

THE ROLE OF THE SUBDISTRICT HEAD IN IMPROVING THE STATUS OF UNDERDEVELOPED VILLAGES TO INDEPENDENT VILLAGES IN SUKA BANGUN SUBDISTRICT, CENTRAL TAPANULI REGENCY

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Abstract

The indicators in the Village Development Index are designed to achieve advanced and self-sufficient villages through sustainable development, encompassing social, economic, and ecological aspects. This index consists of the Social Resilience Index (IKS), the Economic Resilience Index (IKE), and the Environmental Resilience Index (IKL). This study aims to analyze the role of the sub-district head (camat) in improving the status of underdeveloped villages into self-sufficient villages in Suka Bangun Sub-district, Central Tapanuli Regency, as well as to identify the challenges faced. The camat plays a role in guiding village heads and officials, enhancing public services, optimizing village potential, and encouraging community participation in planning and implementing development initiatives. Under the camat's direction, infrastructure improvements, such as village roads, have also begun to materialize. The challenges encountered include limited facilities and infrastructure, particularly road infrastructure, as well as the underutilization of village potential by the community. Additionally, community participation in proposing development programs remains low, as seen in their passive engagement in village development planning meetings (musrenbang).

Keywords: Role, Status, Underdeveloped Villages, Self-Sufficient Villages

Abstrak

Indikator dalam Indeks Desa Membangun dikembangkan untuk mencapai desa maju dan mandiri melalui pembangunan berkelanjutan, mencakup aspek sosial, ekonomi, dan ekologi. Indeks ini terdiri dari Indeks Ketahanan Sosial (IKS), Indeks Ketahanan Ekonomi (IKE), dan Indeks Ketahanan Lingkungan (IKL). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran camat dalam meningkatkan status desa tertinggal menjadi desa mandiri di Kecamatan Suka Bangun, Kabupaten Tapanuli Tengah, serta mengidentifikasi kendala yang dihadapi. Camat berperan dalam membina kepala desa dan aparatur desa, meningkatkan pelayanan masyarakat, mengoptimalkan potensi desa, serta mendorong partisipasi masyarakat dalam perencanaan dan pelaksanaan pembangunan. Berkat arahan camat, perbaikan infrastruktur seperti jalan desa juga mulai terwujud. Kendala yang dihadapi antara lain keterbatasan sarana dan prasarana, terutama infrastruktur jalan, serta rendahnya pemanfaatan potensi desa oleh masyarakat. Selain itu, partisipasi masyarakat dalam pengajuan program

pembangunan masih minim, terlihat dari sikap pasif dalam musyawarah perencanaan pembangunan desa (musrenbang).

Kata Kunci: Peranan, Status, Desa Tertinggal, Desa Mandiri.

INTRODUCTION

The government is responsible for achieving the goals of the Indonesian nation, including advancing the general welfare, as stated in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, paragraph IV. As a decentralized country, Indonesia grants authority to regional governments to implement regional autonomy. The subdistrict (Kecamatan) is a regional apparatus equivalent to regional services and technical institutions, as regulated in Article 120 of Law No. 23 of 2014 on Regional Government.

Development in underdeveloped regions is a planned effort to improve the quality of life of communities in areas with various social, economic, and physical limitations, so they can be on par with other regions in Indonesia. Unlike poverty alleviation, this development encompasses economic, social, cultural, and security aspects. The government needs to give special attention and support to accelerate development in regions with underdeveloped conditions, including in terms of infrastructure and regional finances.

Development is the effort or series of planned growth and changes consciously carried out by a nation, state, and government towards modernization in the framework of national development (Agus Suryono: 2010).

Rural development must be carried out in accordance with its characteristics and includes four main strategies that are interrelated. First, empowering the village economy through capital, technology, and marketing to enhance community independence. Second, improving the quality of human resources to make them more productive and competitive. Third, building infrastructure, especially transportation, which plays a crucial role in overcoming the isolation of villages. Fourth, strengthening village institutions, both formal and informal, to support services and the economy, such as financial institutions.

Improving welfare is part of equitable development, especially in underdeveloped areas that are generally geographically isolated. The subdistrict head (Camat) plays an important role in fostering and supervising village governance to ensure orderly administration. Although villages have their own autonomy with the village head as the executive directly elected by the community, the subdistrict head still performs a supervisory function.

Equitable development is a government goal aimed at reducing economic and social disparities. This aligns with the 1945 Constitution, which emphasizes that the state is responsible for advancing the general welfare. Through equitable development throughout Indonesia, it is hoped that progress and welfare will be achieved, particularly in the economic sector.

