

## THE UTILIZATION OF KAUM-BASED VILLAGE FUNDS AS A FORM OF STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE *NAGARI* GOVERNMENT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**ABSTRACT.** This study discusses the capacity of the *nagari* government to utilize village funds during the COVID-19 pandemic. Limitations in communication patterns, interaction, and community legitimacy are identified as issues in policy implementation. As the front line to accelerate economic recovery for the community during the pandemic, the *nagari* government has to offer various innovations in policy implementation, including the utilization of village funds. Remarkably, one of the *nagari* in West Sumatra, namely *Nagari Pasia Laweh*, utilized the pandemic as a turning point for generating various innovations using village funds. Consequently, this *nagari* was rewarded as the best *Nagari* in village fund transparency in 2020 and the best *nagari* in West Sumatra in 2021. This study employed a qualitative method to observe the phenomena related to the institutional capacity of *nagari* in the utilization of village funds during the pandemic. The data were collected through in-depth interviews with the purposive sampling technique. The results indicate that various policy innovations are carried out through schemes involving local actors in *Nagari Pasia Laweh* using a *kaum*-based method. The collaboration between the government and local elite facilitates the acceptance and implementation of various policies in the community. Thus, community participation and legitimacy greatly influence *Nagari Pasia Laweh* to the extent that it is selected as the best *nagari*.

**Keywords:** government capacity; *nagari*; policy innovation, village funds; West Sumatera.

## PEMANFAATAN DANA DESA BERBASIS KAUM SEBAGAI BENTUK PENGUATAN KAPASITAS PEMERINTAH *NAGARI* DI MASA PANDEMI COVID-19

**ABSTRAK.** Penelitian ini membahas tentang kapasitas pemerintah *nagari* dalam memanfaatkan dana desa di masa pandemi COVID-19. Keterbatasan pola komunikasi, interaksi, dan legitimasi masyarakat menjadi perhatian dalam melaksanakan kebijakan yang akan dilaksanakan. Pemerintah *nagari* sebagai garda terdepan dalam mencegah dan membantu pemulihan ekonomi masyarakat di masa pandemi tentunya harus melakukan berbagai inovasi dalam menjalankan kebijakan, termasuk penggunaan dana desa. Menariknya, salah satu *nagari* di Sumbar, tepatnya *Nagari Pasia Laweh*, justru menjadikan pandemi sebagai titik balik untuk melakukan berbagai inovasi dengan menggunakan dana desa. Hasilnya, *nagari* ini terpilih sebagai *nagari* terbaik dalam transparansi dana desa tahun 2020 dan *Nagari* terbaik untuk wilayah provinsi Sumatera Barat pada tahun 2021. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk melihat fenomena terkait kapasitas kelembagaan *nagari* dalam pemanfaatan dana desa selama pandemi. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan teknik *purposive sampling*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa berbagai bentuk inovasi kebijakan dilakukan dengan skema yang melibatkan aktor lokal di *Nagari Pasia Laweh* dengan menggunakan metode berbasis kerakyatan (*kaum*). Kolaborasi yang dibangun antara pemerintah dan elit lokal membuat berbagai kebijakan mudah diterima dan dijalankan di masyarakat sehingga partisipasi dan legitimasi dari masyarakat sangat mempengaruhi terpilihnya *Nagari Pasia Laweh* menjadi *nagari* terbaik.

**Kata Kunci:** dana desa; inovasi kebijakan; kapasitas pemerintah; *nagari*; Sumatera Barat.

### INTRODUCTION

Institutional capacity plays a crucial role in shaping the surrounding environment (Grindle, 1997) and driving significant transformations during crisis (Diercks et al., 2019), such as the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Dewi et al., 2020; Olivia et al., 2020). Naturally, institutions that demonstrate capability may provide policy innovations that are tailored to meet specific requirements and implemented in alignment with prevailing circumstances and conditions. At a smaller level, several factors

impact the ability of local governments to creatively generate new ideas in both regular and emergency circumstances. A common observation reveals the insufficient capacity of institutions to effectively handle societal issues; hence the importance of focusing on enhancing local institutional capacity, which may function as a model for other local governments and promote internal advancement.

