

## OPTIMIZATION OF APPARATUS RESOURCES IN IMPROVING GOVERNANCE IN SAWADAI VILLAGE, SOUTH BACAN AND LABUHA VILLAGE, BACAN CAPITAL

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### ABSTRACT

Optimizing village apparatus resources is an important factor in improving effective, transparent, and accountable village governance. This study aims to analyze the optimization of apparatus resources in improving governance in Sawadai Village, South Bacan District and Labuha Village, Bacan Capital City. The research method used is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data collection techniques are carried out through interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that the optimization of village apparatus resources has not been fully optimal, which is characterized by limited apparatus competence, lack of training, and not yet optimal use of information technology in the implementation of village government. However, there are efforts from the village government to increase the capacity of the apparatus through training and coaching. The conclusion of this study shows that improving the quality of village apparatus resources needs to be supported by continuous training, clear division of tasks, and support for facilities and infrastructure to realize good village governance.

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### INTRODUCTIONS

Village government is the main foundation in the local government system in Indonesia. As a leading entity that deals directly with the community, villages have a strategic role in the implementation of public services, basic infrastructure development, local resource management, and strengthening citizen participation. In the framework of regional autonomy and bureaucratic reform, village governance is required to meet the principles of good governance, namely transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness, and efficiency (Nirwana et al., 2025; Ma'ruf et al., 2024). However, the implementation of these principles is not easy, especially in areas that still face limited human resources, infrastructure, and institutional capacity.

Two relevant examples of cases are Sawadai Village in South Bacan District and Labuha Village as the capital of Bacan District, which despite having a strategic geographical and administrative position, still face challenges in creating optimal governance. One of the determining factors for the success of village governance is the quality of village apparatus resources. Village officials which include village heads, village secretaries, treasurers, administrative staff, and field cadres are key actors in running the wheels of government and development at the local level. Without competent, professional, and responsive officials, efforts to realize good village governance will be difficult to achieve. Research conducted in Lasiwala Village shows that there is a positive and significant influence between the competence of human resources (HR) of village officials on improving the quality of public services, with a significance value of 0.008 far below the threshold of 0.05 (Nirwana et al., 2025). These findings underscore that investment in capacity building is not an option, but an urgent need.

The competence of village officials covers various dimensions, such as technical knowledge of village regulations, managerial skills, digital literacy, moral integrity, and the ability to communicate with the community. When village officials have an adequate understanding of the Village Law, the Regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs, and the mechanisms for managing village funds, they will be able to develop participatory development planning, manage finances transparently, and report accountability to the community in an accountable manner (Rambe & Pasaribu, 2025; Yuhana & Pathony, 2020). On the other hand, low work discipline, lack of understanding of regulations, and lack of innovation in services can be the main obstacles in creating professional and high-performance village governments (Edu et al., 2020; Hamdi et al., 2021).

In Sawadai Village and Labuha Village, these challenges are increasingly complex. Sawwaai Village, located in the coastal area of South Bacan District, faces unique socio-economic dynamics, including dependence on traditional fisheries and agriculture sectors, as well as relatively limited accessibility. Meanwhile, Labuha Village as the center of the Bacan District government carries a double burden: as an ordinary village as well as an administrative service center for other surrounding villages. These two villages are required to provide fast, accurate, and transparent public services, especially in terms of managing village funds, which are quite significant every year. However, the reality on the ground shows that many village officials are not fully prepared to face these demands.

Several studies have identified three main challenges in optimizing village apparatus resources: (1) limited technical and managerial competence, (2) suboptimal division of tasks and organizational structure, and (3) minimal use of information technology (Nofiansyah, 2019; Kadja & Zega, 2025). In Sawadai Village, for example, manual and non-standardized financial reporting practices are still found, making them prone to errors and lack transparency. In Labuha Village, although the infrastructure is more adequate, coordination between departments often overlaps, and not all staff have the same understanding of modern administrative procedures. This condition is exacerbated by the low adoption of digital-based village information systems, even though this technology has been proven to be able to increase accountability, speed up service processes, and strengthen community participation through online platforms (Hamid et al., 2024; Kadja & Zega, 2025).

Faced with these challenges, a reactive or incidental approach—such as one-time training without follow-up evaluation—is no longer adequate. The optimization of village apparatus resources must be carried out through a systematic, sustainable, and contextual strategy. The strategy includes three main pillars: capacity building, institutional structuring, and strengthening supporting infrastructure (Ma'ruf et al., 2024; Hamid et al., 2024). Capacity building can be done through technical training, intensive mentoring, and participatory learning involving apparatus in fund management simulations, the preparation of RPJMDes, and the use of e-government applications. The participatory approach has proven to be more effective because it encourages the internalization of knowledge and builds a sense of ownership of change (Hamdi, 2025; Karuniawan, 2023).

