



## The Effectiveness of Village Funds in Bridge Infrastructure Development: A Case Study in Sugihwaras Village

Firdha Irzatullaila<sup>1\*</sup>, Dwiki Adi Putra<sup>2</sup>, Doris Febriyanti<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Ilmu Pemerintahan, Universitas Indo Global Mandiri Palembang,

Email : [irzatullailafirdha@gmail.com](mailto:irzatullailafirdha@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

This research is titled "Effectiveness of Village Fund Distribution for Infrastructure Development in Sugih Waras Village, Muara Sugihan District, Banyuasin Regency." The study aims to evaluate the extent to which village fund distribution contributes to infrastructure development and community welfare. The methodology employed is a qualitative approach, with data collection through interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings indicate that village funds have been effectively utilized for infrastructure development, such as bridges and health posts, which are relevant to community needs. Community involvement in village deliberations demonstrates a commitment to transparency and accountability. However, challenges related to infrastructure maintenance and the balance between development and community empowerment require further attention. This study recommends enhancing communication and collaboration between the village government and the community to achieve sustainable development.

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the ways used by the government to improve the welfare of the community in the village through infrastructure development is the Village Fund. Village funds are financial budgets sourced from the State Budget which are specifically intended for villages. These funds are then channeled through the Regency/City APBD, and are used to fund government administration, implementation of development projects, training programs for the community, and community empowerment.

Community involvement is essential to setting development priorities. Given that the Village Head has not taken the initiative to involve the community in this deliberation, where their input is very important to encourage development, it can be concluded that community involvement.

After the planning, the village submitted an official request to the Regional Government to allocate the Village Fund. The Regional Government conducts a thorough evaluation by assessing the limited Human Resources in the Village, then determining the amount of the budget depending on the submission of the necessary documentation which must be comprehensive and in line with the set criteria. In addition, it is important to ensure that the funds disbursed are proportional to the specific needs of the Village.

A report from the Central Statistics Agency shows that infrastructure development in rural areas has a great influence in improving accessibility and stimulating local economic growth. A number of studies have shown that good and targeted distribution of village funds can significantly increase the village development index in various regions in Indonesia. In line with Rondinelli's statement, as quoted from the work (Rostow, 1990) "History, Politics, and Economic Theory" it is stated that three important indicators govern the success of the management of the Village Fund: planning, implementation, and accountability reporting. These elements must be supported by supporting factors that are essential for effective management, such as participatory engagement, transparency, selectivity, community engagement, efficiency, and sustainability.

Rural demographic segments continue to need empowerment, which positions them as objects of development, while simultaneously, rural residents occupy an important role as key actors or catalysts in the rural and national development process. However, many villages throughout Indonesia, including Sugih Waras Village, still lack adequate infrastructure.

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In the opinion of the community, the village head is responsible for the village budget and provides funds for infrastructure development. With the existence of greater development in the village. This fulfills the wishes of the community. In other villages, infrastructure development may not be just their main need, their main desire, but in Sugih Waras Village, the community focuses on physical development and empowerment. The Village Funds used in Sugih Waras Village are used for physical development and empowerment. Physical development in Sugih Village is sane such as posyandu, sports building buildings, hamlet hall buildings, bridges, and markets.

Sugih Waras Village shows significant deficiencies in its infrastructure development, thus hindering its classification as a developed village, mainly due to deficiencies in development, knowledge dissemination and road accessibility, which are further exacerbated by the remoteness of the area, with the village located 90 kilometers from the main highway. The subsequent geographical context of Sugih Waras Village is outlined below:



Figure 1. Geographical Location of Sugih Sanas Village

Source: (google.com 2024)

Figure 1. above shows road access to Sugih Waras Village, Muara Sugihan District which takes some time about 5 hours or more to get to the main road to the city of Palembang. It can be seen in the picture that it is very far to get to Sugih Waras Village where the road access is also very difficult because the road in Sugih Waras Village is still a dirt road, when it rains it is still very difficult. Therefore, access to road construction improvements in Sugih Waras Village is very influential for the people of Sugih Waras Village.

Infrastructure development in the village remains insufficient and requires further improvement to meet the needs of the population adequately. Nonetheless, we must ask whether Sugih Waras Village has the ability to meet the criteria of a developing village indication, which serves as a major reason for the researchers' investigation of the dynamics that exist in Sugih Waras Village. The challenges faced by the Village include issues related to development, economic stability, and road accessibility, in addition to assessing the effectiveness and targeting of the Village Fund Distribution for infrastructure development.

