success of a public policy implementation:

- 1) Successful implementation requires implementor compliance.
- 2) Successful implementation is known from a good routine function and an absence of problems.
- 3) Successful implementation refers to the desired performance and impact of the policy.

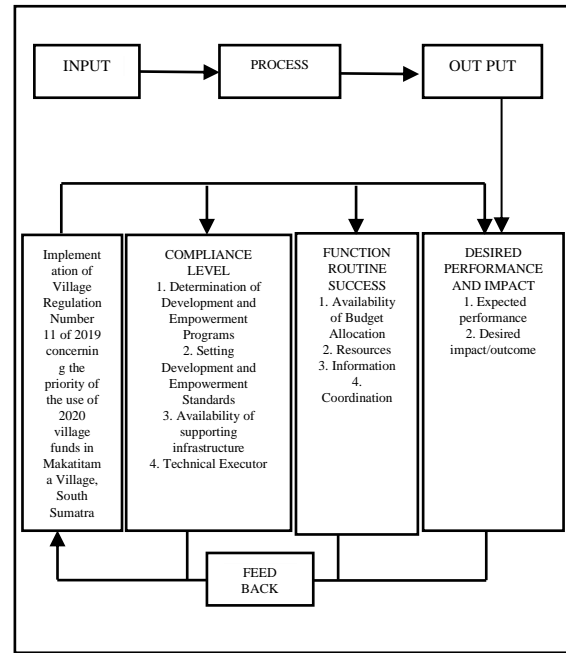
By referring to above explanation, the present study aimed to investigate how was the implementation of the Minister of Village Regulation Number 11 of 2019 concerning the Priority for the Use of Village Funds in 2020 in Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village.

METHODS

This study used descriptive qualitative research method, which was in the form of an exploratory research on field conditions and examined the truth of a premise carried out through data collection process. The researcher presented descriptive data in the form of written explanations, pictures, or paintings systematically, based on data obtained from facts occurred at field.

Due to the fact that the research question was about policy implementation, the focus of the research covered three aspects of implementation from Repley and Grace A. Franklin (1986) namely the compliance level of the implementor, how routine functions run, and performance and impact. It can be described by the following figure 1:

Figure 1: Study framework



Source: the Author formulation adapted from Randall B. Repley and Grace A. Franklin (1986: 232-33 in Alfatih, 2010)

The study was conducted in Makatitama Village and Ulak Mas Village. Therefore, this study was a case study. The author carefully examined programs, events, activities, processes, or groups of individuals in the process of implementing village fund priorities in accordance with the existing reality. Information was obtained from various sources that had been predetermined by the researcher and analyzed without taking sides (Creswell, 2013). The study used snowball sampling technique in determining the informants of this study. The use of snowball sampling technique was employed because the researcher assumed that the data sources that had been determined through purposive sampling had not been able to provide the expected data and information. Technically, the implementation of snowball sampling was that, at first, the researcher selected certain informants who had been considered to provide the necessary data (e.g., purposive sampling). Then, based on the data and information obtained from the previous sample, the researcher could determine other samples considered to provide more complete data. The informants used as sources of informant data in this study included:

- 1) Dul Rochim as Head of Makartitama Village (Key-Informant)
- 2) Talim as Head of Ulak Mas Village (Key-Informant)
- 3) Thomas as Treasurer of Makartitama Village
- 4) Sumiyati as Treasurer of Ulak Mas Village

- 5) Coordinator and Field Implementation Team of Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village

In addition to the interviews, this study used observation and documentation techniques in data collection. The obtained data were analyzed using qualitative analysis, meaning that the data obtained were exposed to an interpretation carried to attain adequate conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Minister of Village Regulation Number 11 of 2019 concerning Priority for the Use of Village Funds in 2020 in Makartitama Village, Lahat District, Lahat Regency.

1. Compliance Level

a. Determination of Development and Empowerment Programs

This policy was a program that provided a space for villages to develop their villages with funding sources from APBN. In the implementation process, of course, based on the provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2019 concerning Priorities for Use of Village Funds in 2020 CHAPTER II concerning Priorities for Use of Village Funds Article 5 including:

- 1) Improvement of life quality;
- 2) Welfare improvement;
- 3) Poverty alleviation; and
- 4) Improvement of public services

Based on the statement from the Head of Makartitama Village, there were several programs that had been implemented in support of the policy of the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2019 concerning Priorities for Use of Village Funds in 2020 CHAPTER II concerning Priorities for Use of Village Funds Article 5, including:

- 1) Construction of Concrete Roads in village area (Improving Welfare)
- 2) Construction of Multipurpose Buildings to support village and community activities (Improving Welfare)
- 3) Construction and maintenance of Drilling Wells (Improving Welfare)
- 4) Program for handling malnutrition (Physical Social Assistance) per week (Poverty Reduction)
- 5) Village Library Development (Improving Life Quality)

Of the five programs, only aspect of improving public services had not been included in the program. However, the village was aware of this because the current priority was only for the people of Makartitama village.