According to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Updating the Village Development Status in the 2020 Village Development Index (IDM), the Village Development Index (IDM) is a Composite Index formed based on three indices: the social resilience index, the economic resilience index, and the ecological/environmental resilience index. The indicators of the Village Development Index consist of: 1. IKS: Social Resilience Index 2. IKE: Economic Resilience Index 3. IKL: Environmental Resilience Index.

Suka Bangun Subdistrict, Central Tapanuli Regency, is categorized as an underdeveloped subdistrict based on the 2020 Village Development Index (IDM), with a ranking of 5,769 and an average score of 0.5191. This subdistrict covers an area of 49.37 km² with a population of 3,849 people. Of the six villages, three are classified as underdeveloped

(Pulo Pakkat II, Janjia Maria, and Sihadatuon), while the other three are developing (Tebing Tinggi, Pulo Pakkat I, and Sihapas).

The development of underdeveloped villages in Suka Bangun Subdistrict needs to be improved due to limited infrastructure, lack of job opportunities, as well as low levels of education and community participation in development. Educational facilities are still minimal, with only four elementary schools and one junior high school available.

The subdistrict head (Camat) plays an important role in promoting equitable development through tasks such as government coordination, community empowerment, infrastructure maintenance, and supervision of village governance. Efforts to develop underdeveloped villages include maintaining and constructing roads to improve transportation and boost the local economy. Therefore, this study focuses on the role of the subdistrict head in upgrading the status of underdeveloped villages to independent villages in Suka Bangun Subdistrict.

METHOD

The research method used in this study is qualitative research, specifically descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research with an analytical descriptive approach is a method aimed at understanding social phenomena in depth by using data in the form of words and actions. The analytical descriptive approach is used to systematically describe the conditions under study and analyze the facts based on the research findings (Puansah et al., 2022), (Puansah et al., 2023), (Puansah & Ritonga, 2020). The informants in this study are the Elected Village Head, Amran Dalimunte's Success Team, the Head of the Hamlet, and the community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of the Subdistrict Head (Camat)

In sociology, a role is a dynamic aspect in the form of actions or behaviors of a person in carrying out their rights and obligations according to their position. If the role is carried out well, it is expected to meet the expectations of oneself and the surrounding environment (Soerjono Soekanto: 2022).

The subdistrict head (Camat) is the head of the regional government under the regent (mayor) who leads the subdistrict. As a component of the government, the subdistrict head is one of the government leaders who leads the subdistrict government organization and must understand the tasks that need to be carried out. Simply put, the role of the subdistrict head can be defined as a civil servant given the role of assisting the regent/mayor in administering governance, development, and fostering community life within the subdistrict.

Underdeveloped Villages

According to the Regulation of the Minister of Village, Development of Underdeveloped Regions, and Transmigration of the Republic of Indonesia Number 11 of 2019 concerning the Priorities for the Use of Village Funds in 2020, it is stated that a village is a community unit of law, including traditional villages or those called by other names, hereinafter referred to as a Village, which has territorial boundaries and is authorized to regulate and manage governmental affairs and the interests of the local community based on community initiatives, customary rights, and/or traditional rights that are recognized and respected in the system of government of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

An underdeveloped village, on the other hand, is a village that possesses social, economic, and ecological resource potential but has not yet, or is lacking in managing it to improve the welfare of the village community, the quality of human life, and is experiencing poverty in various forms.

Underdeveloped Villages and/or Very Underdeveloped Villages prioritize village development activities in the following areas:

1. Procurement, construction, development, and maintenance of basic infrastructure; and
2. Development, expansion, and maintenance of economic infrastructure, as well as procurement of facilities for production, distribution, and marketing, aimed at efforts to establish productive-scale agricultural and/or fishery businesses, agricultural and/or fishery businesses for food security, and other economic ventures focused on the formation and development of superior village products and/or superior rural area products

At the same time, prioritizing community empowerment activities to improve the economic welfare of village communities, which include:

1. Establishing Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) and/or Joint Village-Owned Enterprises through capital investment, management of production, distribution, and marketing for productive-scale agricultural businesses and other economic ventures focused on the formation and development of superior village products and/or superior rural area products.
2. Establishing economic ventures for citizens/groups, and/or other village community economic institutions through access to capital managed by BUMDes and/or the Village-Owned Enterprises, managing production, distribution, and marketing for productive-scale agricultural businesses and other economic ventures focused on the formation and development of superior village products and/or superior rural area products.
3. Establishing economic ventures through the utilization of natural resources and the application of appropriate technology; and
4. Opening job opportunities to meet the livelihood needs of the village community in a sustainable manner.