The essential aspect to clarify is the active participation of all relevant stakeholders in developing a collective ability to encourage the emergence of policy innovations. Comprehending

this notion is paramount, particularly in the face of an unforeseen crisis. The involvement of all elements of society will be instrumental in shaping policies and assessing their effectiveness. It will enable the evaluation of institutional capacity through factors such as human resource development, organizational strengthening, and institutional reform. The outcomes or policies are determined by comprehensive findings, ensuring effectiveness, efficiency, and adaptive responsiveness to institutional performance (Grindle, 1997; Grindle & Thomas, 1989).

This study identifies West Sumatra as a distinctive region that places a high value on local wisdom in establishing equitable policies for the community. *Nagari Pasia Laweh*, which is located in Agam District, excels for its successful policy transformation and innovations. This success may be attributed to the comprehensive preparedness and capability of the local government. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a notable improvement in transparency regarding the management of village funds. A myriad of challenges confronted multiple sectors, yet the *nagari* thrived by persistently fostering development through its institutions. As a consequence, the *nagari* is nominated as a model for adhering to local constitutional principles. This study thus attempts to thoroughly evaluate how the *nagari* administration manages to endure and innovate amidst a crisis.

*Nagari* as villages in West Sumatra are characterized by their genealogical and historical customary law community units. They have defined boundaries within certain areas, their own assets, and the authority to select their leaders by deliberation. They regulate and manage local community interests based on the philosophy and customary code of “*adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi kitabullah*” or the origin of local customs in West Sumatra Province (West Sumatra Provincial Regulation No. 7 of 2018). *Nagari* holds a special status in West Sumatra, as elucidated in the explanation of Article 18 of the 1945 Constitution, to form the lowest government as the foremost government to serve the community. Also dubbed as a small republic (a term coined from the Netherlands), *nagari* operates as a community-based autonomous government (self-governing community) with democratic government apparatus comprising legislative, executive, and judicial elements (Valentina et al., 2019a). Anthropologically, *nagari* is a unity for various socio-cultural orders (Valentina et al., 2019b). In ancient

times, the *nagari* bond in Minangkabau was dominantly characterized by blood ties, fostering a strong sense of ethnicity and kinship. This provides the *Nagari* government with a local advantage, enabling them to utilize village funds simultaneously with tribal ties.

One of several innovations initiated by the government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* with an outstanding success is the COVID-19 management, specifically using kaum-based village funds. All efforts to handle COVID-19 were conducted using a kaum-based method, which entails the contribution of ethnic-based community groups such as *niniak mamak* which is grouped into *niniak mamak nan 100 dikato* (consisting of 123 people). The highlighted uniqueness of this kaum-based village fund management is cultural innovation and the inclusion of traditional institutions, notably *tigo tungku sajarangan* and *niniak mamak*. In managing village funds, community participation is the main aspect required for strengthening the capacity of the *nagari* government in community development and welfare at the *nagari* level, in order to become a self-sufficient *Nagari* in all aspects.

Cahyono et al. (2020) emphasize that communal democracy naturally enhances the ability and growth of the *nagari* administration. The crucial aspect of this notion is community involvement in administrative proficiency, fostering unity to advance and flourish by developing human resources. Furthermore, Chawa et al. (2023) analyze the collaboration among local actors in managing village funds, particularly during crises where local actors (*pecalang*) play a vital role. This collaboration aligns with the custom-based governance in Bali, as outlined in Governor Decree No. 1571 of 2020. The joint COVID-19 prevention unit is responsible for enforcing penalties for violators of health regulations (Diantari & Wirawati, 2019), overseeing customary village fines, and proactively addressing cases of abuse of authority under the supervision of local wisdom frameworks (Saputra et al., 2018).

This study expands upon prior studies on indigenous knowledge in enhancing the capacity of *nagari* administration, particularly regarding the utilization of village funds for the betterment of the community. Several studies, including those conducted by Hidayat (2021), Nuryati et al. (2023), and Putri et al. (2021), examine the utilization of village funds during the pandemic, specifically their alignment with government

policies. The distinguishing aspect of this study is the effective implementation of policy solutions by the *nagari* government to overcome the COVID-19 dilemma (Sumarto & Dwiantara, 2019). This initiative attempts to mitigate and manage the spread of COVID-19 through measures such as village cash intensive programs and village cash direct assistance. In general, despite the presence of several obstacles that require resolution, the allocation of village funds proves highly beneficial in empowering village community through effective management.