Meanwhile, the Head of Ulak Mas Village explained that several programs had been implemented

in support of the policy of the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2019 concerning Priorities for Use of Village Funds in 2020 CHAPTER II concerning Priorities for Use of Village Funds Article 5, including:

- 1) Drilling Well Community-Based Drinking Water and Sanitation Provision Program (PAMSIMAS),
- 2) The village ring road access development program, and
- 3) Program for providing direct village fund cash assistance (BLT-DD) due to the impact of covid-19.

This is not much different from the implementation of the program in Makartitama Village, where of the 3 programs only aspect of improving public services had not been used as programs in succeeding the policy.

b. Setting Development and Empowerment Standards

The program standards, both development and empowerment programs, were based on RAPB of Makartitama Village and RAPB of Ulak Mas Village. Based on the explanation from the Head of Planning Affairs for Makartitama Village, the implementation was carried out based on the standards of development work from the Ministry of Public Works, so that the buildings being constructed had maximum benefits and were sturdy and durable for a long period of time. Meanwhile, for empowerment standards, according to the explanation from the Head of the Makartitama Village Welfare Section, there was a selection process for people who were truly in the poor category and had a record of malnutrition for their children. This also certainly paid attention to the considerations and recommendations of the Lahat Regency Social Service that also monitored the condition of the village community.

Meanwhile, the Head of Village Planning Affairs explained that the physical development program was carried out with the building standards set in RAPB, which in fact referred to the standards of the Ministry of Public Works. Meanwhile, the Covid-19 impact mitigation program was determined according to the needs of the village community at this time that was becoming a crisis or was of a survival nature in the form of basic material assistance for Ulak Mas Village community.

c. Availability of Supporting Infrastructure

The process of implementing development and empowerment programs must have facilities and infrastructure as supporting tools in its implementation. According to an explanation from the Head of Administrative and General Affairs of the Makartitama Village, the process of implementing the development of any tools needed to support it had been provided from the beginning, so that if there was a shortage of tools or equipment, the general sector would assist its efforts in

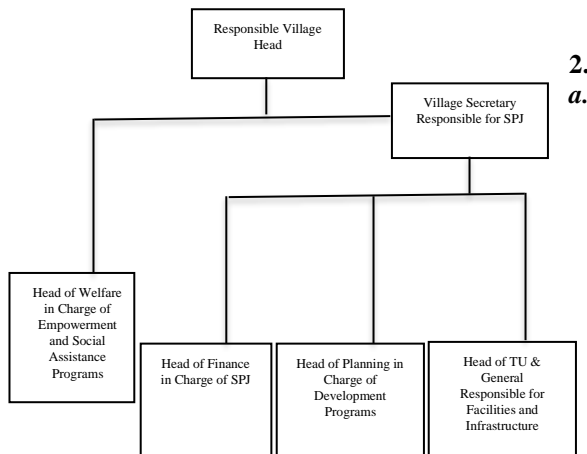
meeting these needs. Meanwhile, as a supporter of the empowerment program, it only required personnel to distribute weekly assistance, so that in this program the village government cooperated with village youth who were members of "Karang Taruna" organization.

Meanwhile, the Head of Administrative and General Affairs of Ulak Mas Village stated that the availability of development facilities had been provided by the partner/contractor. Meanwhile, for supporting facilities for BLT-DD program, it did not require many tools, but by cooperating with village officials and Village Consultative Body for the process of shopping for basic goods given to village communities and distributing them directly to the homes of BLT-DD recipients, Ulak Mas Village.

d. Technical Implementer

According to the technical implementer, according to the explanation from the Head of Makartitama Village, there were several fields dealing with the government structure in Makartitama Village. Figure 2 shows the technical implementer in Makartitama Village.

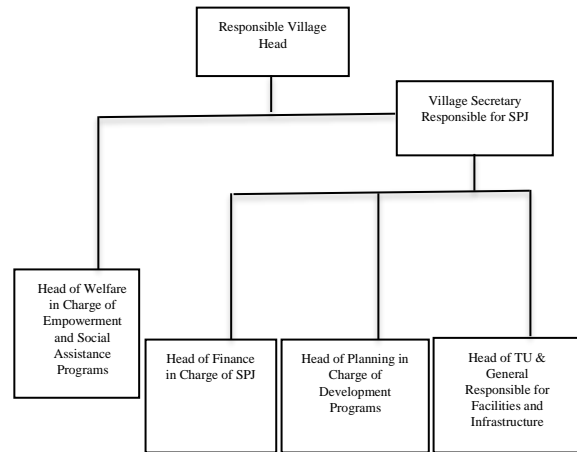
Figure 2. Technical Implementer in Makartitama Village



Source: The Makartitama Village Office, 2020

Similar to Makartitama Village, the technical implementer in Ulak Mas Village stated that there were several fields dealing with the government structure in Ulak Mas Village. Figure 3 shows that the technical implementer in Ulak Mas Village.