In addition, institutional structuring is also important to ensure that each apparatus has a clear description of duties, a fair reward-punishment system, and a strong internal oversight mechanism. This will prevent overlapping tasks and increase individual accountability. Meanwhile, strengthening facilities and infrastructure especially in the form of providing computer devices, stable internet access, and digital literacy training will enable villages to develop

an integrated village information system (SID). The SID not only functions as a digital archive, but also as a means of budget transparency, public complaints, and real-time monitoring of development programs.

Assistance in the form of socialization and education also has a crucial role, especially in the context of preventing corruption and misuse of village funds. Several studies have shown that ignorance not malicious intent is often the root of the problem in village financial administration violations (Hamdi et al., 2021; Titania & Utami, 2021). Therefore, continuous assistance from sub-district heads, village assistants, or academic institutions can help the apparatus understand legal limitations, audit procedures, and principles of good state financial management. Given the urgency and complexity of the issue, the study on the optimization of apparatus resources in Sawadai Village and Labuha Village is very relevant. This research aims not only to map the actual condition of apparatus capacity, but also to identify structural and cultural barriers that hinder good governance. Furthermore, this study is expected to formulate specific, contextual, and applicable policy recommendations both for the local government of South Halmahera Regency and for the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration.

From a sustainable development perspective, effective and accountable village governance is a prerequisite for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. Villages managed by competent apparatus will be able to create an environment conducive to social, economic, and environmental investment. The community will have more faith in government institutions, citizen participation will increase, and development will run in an inclusive and equitable manner.

Therefore, the optimization of apparatus resources is not just an administrative technical issue, but an integral part of efforts to build a healthy and sustainable local democracy. Through continuous training, intensive mentoring, technology strengthening, and institutional reform, Sawadai Village and Labuha Village have great potential to become a model of good village governance in the North Maluku region. This effort will not only improve the quality of public services, but also strengthen the legitimacy of village government in the eyes of the community an important foundation for sustainable and equitable regional development.

## METHOD

This study uses a type of qualitative research with a descriptive approach, which aims to describe and analyze in depth the process of optimizing apparatus resources in improving governance in Sawadai Village, South Bacan District, and Labuha Village as the Capital City of Bacan. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to capture social realities holistically through a contextual understanding of the internal dynamics of village government, including perceptions, practices, and challenges faced by key actors in the village government system. The research was carried out for four months, from April to August 2025, in two strategic locations selected based on their significant role in the delivery of public services and the management of local government administration. The two villages represent different but complementary contexts Sawadai Village as a coastal area with specific development characteristics, and Labuha Village as the administrative center of the sub-district thus allowing for a comparative analysis rich in empirical findings.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly through in-depth interviews and participatory observation of key informants, which included village heads, village officials, members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), and community representatives. Interviews were conducted to explore experiences, views, and strategies applied in the optimization of apparatus resources, while observations were used to verify real practices in the field, such as service mechanisms, internal coordination, and transparency of financial management. The secondary data is collected through documentation techniques, including official village documents such as organizational structure, annual activity reports, budget realization reports, village regulations, as well as relevant academic literature and laws and regulations. All data were analyzed qualitatively through three main stages: data reduction (selection and simplification of important information), data presentation (organizing in the form of thematic narratives), and drawing conclusions (interpretation of meaning based on patterns

and relationships between phenomena). This analysis process ensures that the research findings are not only descriptive, but also have sufficient analytical depth to formulate contextual and applicable policy recommendations.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### Result

#### Condition and Optimization of Village Apparatus Resources

##### 1. Condition of Village Apparatus Resources

Based on the results of research conducted in Sawadai Village, South Bacan District and Labuha Village as the capital of Bacan, there is a clear recognition of the importance of village apparatus resources in the implementation of village government. Although the organizational structure of the village government has been fulfilled in quantity, there is a significant lack in the quality of human resources (HR) involved, especially in terms of administrative competence and mastery of information technology Nofiansyah, 2019; Nirwana et al., 2025). Data shows that many village apparatus have a limited understanding of their duties and functions, which has negative implications for the effectiveness of government (Wahyuningsih & Martini, 2025). In Sawadai Village, the problem of limited number of apparatus and high workload causes task performance to be not optimal. This is in contrast to Labuha Village which has more complex public service demands. These limitations add pressure on village officials to act professionally and responsively, but they are often not well prepared to meet these expectations (Dana et al., 2025).