From the researcher's observation, the issues in Suka Bangun Subdistrict, Central Tapanuli Regency, include inadequate facilities and infrastructure, such as roads that are mostly hardened (gravel, stones, etc.), high unemployment due to the lack of job opportunities, as the agricultural area has no industrial development to generate jobs. There is also a low level of education, as both formal and informal schools are limited; according to BPS data, there are only 4 (four) elementary schools and 1 (one) junior high school. Furthermore, there are insufficient facilities to support students, even though education is one of the means to improve human resources, skills, and knowledge. There is also low community participation in development.

The role of the subdistrict head (Camat) in equitable development is focused on community empowerment and the maintenance of public service infrastructure, such as the community health center (puskesmas), to improve healthcare services for the community. By achieving good health, community participation in development increases, leading to more equitable development and improved community welfare. The development in Suka Bangun Subdistrict, especially in underdeveloped villages, includes road maintenance by repairing damaged roads, maintaining well-established roads, and constructing concrete-paved roads to connect the villages.

The researcher conducted interviews with the Subdistrict Head of Suka Bangun, Parulian Lubis, and the Head of Community Empowerment, Hotma Manurung, regarding the development of underdeveloped villages. The interview results showed that the agricultural sector is the main potential that will be enhanced to improve productivity and competitiveness. Guidance for village heads is carried out through the Village Development Planning Meeting

(Musrenbang Desa), which aims to identify and prioritize village development programs. The subdistrict head also encourages community participation in Musrenbang to ensure that their needs are properly addressed.

In the interview, the subdistrict head and the head of the Department of Community Empowerment, Parulian Lubis and Hotma Manurung, mentioned that they have programs to increase community income, health standards, and social welfare as indicators to elevate the status of underdeveloped villages to independent villages. The subdistrict head plays a key role in guiding village heads to optimize village potential through planning, implementation, and maintenance of development outcomes.

The subdistrict head plays an important role in providing direction to village heads and village officials, including involving the community in village development. One of the mechanisms used is Musrenbang (Village Development Planning Meeting), which involves various components of the community to create better development solutions. The subdistrict head also ensures that the community is actively involved in development planning by instructing village heads to invite residents to Musrenbang.

Some of the challenges identified in the interviews include the low utilization of village potential by the community, inadequate infrastructure, and limited funding. Additionally, bureaucratic issues that slow down program implementation were revealed by the village heads as significant obstacles. The main issue faced in advancing underdeveloped villages is the infrastructure, which still requires substantial improvement, such as damaged and hard-to-access roads, which are the main barriers to village development efforts. Infrastructure improvements are crucial to supporting community mobility and agricultural product distribution.

To improve the village economy, the subdistrict head focuses on infrastructure development that facilitates the distribution of agricultural products. The subdistrict head also provides training and extension services to the community to enhance agricultural productivity, which is expected to have a positive impact on the welfare of the village community. Additionally, the subdistrict head motivates residents to be more diligent in managing agricultural land and optimizing village fund programs by involving the community in village infrastructure development.

The subdistrict head also works to boost the village economy by channeling agricultural products to markets outside the village. Efforts to improve underdeveloped village facilities are focused on improving road access to connect the village with the nearest economic center. Overall, the subdistrict head strives to create job opportunities and ensure that development programs are implemented in a way that actively involves the community at every stage.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, the conclusions can be drawn as follows:

1. The Role of the Subdistrict Head in Improving the Status of Underdeveloped Villages: The Subdistrict Head of Suka Bangun, Tapanuli Tengah, plays an essential role in mentoring village heads and village apparatus in Pulu Pakkat II Village, Janji Maria Village, and Sihadatuon Village to enhance public services. Through the subdistrict head's guidance, the community is now involved in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of village development, as seen in the Village Development Planning Meeting (Musrenbang Desa) that includes all village components. One tangible result of the subdistrict head's guidance is the improvement of the village roads, which were previously in poor condition but have started to improve thanks to the use of village funds.
2. Challenges in Improving the Status of Underdeveloped Villages: The Subdistrict Head faces several challenges in the effort to improve the status of underdeveloped villages to independent villages, including the lack of village facilities, particularly road infrastructure connecting villages to other villages and the subdistrict center.

Additionally, the potential of the village that has not been maximally utilized by the community and the low community participation in Musrenbang pose challenges, as the community tends to be passive in proposing village development programs

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher provides the following suggestions:

1. The results of this study are expected to broaden knowledge and provide experience in applying the theories learned during the course, as well as support the development of public administration studies, particularly regarding the role of the subdistrict head in the equitable development in Suka Bangun Subdistrict, Tapanuli Tengah Regency.
2. The results of this study are expected to serve as a consideration and provide valuable insights related to the role of the subdistrict head in equitable development in Suka Bangun Subdistrict, Tapanuli Tengah Regency.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to all parties who have supported the completion of this article. To all the informants and community members who voluntarily provided information related to the research conducted by the author.

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