Figure 3. Technical Implementer in Ulak Mas Village



Source: The Ulak Mas Village office, 2020

In accordance to Figure2 and Figure 3, not all stakeholders were responsible for routine technical implementation of village funds, of which only a few village government officials utilized the self-help/self-management of the communities of the two villages themselves in the implementation process.

2. Good Routine Function

a. Availability of Budget Allocation

In connection with the budget from the development and empowerment program in Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village, the Heads of Financial Affairs/Village Treasurer explained that the budget fully used village funds sourced from APBN that was disbursed in three stages in a year. In addition, there was also some assistance from the government of South Sumatera Province. So that, the program would be implemented based on the disbursement of village fund allocations that were available every four months and were transferred directly from the central government to Lahat regency government and forwarded to Makartitama Village account. Provisions for the distribution of village funds according to Government Regulation Number 60 of 2014 article 16 paragraph 1 were conducted in three stages namely Phase I of 40%, Phase II by 40%, and Phase III of 20%.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the budget that should have been worth Rp. 797,000,000 had to be reduced as a result of the local government's efforts to deal with the problem of worldwide Covid-19 outbreak. So that, the village funds available in 2020 were only Rp. 786 million from the budget reduction due to the covid-19 pandemic in Makartitama Village. Meanwhile, in Ulak Mas Village, the budget that should have been worth Rp.793,000,000 had to be reduced as a result of the local government's efforts to deal with the

worldwide Covid-19 outbreak. So that, the village funds available in 2020 were only Rp. 782,000,000.

b. Resources

Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village utilized self-help or self-management in the process of implementing development and empowerment. In connection with the process of constructing the drilling well in Ulak Mas Village, the construction partner or contractor was still used.

Consequently, the implementing resources for development both from the construction of concrete roads in the village area, construction of multipurpose buildings, construction and maintenance of drilling wells, and construction of village libraries utilized human resources from Makartitama Village community itself, because in addition to providing work space for the village community themselves through empowerment. In terms of wages allocated to development personnel, it was also relatively lower than seeking workers from outside the village.

Meanwhile, in the process of empowering the activities of Malnutrition Handling Program (Physical Social Assistance) and COVID-19 basic needs assistance, they utilized energy from village officials and BPD with the assistance of village youth with an emphasis on volunteering, so that villages only needed to allocate social assistance funds without any costs for distribution personnel.

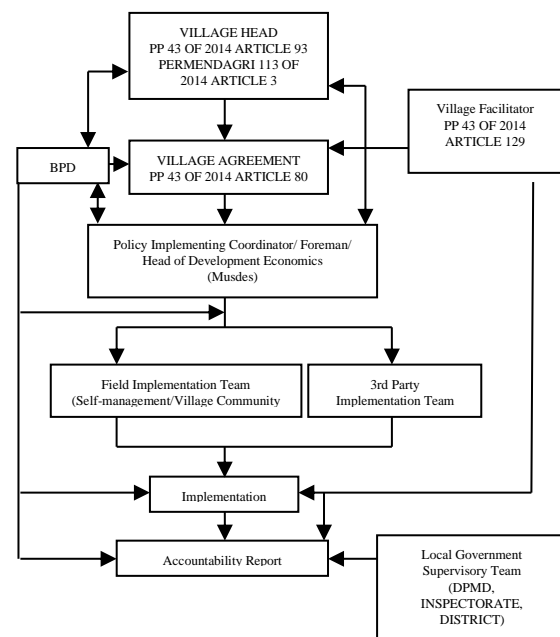
c. Information

The distribution of information and village transparency in both Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village had been attempted through printed banners that were displayed directly in front of the village office. In addition, the village government also provided information through village deliberation activities in which various elements of village representatives were also present in these activities.

d. Coordination

The process of implementing the program itself was currently still hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Head of Makartitama Village Head and Ulak Mas Village explained that both the consultation and the communication process outside the village used gadget/smartphone application and Zoom meeting so that the process continued even though there were several hindered activities. Figure 4 illustrates that the coordination chart of village funds in Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village:

Figure 4. Coordination Structure of Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village.