In addition, inoptimality in administrative and financial management, such as delays in the preparation of reports, worsening the situation, shows the need to improve competence in this field (Aziiz, 2019). Work discipline among village officials also needs to be improved. Although they have generally shown intention in carrying out their obligations, there are problems in the consistency of attendance and time discipline that affect the quality of public services they provide to the community (Heni & Wibowo, 2022).

##### 2. Optimization of Village Apparatus Resources

Optimizing village apparatus resources is a crucial step to improve the performance of village government. Research shows that the village government's efforts in the division of tasks and training that have been carried out have not fully succeeded in achieving optimal results (Purba et al., 2025; . For example, even though training is held, this is not carried out continuously, so not all village apparatus get the expected competency increase (Rahmah et al., 2023).

The meaning of optimization also includes the use of information technology, where research shows that the use of technology for government administration is still limited. This is an obstacle for officials who have not fully mastered existing technological tools, and interferes with effective administrative processes and public services (Saputra et al., 2024).

The results of coaching efforts such as internal meetings and performance evaluations are not carried out systematically and continuously, so they are not effective in supporting the improvement of apparatus performance (Dana et al., 2025). Therefore, it is important for village governments to implement a planned strategy, which includes capacity building through continuous training and affirmation of duties and responsibilities (Aziiz, 2019).

##### 3. Village Governance

Village governance plays an important role in realizing the implementation of effective and responsive government to the needs of the community. Research shows that the principles of good governance must be adhered to to manage authority, resources, and public services (Fitriansyah & Nuryakin, 2021; Sirait, 2022). Good governance can help village governments to achieve transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in the implementation of their programs. The effectiveness of this governance can be influenced by the quality of village apparatus resources. By improving human resource competence and knowledge, it is hoped that it can improve administrative quality and transparency in fund management (Purba et al., 2025; Abadi et al., 2020).

In the context of digitalization, the challenges faced by village governments need to be managed through training related to digital skills and information system management (Rahmah et al., 2023). Overall, the condition and optimization of village apparatus resources in Sawadai Village and Labuha Village show the need for efforts to improve competence, professionalism, and the use of information technology. With systematic steps, it is hoped that the achievement of effective and accountable village governance can be realized, ultimately improving the quality of services to the community (Joenso & Topan, 2023; Nofiarisyah, 2019; Haq & Prabawati, 2022).

The research revealed that the implementation of good governance principles in Sawadai Village and Labuha Village has shown progress, especially in the aspect of transparency. The village governments of the two regions actively convey information related to work programs, budget allocation, and the implementation of development activities through the Village Conference forum (Musdes) and public information boards placed at the village hall. This step reflects a real commitment to open access to information to the community, which in turn has the potential to strengthen public trust in village government institutions (Astuti & Yulianto, 2016). Transparency in village financial management, as one of the main pillars of good governance, is an important foundation for accountability and citizen participation (Musfirah et al., 2023). However, the disclosure of existing information is still passive people need to come to village halls or attend official forums to obtain data, so it is not yet fully inclusive for vulnerable groups or residents living in remote hamlets. In terms of community participation, the study found that the mechanism of the Village Development Planning Deliberation (Musrenbangdes) has become the main forum for citizen involvement in development planning. The community is given space to propose program priorities that suit local needs.

However, this participation tends to be limited to the initial planning stage and has not continued to the stage of supervision and evaluation of program implementation (Kusuma, 2025; Harfis, 2019). Many residents admitted that they did not know whether their proposal was really realized or how the progress was made. Limited public understanding of the village planning cycle and the lack of further socialization from the village government are the main obstacles to more meaningful participation (Cahyono & Mufidayati, 2021). In fact, sustainable participation is very important to encourage accountability of the apparatus and ensure that development truly answers the real needs of the community.

On the other hand, accountability is still a significant challenge. Despite the good intentions to prepare accountability reports, the quality and timeliness of village administrative and financial reports are often not optimal. This is due to the limited capacity of village officials, especially in terms of technical understanding of village financial management in accordance with the latest regulations (Kuncahyo & Dharmakarja, 2022; Muhammad, 2025). Some village staff admitted that they had never participated in intensive training on the village accounting system or the maximum use of the Siskeudes application. As a result, the reports produced are often delayed, lack of detail, or even contain technical errors, which have an impact on the decline of the credibility of the village government in the eyes of the community and supervisory agencies (Azizah & R, 2023; Banobe, 2023).