The majority of the residents of Sugih Waras Village are farmers and traders. The people in this village have problems in accessing wooden or bamboo bridges, because the wooden or wooden bridges can collapse and slippery and the road is still dirty and when it rains, the road is difficult. People experience difficulties in carrying out daily activities, going to markets, schools and health facilities. Because road access is difficult and the travel time to reach the destination is long. Because the problems of the community in Sugih Waras Village still require infrastructure development.

The infrastructure improvements carried out in Sugih Waras Village, which are felt by the residents of Sugih Waras, include the construction of bridges, road repairs, the construction of sports facilities (GOR), and the provision of posyandu services, bridges. Such real development is very important within the Village, as it serves to encourage the growth and prosperity of the village community.

From observations made by researchers in Sugih Waras Village which consists of four hamlets, it is estimated that the population of Sugih Waras Village in Muara Sugihan District is around 2,017 people, located in an area of about 18.05 km<sup>2</sup> Sugih Waras Village is characterized as a developing village.

Therefore, given the findings of this study, it is very important for the government to prioritize the preferences expressed by the residents of Sugih Waras Village. This approach will facilitate the progress of the Village, ensuring that it is not left behind in terms of infrastructure development compared to other Villages. In addition, there may also be challenges related to human resources (HR) due to low levels of education and inadequate knowledge among villagers, which require focused government interventions to grow a more advanced and innovative generation.

In this study, infrastructure refers to the physical structures and facilities that are crucial to support various activities and services in Sugih Waras Village. Some criteria for assessing the condition of infrastructure include the type and condition of bridges, drainage, roads that are generally still dirty or muddy, and ease of access to important locations such as markets, schools, and health facilities. In addition, the time it takes to reach these places is also an important factor.

Based on these issues, it became clear that the work programs and infrastructure development initiatives in Sugih Waras Village could not be considered effective, with certain aspects not achieving the intended targets in implementation and construction. Therefore, the author has developed an interest in investigating the allocation of village funds directed to infrastructure development in Sugih Waras Village in 2024, to help measure the effectiveness of the use of funds in increasing access to basic infrastructure, have a direct effect on the quality of life of the village community and assess the level of community involvement in decision-making which is important to ensure funds are used according to the needs of the community, building targeted and sustainable infrastructure, to encourage local economic growth.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The methodological approach used in this study is qualitative. The qualitative approach is characterized by its focus on a deep understanding of social realities through the acquisition of descriptive data. The qualitative methodology was chosen for its suitability for this study, informed by considerations of time limits, accuracy, feasibility, instruments used, and data analysis processes. The approach used takes the form of descriptive research.

In this descriptive investigation, the researchers present the phenomenon as it is, without any manipulative influence or alteration on the research subject, with the aim of offering a transparent depiction of how village funds are allocated and their social impact. Using qualitative methods and descriptive approaches, this study aspires to provide an in-depth understanding of the efficacy of the distribution of village funds for infrastructure development in Sugih Waras Village, located in Muara Sugihan District, Banyuasin Regency.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The distribution of village funds is the process of allocating and using funds provided by the central and regional governments to support the development and empowerment of communities in the village. The funds received are used for various infrastructure projects, such as repairing damaged roads to improve accessibility, building bridges to connect between regions to facilitate transportation. The construction of bridges can increase new business opportunities because it makes roads more accessible (Efendi and Hendarto, 2014). As is the case in Sugih Waras Village, this is a water area where the community needs the construction of a bridge.

Many initiatives for village development have been undertaken over the years, but none have succeeded in improving the quality of life of villagers. Therefore, the existence of village development goals and targets that can help achieve development results can be seen as a step to carry out overall and specific development in the village. The availability of this infrastructure can have an impact on increasing people's access to resources. As a result, access to resource productivity is improved, which in turn drives economic growth. (Sudaryadi, 2007).

Based on Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning villages, which includes village government management, development implementation, community strengthening, and village empowerment, the purpose of village development is to improve the welfare of the community as a whole. In this context, the village government has responsibilities as a government manager, which includes decision-making, coordination, communication, and supervision of the implementation of development activities (Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages). The Village Head of Sugih Waras Village in Improving Development in Sugih Waras Village in determining the village development planning is good enough because it has involved the people of Sugih Waras Village itself. It is very important to identify development needs in the community to prevent deviations from the goals during development planning. The Head of Sugih Waras Village in preparing the plan also selects and determines the right development program with the needs of the community, through collecting aspirations or input from residents in every village deliberation or the implementation of musrembang and musdus in the village.