The current state of Indonesia due to the COVID-19 outbreak has led to several policy adjustments, including in the utilization of village funds. The Regulation of the Minister of Villages, Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration (Permendes PDTT) No. 6 of 2020 on the amendments to Permendes PDTT No. 11 of 2019 stipulates the utilization of village funds in 2020 for the prevention and management of COVID-19, village cash intensive programs, and village cash direct assistance. Meanwhile, Permendes PDTT No. 11 of 2019 emphasizes that the utilization of village funds in 2020 should provide optimal benefits for increasing the quality of life of rural communities through financing programs and activities related to social services.

In simple terms, capacity represents the ability to perform tasks. In the context of the public sector, capacity is broadly illustrated as the capability of the government to regulate, develop, direct, and control financial, human, physical, and information resources. Several scholars view capacity as any qualities that can either hinder or encourage success in achieving organizational goals. Nugraha (2004) and Ratnasari et al. (2016)(2 describe capacity as the interaction between expectations, resources, and community problems. Meanwhile, the others interpret the meaning and synonyms of capacity, namely capability and capacity building. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), capacity is “the process by which individuals, organizations, and societies develop abilities to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve goals premised on ownership, choice, and self-estimation” (UNDP, 2008).

Similarly, Grindle (1997) and Millen (2004) reveals how capacity is defined. The most contemporary and widely accepted definition articulates capacity as the ability of an individual, organization, or system to perform the appropriate function effectively, efficiently, and sustainably.

Capacity constitutes properties that allow an organization or system to survive, thrive, and evolve. It is a collective capability, encompassing attributes that enable system performance, value provision, relationship-building, and self-renewal. It is also commonly referred to as a mechanism through which systems (individuals, groups, or organizations) can perform tasks effectively over time.

When examined from its meaning, capacity encompasses a range of points such as abilities, skills, understanding, attitudes, values, relationships, behavior, motivation, resources, and conditions. These components allow individuals, organizations, networks/sectors, and broad social systems to carry out functions and eventually achieve their objectives. Notions of capacity building have shifted from individual training to institutional development and complex systems. Various factors influence capacity development (Milen, 2004), including collective or shared commitments, conducive leadership, regulatory and institutional reform, as well as increased strengths and weaknesses. These factors provide insights into how the *nagari* government conducts capacity building, as well as several factors influencing the process.

This study aims to elucidate the capacity of the government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* during the pandemic through the use of village funds in 2020. Despite the steadfast adherence of the *nagari* to local customs, the involvement of local actors is recognized as pivotal in handling COVID-19. However, the extent to which village funds are allocated in alignment with the needs of the community in *Nagari Pasia Laweh* remains an open question. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the capacity of the *nagari* government in the utilization of village funds during the pandemic by adhering to central government policies stipulating the proper utilization of these funds.

## METHOD

### Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative approach to further analyze the phenomenon at the core of the research implementation. Consistent with this approach, the authors adhere to the theory articulated by Creswell (2009), which defines a qualitative approach as a method for exploring and understanding the meaning attributed by various individuals or groups of people to social or humanitarian issues. The qualitative



approach is essential to describe the problem under investigation as a complex phenomenon through a holistic analysis aimed at uncovering answers to the underlying realities. This includes examining assumptions, the participation of local actors, traditional institutions, or external institutions bolstering the capacity of the *nagari* government in utilizing village funds. Thus, this study attempts to observe strategies to strengthen the capacity of the *nagari* government in the utilization of village funds in *Nagari Pasia Laweh*, Agam District. The underlying premise of this study is that innovations in the utilization of village funds by the *nagari* government predominantly rely on a kaum-based method.

### Data Collection

This study was conducted in *Nagari Pasia Laweh* in the *luhak* Agam District, which is renowned for its local wisdom in decision-making. It covers a total area of approximately 8,770.2 ha and encompasses ten neighborhoods (*orong*), two of which are newly expanded from the existing *orong* (Figure 1). The entire populace amounts to 5,096 people, consisting of 2,652 men and 2,444 women. According to tradition and religion, they belong to the Minangkabau ethnic group and adhere to the Muslim teachings.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with various relevant parties of the *nagari*, such as *Wali Nagari* and the apparatus, institutions, community leaders, local political experts, and the government of Agam District (Table 1). The criteria for informant selection adopted purposive and snowball sampling. The unit of analysis is the institutions and the community of the *nagari*.