These findings are in line with the research of Helsa et al. (2023) which affirms that accountability cannot be separated from the technical competence of the apparatus without adequate capacity, the principle of accountability will only become a slogan without real implementation. Finally, the effectiveness and efficiency aspects in public services also show gaps that need to be closed immediately. The administrative process in both villages still relies heavily on a manual system, starting from submitting certificates to recording budget realization. This leads to service delays, high workload of apparatus, and greater risk of administrative errors (Astuti & Yulianto, 2016; Ramadhan & Ma'ruf, 2022). The use of information technology, such as village information systems (SID) or digital platforms for administrative services, is still very limited both due to limited infrastructure (such as unstable internet networks), and due to low digital literacy among the apparatus (Nurliana, 2023; Karinda et al., 2024). In fact, the adoption of the right technology will not only speed up the service process, but also increase transparency and make it easier for people to access information independently.

Overall, this study shows that Sawadai Village and Labuha Village have laid the initial foundation of good governance, especially through a commitment to transparency and community involvement in planning. However, these efforts have not been balanced with adequate apparatus capacity and optimal use of technology. Therefore, optimizing apparatus resources through continuous training, technical assistance, and strengthening digital infrastructure is a strategic key to overcoming obstacles in accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency. Without systematic interventions in the field of capacity building and digital transformation, efforts to realize professional, responsive, and sustainable village governance will be difficult to achieve.

#### 4. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Optimizing Village Apparatus Resources

Research in Sawadai Village and Labuha Village identified a number of supporting factors that contribute positively to efforts to optimize village apparatus resources. First, support from the sub-district government and related agencies has proven to be an important foundation in strengthening the capacity of the apparatus. Through routine coaching, technical guidance, and the provision of clear regulations, the sub-district government provides operational directions that help village officials understand their duties and responsibilities more systematically (Fitriani, 2022; Nurmalinda & Firdaus, 2024). Second, the will and internal commitment of the village apparatus itself becomes invaluable social capital. Many village apparatus expressed full awareness that improving the quality of public services is part of their moral responsibility in realizing good governance (Kopong et al., 2025; Hermawan et al., 2025).

Third, active community participation, especially through village deliberation forums, not only strengthens the legitimacy of village policies but also serves as an effective social control mechanism (Rustika, 2020; Rambe & Pasaribu, 2025). Finally, although still limited, the availability of basic facilities and infrastructure such as proper workspaces, administrative equipment, and access to information technology has provided significant operational support for the smooth running of the daily tasks of the apparatus (Pardosi et al., 2020; Scott, 2021). However, on the other hand, there are also inhibiting factors that interfere with the optimization process. The most dominant is the limited quality of apparatus resources, especially in terms of technical competence, understanding of government administration, and digital literacy. Many officials admitted that they had never received in-depth training on village financial management or the use of the Siskeudes application, so they often worked based on experience or asked each other questions to more senior colleagues (Luthfiani et al., 2020; Wahyudi, 2022).

In addition, the limited village budget for capacity development is a serious structural obstacle. The lack of allocation of funds for training, seminars, or comparative studies causes it difficult for officials to access opportunities for competency improvement in a sustainable manner (Triarto, 2025; Kusuma, 2022). The third factor is the lack of optimal coaching and supervision systems from the sub-district and district levels. Evaluation of the performance of village apparatus is rarely carried out periodically and objectively, so there is no constructive feedback that can encourage improvement (Maskikit, 2017; Patra et al., 2020). Finally, the low utilization of information technology, exacerbated by uneven digital infrastructure such as unstable internet connections and limited number of computers—hinders the transformation of public services towards faster, more accurate, and more transparent systems (Pardosi et al., 2020; Scott, 2021).

#### 5. Implications for Improving Village Governance

These findings on supporting and inhibiting factors have direct implications for the four main pillars of village governance. First, in the aspect of transparency, competent officials are able to compile and convey budget and program information more systematically and easily understand, thereby increasing public openness and trust (Fitriani, 2022; Luthfiani et al., 2020). Second, in the accountability dimension, the professionalism of the apparatus supported by adequate technical understanding allows the preparation of accountability reports that are timely, accurate, and in accordance with standards, thereby minimizing the risk of administrative and financial irregularities. Third, the effectiveness and efficiency of public services is highly dependent on the ability of the apparatus to utilize information technology and design lean but responsive work procedures (Wahyudi, 2022; Hermawan et al., 2025).