In the hamlet deliberation regarding the discussion in the implementation of village fund activities in Sugih Waras Village which was attended by the head of the hamlet, local BPD and community leaders who discussed the implementation of development activities, development activities, and coaching activities. The construction is for road and bridge repairs. This is also how the researcher conducted research by observing in Sugih Waras Village in the use of village funds for infrastructure development.

In this study, the author wants to explore the effectiveness of distributing village funds for infrastructure development in Sugih Waras Village. The author will assess whether the funds are used effectively and on target in Sugih Waras Village, as well as whether this village can develop better than before. Some of the planned infrastructure includes the construction of three production and drainage bridges in front of the village office. The author will also assess whether the use of these funds has resulted in a good development program or not, as well as make observations through documentation related to development in Sugih Waras Village.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of a research conducted by the researcher entitled The Effectiveness of Distributing Village Funds for Infrastructure Development in Sugih Waras Village, Muara Sugihan District, Banyuasin Regency in 2024 based on the results of the researcher's analysis, it was concluded that the distribution of Village Funds in Sugih Waras Village is effective in building infrastructure in accordance with the needs of the community, with a commitment to continue to increase transparency and community involvement. The distribution of village funds for infrastructure development in Sugih Waras Village shows significant achievements. Active community involvement, good collaboration between stakeholders, and the ability to adapt to challenges make the project effective and relevant to the needs of the community. Despite the challenges in maintenance and balance between development and empowerment, the commitment of all parties to collaborate ensures the success and sustainability of infrastructure development in Sugih Waras Village. The results of the research obtained by the researcher from these 3 indicators, the researcher explained as follows:

### Goal achievement

The indicator of achieving this goal concludes that the use of the Village Fund has succeeded in meeting the set targets. In the construction of infrastructure, including bridges, drainage (waterways) and posyandu, it shows good quality and relevance to the needs of the community. The infrastructure built has succeeded in improving mobility and accessibility, providing benefits for people's daily lives. Village funds are used effectively to meet the needs of the community in Sugih Waras Village, by involving the community in the planning process through deliberation. The proposals submitted by the community are well accommodated, and ensure that development priorities are in line with local needs.

### Integrations

The Integration Indicator includes coordination between stakeholders, especially between the village government and the Village Consultative Body (BPD) in Sugih Waras Village in a synergistic planning process, through village deliberations (musdes) and hamlet deliberations (musdus), which shows that the aspirations of the village community are well accommodated. The community feels involved in every stage, but there is still a need to increase understanding of the use of village funds and this Synergy strengthens the active participation of the people of Sugih Waras Village in development.

### Adaptation

This adaptation indicator based on the results of interviews and observations conducted by researchers concluded the ability of the village government to adjust the use of Village Funds to changes in community needs. The village head, Sugih Waras, admitted that there are challenges in meeting the ever-changing wishes of the community. Discretionary policies and village deliberations are a way to accommodate urgent needs. The people of Sugih Waras Village also responded positively to the changes in infrastructure, although some obstacles in maintenance still need to be overcome such as mutual cooperation and the desire to maintain infrastructure as a sign of the community's commitment to support sustainable development.

## SUGGESTIONS

The author's suggestions given as input in the effectiveness of distributing village funds for infrastructure development in Sugih Waras Village, Muara Sugihan District, Banyuasin Regency are as follows:

The Sugih Waras Village Government is advised to improve communication with the community. So that the Village Government strengthens the infrastructure maintenance system that has been built through special budget allocation and community involvement in maintenance activities. Through training and socialization on the use of Village Funds, the community can better understand the process and allocation of funds carried out.

The community must continue to be involved in every stage of project planning and implementation, by increasing village deliberations and more systematic aspiration management to accommodate needs. Maintenance of bridges and other infrastructure must also be a priority, where the village government can develop routine maintenance programs and involve the community in gotong royong activities. To increase the resilience of the bridge, it is necessary to evaluate and improve the structural design, as well as training for local workers on good construction techniques. Given the limitations of village funds, village governments are advised to seek additional funding sources from the central government, the province, or through cooperation with donor and private institutions. In addition, a structured monitoring and evaluation system needs to be implemented to assess the effectiveness of the use of village funds and the impact of infrastructure projects, by continuously monitoring feedback from the community.

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