### PETA NAGARI PASIA LAWEH

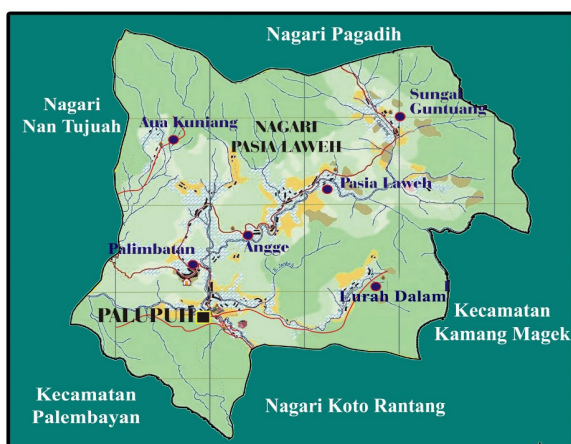


Figure 1. Map of Nagari Pasia Laweh, Agam District, West Sumatera Province.

Source: The Government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh*

The subjective criteria determined by the authors are consistent with the specific objectives of the study and can be modified to accommodate any requirements that arise in the field. They include the government, the traditional institutions, the community, and the local elite which refers to a third party or associate of *Nagari Pasia Laweh*.

The data triangulation method serves as a means to validate the data collected from several sources in the field by comparing them with the data collected from other sources (Creswell, 2009; Sugiyono, 2011). In this study, two forms of data triangulation were employed: theoretical triangulation and data source triangulation. Data source triangulation refers to the process of verifying the accuracy of information obtained from informants. It involves consulting experts who have knowledge about the capacity of the *nagari* government, individuals engaged in the utilization of village funds, and individuals familiar with the implementation and usage of these funds. The purpose of this process is to ensure accountability.

Table 1. Research Informants

Name	Position
ZA Dt.P	<i>Wali Nagari</i> /Village Head
He	Secretary of Nagari
RS	Head of Government
MKW	Head of General Department/ Chairman of the Nagari-Owned Enterprise (Bumnag)
URYTS	<i>Niniak Mamak</i> (Ulema Council/MUI)
E Dt.REB	<i>Niniak Mamak/ Ketua Kerapatan Adat Nagari</i>
M Dt.K	<i>Niniak Mamak Panungkek (Cadiak Pandai)</i>
AH	Members of the Nagari Deliberative Body
MAH	<i>Wali Jorong</i> /Head of Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis)
AH Dt.P	Youth Leader
FE	<i>Bundo Kandang</i>

Source: Processed by authors in 2022

### Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the postpositive exploratory method, wherein the authors summarized the data through abstractions. Data analysis also incorporated the views of informants (*emic*) which have been validated using the triangulation method. The analysis drew conclusions from the combination of data obtained from informants (*emic*) and the interpretation of the authors of existing data (*etic*). The data obtained from interviews and documents were meticulously selected and categorized based on specific criteria. Mulyani et al. (2020)

defines data analysis as the process of examining, classifying, organizing, or rearranging data to support the initial hypothesis of a research. Data analysis is the procedure of transforming complex data into a more accessible and comprehensible format. The simplification process entails classifying and documenting materials acquired during interviews in a transcript to facilitate the interpretation and comprehension. Subsequently, the authors seek to understand and analyze the qualitatively elucidated facts pertaining to the strengthening of the capacity of *nagari* in the utilization of village funds.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

During the pandemic, it is important to implement overcoming, preventing, and empowering measures to suppress the impact of COVID-19 on community welfare. As the leading government in West Sumatra, *nagari* has to implement various innovations and policies that prioritize the needs and interests of its community. One of the initiatives is the utilization of village funds disbursed by the central government to each *nagari*, which serve as a vital facility for disaster management during the pandemic. The government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* has utilized village funds with a *kaum*-based approach. The word “*kaum*” refers to a community group defined by ethnicity and region. This approach involves actors from each clan, namely *niniak mamak*, which is grouped into *niniak mamak nan 100 dikato*. Furthermore, this approach emphasizes the integration of local wisdom by involving traditional institutions in *nagari* such as *tigo tungku sajarangan* and *bundo kanduang* as well as the *nagari* community. In the context of the utilization of village funds during the 2020 pandemic, the policy is prioritized into three areas: 1) Prevention and management of COVID-19, 2) Village cash direct assistance, and 3) Village cash intensive programs.