Source: the Office of village community empowerment, Lahat Regency, 2020

3. Expected Performance and Impact

a. Expected Performance

Referring to the expectations of the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2019 concerning Priority for the Use of Village Funds in 2020 carried out in Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village, Lahat District, Lahat Regency, South Sumatra Province, the determination of priorities for development and empowerment programs still prioritized improving people's life quality, improving welfare, and reducing poverty. Meanwhile, the improvement of public services was carried out if the aspects made through development and empowerment programs had been determined.

Meanwhile, an unexpected problem arose namely the COVID-19 pandemic that had been a national epidemic so that all activities were limited and also impacted on the development process. According to the explanation of the Head of the Planning Department, the implementation had been running for 2 months early 2020, namely in January and February. However, when entering March until now, this process was hampered as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was not only causing obstacles, but also became a factor for several programs to stop completely, such as the construction of village libraries and the construction of multipurpose buildings.

Therefore, Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village placed more emphasis on more important programs that must be implemented first, namely the construction of concrete roads in the village area, construction and maintenance of drilling wells, and the program for handling malnutrition (Physical Social Assistance) per week. Meanwhile, Ulak Mas Village was still carrying out its three programs despite the reduction in the village funds.

b. Expected Effect/Outcome

Of the five Makartitama Village government programs, only 3 had been running until now. So, the present study only focused on the 3 programs related to the impact/outcome of implementing the program. The following points were the explanation from the Heads of Villages and the Head of Planning Affairs regarding the expected impact of the village fund program in Makartitama Village:

- 1) Construction of Concrete Roads in the village area was a program that helped to improve the welfare of rural communities, where roads became access to facilitate all village community activities both from economic, cultural, and social perspective. The process had been running although it had not been completed. Moreover, the community was also enthusiastic about supporting this program because with good road access they were able to mobile more comfortably.
- 2) Drilling well construction and maintenance was a program to improve the welfare of rural communities, where the availability of clean water helped people, especially those who did not have wells. In addition to helping the community with the existence and maintenance of springs provided by the village, drilled wells also had a large capacity for water exploration so that the village community did not have to worry about the need for clean water.
- 3) The weekly program for handling malnutrition (Physical Social Assistance) was a form of poverty alleviation for rural communities, through which it was expected that the nutrition of rural communities could be fulfilled through the fulfillment of balanced nutrition in the form of social food assistance every week.

In addition, the three Ulak Mas village government programs were currently in progress. The following points were the explanation from the Head of the Village and the Head of Planning Affairs regarding the expected impact of the village fund program in Ulak Mas Village:

- 1) The village ring road access development program was a program that helped to improve the welfare of rural communities. The process had been running, although it had not been completed, the community was also enthusiastic about supporting this program because with adequate road access, it could support the villager' economic activities.

- 2) The drilled well community-based drinking water and sanitation provision program (PAMSIMAS) was a program to improve the welfare of rural communities, where the availability of clean water could help people, especially those who did not have wells.
- 3) The program for providing direct village cash assistance (BLT-DD) due to the impact of COVID-19 was a response to the quality of life of rural communities as a result of the pandemic, through which it was expected that the food needs of rural communities could be fulfilled as a result of social restrictions in Ulak Mas Village.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of the study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2019 concerning Priorities for the Use of Village Funds in 2020 carried out in Makartitama Village and Ulak Mas Village, Lahat District, Lahat Regency, South Sumatra Province, has not been fully completed with the provisions set by the minister of PDPT. This can be seen from the program that has been mutually agreed upon by the village government and the community in the two villages that focuses more on three aspects, namely:

- 1) Improvement of life quality;
- 2) Welfare improvement; and
- 3) Poverty alleviation

Meanwhile, the village fund program based on the aspect of improving public services in the two villages has not been implemented. This is because the condition of the village is still lagging behind both in terms of basic needs to the problem of poverty. Meanwhile, the implementation process, from the sources of funds and resources to coordination, has been in accordance with the expectations, which can be seen from the process of implementing the programs from each village. Although the three programs implemented in Ulak Mas Village are conducted well, Makartitama Village program is stopped and still no certainty about its continuation. The programs included the Construction of Multipurpose Building to support village and community activities and Village Library Construction. This is due to two factors, namely as a result of the impact of the covid-19 pandemic that almost influences various activities especially in the government and the reduction of village fund budget as a continuation of the covid-19 pandemic.

Considering that the village fund policy is routine in nature, but the implementation of the policy is dynamic due to the rapidly changing community situation, a study on implementation must be carried out regularly especially in Lahat Regency area. Both the

central government and the village government need to evaluate the not yet implemented spending priorities on improving public services. In addition, in Makatitama Village, there are two programs that have been hampered due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so there is a

need for anticipatory steps to deal with similar things in the future.

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