### The Utilization of Kaum-Based Village Funds Prevention and management of COVID-19

The directives and policies issued by the central government for the prevention and management of COVID-19 emphasize the utilization of village funds. These funds are allocated by the government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* to support various programs and innovations. In this regard, it is crucial for the *nagari* to have adequate capacity to effectively handle COVID-19, as a great number of *nagari*

struggle to execute designated programs and policies during the COVID-19 period. This issue arises due to a lack of capacity of the *nagari* government to implement prevention and management efforts through suitable programs for the community. Effective communication between the *nagari* government and all elements of society is paramount to ensure that the programs devised accommodate the interests and requirements of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Several programs and policy innovations in *Nagari Pasia Laweh* that were initiated to prevent and managed COVID-19 and funded by community-based village funds are as follows:

#### a. Procurement of the COVID-19 Command Post

This directive program from the government entails the establishment of a community-screening space for detecting the COVID-19 virus in the *nagari*. The post, located adjacent to the office of the *Wali Nagari Pasia Laweh*, acted as a gateway for immigrants and visitors passing through and stopping in the *nagari*. The command post constitutes several elements, including the *nagari*, the community members such as *niniak mamak*, delegates from the clan, youth representatives, village midwives, Village Guidance Officers (Babinsa), and Bhayangkara Trustees of Community Security and Order (Bhabinkamtibmas). The command post aims to facilitate the dissemination of information throughout the *nagari*, screen all individuals entering the *nagari* starting from conducting body temperature checks to enforcing health protocols, and maintain records of visitors. These are forms of early prevention enacted by *Nagari Pasia Laweh*.

#### b. COVID-19 Education Team

A great number of people in general lack a clear understanding about the COVID-19. The limited knowledge owned and information received by the community motivates *nagari* to perform socialization and education regarding the COVID-19. To minimize public apprehension and ignorance in responding to this outbreak, the *nagari* formed an educated team tasked with providing necessary education to the community (Ayu et al., 2020). This team comprises various elements such as *niniak mamak*, *wali jorong*, village midwives, Babinsa, and Babinkamtibmas. This team distributed questionnaires to the community and organized question-and-answer sessions. The results revealed that a significant portion of the population had limited knowledge

about the COVID-19, with most only recognizing it as a deadly virus. The team then provided pamphlets and direct discussions to enhance community awareness about COVID-19 and preventive measures. Furthermore, concerns were raised regarding the economic impact of the pandemic on the community. In response, the *nagari* collected diverse information and held inclusive discussions to ensure that the COVID-19 prevention and management programs align with the needs of the community.

c. COVID-19 Prevention and Management Programs and Innovations

- 1) The distribution of free masks and hand sanitizers: One of the responsibilities assumed by the government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* is to fulfill the needs of the community to anticipate and prevent the spread of COVID-19. This initiative aims to ensure that the community complies with the established health protocols in preventing virus transmission.
- 2) The establishment of a data and information center: This center serves as a space for the public to obtain accurate information regarding the prevention and management of COVID-19. This initiative aims to prevent miscommunication between the *nagari* and the community. Considering various assistance programs initiated by the central government to aid those affected by COVID-19, it is imperative for the *nagari* to ensure the accuracy of data to prevent the dissemination of misinformation. Therefore, the center plays a vital role in compiling all relevant information in one location, thereby minimizing the spread of invalid news. In addition, the *nagari* also reports financial information and aid funds from external sources, including immigrants providing assistance to the *nagari* in the form of basic commodities and other necessities.
- 3) The implementation of disinfectant spraying: It involves the formation of a task force team comprising representatives from all elements of the *nagari*. This team has been divided into multiple groups assigned to guard their respective posts and spray disinfectant in several public places.
- 4) The provision of credit assistance and internet packages to 164 students at state or private campuses in *Nagari Pasia Laweh*: The limitations imposed by the pandemic

have also affected students, particularly with the transition to distance learning. Many students faced difficulties with online learning, which requires access to PCs or smartphones. Additionally, the economic instability in the community has exacerbated the situation, with parents frequently expressing concerns about the financial burden of internet expenses. In response to these concerns, the *nagari* provides students with credit assistance and internet packages to alleviate financial constraints and facilitate online learning.

- 5) The provision of milk assistance for 148 breastfeeding mothers: Participation is part of the sustainability of existing policies in the *nagari*. Encouraging community activities in the *nagari* offers numerous advantages for mothers. It motivates the *nagari* to prioritize assistance for breastfeeding mothers to meet the nutritional needs of their children and prevent stunting. This initiative is also carried out in response to the request conveyed by *Bundo Kandung*.
- 6) The formation of Online Learning Group (KOBEDA): The *nagari* establishes this group to address the concerns expressed by parents regarding the limited ability of students to understand online educational materials. This group comprises students from elementary, middle, high school, and college levels. They are provided with access to libraries and computers, allowing them to access reference sources and various important school lessons.
- 7) The establishment of People's Healthy Houses: They serve as isolation facilities for people affected by COVID-19. Upon returning to the *nagari*, migrants are required to self-isolate in these designated houses. These healthy houses, totaling 32 in number, are community-owned properties that have been willingly offered for this purpose. This collaborative effort between the *nagari* and the community enhances the effectiveness of COVID-19 prevention and management activities. Additionally, the collaboration between the *nagari* and *niniak mamak* is instrumental in the success of various COVID-19 handling programs. This partnership also acts as a manifestation of community legitimacy towards the *nagari* in executing its policies during the COVID-19 pandemic.



### ***Village Cash Direct Assistance***

Based on the criteria established by the central government and in accordance with Permendes PDTT No. 1261/PRI.00/IV/2020, the recipients eligible for direct cash assistance from village funds (BLT DD) in 2020 are as follows: underprivileged families who have lost their livelihood and not registered in Family Hope Program (PKH) or Non-Cash Food Assistance (BPNT); underprivileged families who have not yet been registered to receive any assistance; families with chronically ill members.

The aforementioned criteria align with Permendes PDTT to uphold the policy on Priorities in the Utilization of Village Funds during the COVID-19 in 2020 in compliance with Permendes PDTT No. 6 of 2020, the Regulation of the Minister of Finance No. 40 of 2020, and the Instruction of the Ministry of Home Affairs No. 3 of 2020. These regulations state that the beneficiaries of the village cash direct assistance should be underprivileged families. The initial step taken by the *nagari* is to record individuals affected by COVID-19, recipients of government assistance such as PKH, BNPT, and Social Assistance, as well as those with chronic illnesses. This method of data collection is designed to streamline the selection process for identifying eligible recipients of BLT DD. Subsequently, the collected data are disseminated through the data and information center.

The data collection applied a *kaum*-based method, supervised by *niniak mamak* of each clan in *Nagari Pasia Laweh*. All elements of *niniak mamak* and *Nagari* gathered to determine several criteria that must be met by potential recipients. The responsibility of selecting BLT DD recipients was delegated to *niniak mamak*, as they intimately know the economic conditions of their respective clan. The list of eligible recipients of BLT DD was presented in the community deliberation and forwarded to the *nagari* for further review and approval.

The deliberation process, designed based on local wisdom and customs of *Nagari Pasia Laweh*, has assisted with the policy implementation.

The community accepts all decisions resulting from the deliberation. Community involvement, particularly that of *niniak mamak*, serves to legitimize public trust in the *nagari* government. The absence of conflicts regarding the distribution of COVID-19 aid in the *nagari* contrasts with the challenges faced by other villages or *nagari* in Indonesia. In these areas, conflicts have hindered the proper implementation of policies and impeded the progress of innovative programs for community development during the pandemic. In compliance with the government policy, a total of 150 BLT DD recipients in *Nagari Pasia Laweh* received IDR 600,000 each for a period of three months. This assistance was disbursed through two methods, either delivered directly to the houses of the recipients or collected by the recipients themselves from the *nagari* government. Individuals who are ill and unable to visit the *Wali Nagari* will benefit from the first option, as well as individuals residing far from the government center of the *nagari*.

### ***Village Cash Intensive Programs***

The programs aspire to empower the *nagari* community in particular, targeting the underprivileged and marginalized individuals to enable them to sustain their livelihoods amid the COVID-19 pandemic. It emphasizes not only the development of infrastructure, but also endeavors by the *nagari* government to leverage all available resources. Reflecting on the economic recovery of the community, the *nagari* government is committed to inspire the community through innovations that remain consistent with the *kaum*-based scheme. These village cash intensive programs continue to prioritize deliberations of the people and *niniak mamak* to propose specific programs and select workers from among the community. They are involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases. Referring to Article 4 of Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages, these programs aim to advance the rural economy, bridge development gaps, and strengthen village communities as active participants in the development. Several village cash intensive programs carried out by the government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* include:

**Table 2. Village Cash Intensive Programs in the Report on the Utilization of Village Funds by the Government of Nagari Pasia Laweh, Palupuh Subdistrict, Agam District in 2020**

Field of Implementation				
No	Activity	Program/Innovation	Item	Information
1.	Organizing Village Maternity Cottage (Polendes) of <i>nagari</i>	Procurement of growth mats /stunting detection kits	9 units	Self-management
		Substitute for health care transport (KPM)	108 Oh	Self-management

2.	Provision of additional Integrated Service Post (Posyandu)	Meals	Package	Self-management
		Posyandu care services	108 ob	Self-management
3.	Counseling and training in the health sector	Socialization/ Stunting prevention convergence training	25 ok	Self-management
4.	Maintenance of <i>nagari</i>	Road expansion	18 Km	Self-management
5.	Construction/rehabilitation/ improvement of residential streets/alleys	Pecong Street	107 m	Self-management
		Improvements to Angge-Aur Kuning Street	385 m	Self-management
		Improvements to Angge-Mudiak residential street	m	Self-management
		Improvements to Limau Abuang Street	m	Self-management
		Improvements to Surau Lamo Bateh Street	170 m	Self-management
6.	Construction/rehabilitation/ improvement of the <i>nagari</i>	Improvements to Limau Abuang Street	Package	Self-management
		Koto Baru Bridge	Package	Self-management
7.	Construction/rehabilitation/ improvement of road infrastructure	Construction of Banda Aur Kuning Street	Package	Self-management
8.	Training/socialization/ instruction/awareness on the environment	Socialization of forest management	Package	Self-management
9.	Tourism development at <i>nagari</i>	Development of the Sarasah Sungai Guntung tourist attraction	Package	Self-management

#### Community Empowerment Sector

No	Activity	Program/Innovation	Item	Information
1.	Strengthening food security in the <i>nagari</i>	Food safe cadre transportation assistance	49 ok	Self-management
2.	Construction of tertiary/simple irrigation canals	Improvements to the Palimbatan Banda Tengah rope	Package	Self-management
3.	Training for Bumrag Management	Training on Bumrag	Package	Self-management
4.	Formation/facilities/training/assistance groups	Training on <i>nagari</i>	Package	Self-management

The utilization of village funds by the government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh*, by prioritizing the kaum-based method and involving local actors such as *niniak mamak* which consists of *tigo tungku sajarangan*, reflects the capacity of the *nagari* government in handling COVID-19. One of the most dominant factors in the successful implementation of policies and programs during the challenging pandemic is the strong leadership exhibited by *Wali Nagari*. The style of leadership adopted by *Wali Nagari* has proven effective in governing the *nagari*. This leadership influence, both as an individual and within an organizational context, has been instrumental in guiding the course of the policies during the pandemic. The commitment demonstrated by *Wali Nagari* and apparatus in preventing and managing COVID-19 has in fact led to the success of the *nagari*, gaining recognition for the transparency in utilizing village funds in 2020 and acknowledgement as the best *nagari* in West Sumatra. These remarkable

achievements are a testament to the leadership of the current *Parpatih* of the *nagari*, serving as an example for other *nagari* in West Sumatra.

The shared commitment fostered between the *nagari* and the community also plays a significant role. Rooted in customs and culture, the strength of local actors, particularly *niniak mamak*, exemplifies collaboration and synergy in formulating policies that cater to the interests of the community. Consequently, the participation of the *nagari* community contributes to the effectiveness and success of policies implemented.

Shared commitment is an important element that must be present in an institution as it is closely related to the commitment of the supporting elements in the development and improvement of institutional capacity. As articulated by Milen (2004) in relation to the theory of capacity development in practical implementation, it is evident that capacity building is a gradual process that necessitates a long-term commitment from all involved parties. The shared commitment



fostered by the *nagari* government encompasses both internal and external aspects. Internal aspects include all elements in the *nagari* while external elements consist of supporting institutions outside the *nigari* government. Internally, this commitment arises because of the trust of the community towards the *nagari* government, particularly towards *Wali Nagari* and *niniak mamak* (*niniak mamak nan saratuih di kato*). This commitment enables the contribution of all elements of the *nagari* government, institutions, community organizations, *niniak mamak*, *bundo kanduang*, and elements of the community, in the policy-making process. This commitment is maintained as a form of community participation in legitimizing the governance of *Nagari Pasia Laweh*.

The assembly of 100 *niniak mamak nan dikato*, consisting of 123 individuals gathered by the *nagari* government, represents a commitment given by the *nagari* to the community. This assembly includes *niniak mamak* from each clan, hailing from diverse professional backgrounds and holding positions in institutions and organizations both within and outside the *nagari*. The assembly operates as a forum for deliberating on the socio-economic conditions of the *nagari* community. The commitment has been instrumental in fostering cohesion and harmony in the *nagari* as the community-based activities have successfully prevented conflicts.

The shared commitment is fostered on the trust of the community, which is involved in every stage of program and policy development conducted by the *nagari* government, from planning to evaluation. This inclusive approach, encouraged by *Wali Nagari*, ensures the effective administration of the *nagari* government of. Communication with the community is highly participatory, using various public spaces such as stalls (*lapau*), mosques, and markets to disseminate information about *nagari* programs as well as solicit feedback and input from the community. Moreover, the communication efforts extend to social media platforms, such as Facebook and WhatsApp. The community is invited into WhatsApp groups based on their respective *orong*. These platforms facilitate rapid dissemination of information and data to the public.

The legitimacy of the *nagari* government is reinforced when policy formulation actively involves *niniak mamak nan saratuih dikato*, as they act as conduits for the aspirations and messages from their respective clan and the community as

a whole. This ongoing commitment remains paramount for the *nagari* government to secure legitimacy and community participation in policy implementation.

Observed from the external aspect, the commitment fostered by the *nagari* government in collaboration with several external stakeholders has been instrumental in taking preventive measures and empowering the community to manage COVID-19. It has been proven by the network and expertise of *Wali Nagari* Zul Arifin, who also serves as a member of the council for two terms. Utilizing this relationship has effectively revitalized partnerships with various DPOs, institutions, and community organizations. The contribution of these external stakeholders in strengthening the capacity of the government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* include a) Cooperation with mass media, b) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with universities and the private sector in West Sumatra, 3) Cooperation with Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD) of Agam District, 4) Cooperation with community organizations, 5) Cooperation with Warsi Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), 6) Shared commitment with *nagari* facilitators.

## CONCLUSION

The efforts taken by the government of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* during the pandemic have garnered significant attention of villages and other *nagari* across West Sumatra. The successful management and utilization of village funds during the pandemic have resulted in *Nagari Pasia Laweh* being acknowledged for village fund transparency in 2020. The utilization of village funds using a *kaum*-based method is an effective strategy to encourage active community participation in decision-making processes. The involvement of local actors, such as *niniak mamak* or *tigo tungku sajarangan*, has facilitated a more community-centric approach to pandemic management, strengthening the capacity of *nagari* as the leading government in addressing community problems.

The success of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* can be attributed to several factors, with prominent emphasis on the leadership of *Wali Nagari* and the shared commitment between the *nagari* and all elements within *nagari*, particularly *niniak mamak*, and traditional elements. The preservation of local wisdom and customs by

the community proves the ongoing adherence of *Nagari Pasia Laweh* to the principles of deliberation and consensus. The involvement of *niniak mamak* (*tigo tungku sajarangan*) provides essential insights into the conditions and the needs of the community, serving as a crucial foundation upon which the *nagari* can formulate programs and innovations tailored to meet these needs effectively.

In conclusion, *Nagari Pasia Laweh* has adequate capacity in successfully utilizing the village funds through a kaum-based method during the pandemic. It is evident in the recognition of the *nagari* in village fund transparency in 2020, as the best *nagari* in West Sumatra in 2022, and a leading *nagari* in 2021. The integral aspect of these achievements is the shared commitment established in handling the pandemic among all elements of society, particularly local actors such as *niniak mamak*, *tigo tungku sajarangan*, *bundo kanduang*, and youth representatives.

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