With an integrated digital system, processes such as mail submission, data verification, or program realization reporting can be accelerated without sacrificing accuracy. Fourth, community participation will be of higher quality

if the apparatus is communicative, responsive, and proactive in inviting citizen input not only during Musrenbangdes, but throughout the planning to evaluation cycle (Pardosi et al., 2020; Luthfiani et al., 2020).

Overall, the optimization of village apparatus resources is not a purely technical issue, but a multidimensional issue involving individual capacity, institutional support, budget availability, and supporting infrastructure. To create a transparent, accountable, effective, and participatory village government, an integrated strategy is needed that strengthens supporting factors while addressing structural and cultural barriers. The top priority must be given to increasing the capacity of the apparatus through continuous training, strengthening the coaching system and performance evaluation, and accelerating the adoption of information technology adapted to the local context. Only with this kind of holistic approach, Sawadai Village and Labuha Village can be transformed into a superior model of village governance in the North Maluku region.

## DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study show that the optimization of village apparatus resources is the central key in realizing good governance in Sawadai Village and Labuha Village. The results of the study confirm the findings of a number of previous studies that emphasized that the competence of village officials directly affects the quality of transparency, accountability, participation, and effectiveness of public services (Nirwana et al., 2025; Rambe & Pasaribu, 2025). Although both villages have demonstrated a commitment to the principle of transparency through information boards and deliberative forums the implementation has not been fully inclusive and sustainable. This is in line with the argument of Astuti & Yulianto (2016) who stated that transparency is not only about the availability of information, but also about the ease of public access and understanding of the information.

Without a digital approach or active socialization to the hamlets, information disclosure risks becoming purely symbolic. Community participation through Musrenbangdes has indeed become a recognized formal mechanism, but as revealed by Harfis (2019) and Kusuma (2025), participation that is limited to the proposal stage without further supervision tends to be procedural, not substantial. This finding reinforces the criticism of Cahyono & Mufidayati (2021) that village independence will not be achieved if the community is only involved as a "planning object", not as a "development subject". Therefore, innovation is needed in participation mechanisms for example through digital platforms for real-time reporting or citizen working groups tasked with monitoring program progress so that participation does not stop at annual meetings, but becomes part of the daily governance culture. On the other hand, accountability is still the main weak point, whose roots lie in the limited technical capacity of village officials.

These findings are consistent with the research of Kuncahyo & Dharmakarja (2022) and Helsa et al. (2023) which affirm that administrative and financial accountability cannot be separated from HR competence. Late or inaccurate accountability reports are not solely a matter of intent, but a reflection of the lack of technical training and ongoing mentoring. As reminded by Azizah & R (2023) and Banobe (2023), when the apparatus does not understand the accounting standards of the village government, the risk of errors even potential irregularities will increase, which ultimately undermines public trust.

Supporting factors such as the support of the sub-district government (Fitriani, 2022; Nurmalienda & Firdaus, 2024) and internal commitment of the apparatus (Kopong et al., 2025; Hermawan et al., 2025) show the existence of social and institutional capital that can be used for further interventions. However, the inhibiting factors especially the budget constraints for training (Triarto, 2025; Kusuma, 2022) and low utilization of information technology (Pardosi et al., 2020; Silitonga, 2021) indicates a gap between the need and availability of resources. In fact, as emphasized by Nurliana (2023) and Karinda et al. (2024), digital transformation is no longer a luxury, but a strategic need to increase efficiency and transparency.

Without adequate digital infrastructure, optimization efforts will continue to be hampered by slow and error-prone manual bureaucracy. The implications of these findings are very relevant to the framework of good governance. Competent apparatus is not only able to prepare accountable reports (Fitriani, 2022; Luthfiani et al., 2020), but also

being able to create a space for dialogue that is responsive to society (Pardosi et al., 2020). In other words, increasing the capacity of the apparatus is a direct investment in the legitimacy and effectiveness of village government. As revealed by Wahyudi (2022) and Hermawan et al. (2025), the efficiency of public services is impossible to achieve if the apparatus is still working with a paper archive system and non-standardized procedures.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the view that good village governance is not determined by regulations alone, but by the quality of the people who run them. Village regulations after Law No. 6/2014 do provide broad autonomy, but without ready human resources, this autonomy can actually become a burden. Therefore, policy recommendations should focus on strengthening the apparatus capacity ecosystem, which includes: (1) technical training based on local needs, (2) continuous assistance by sub-district heads and professional village assistants, (3) special budget allocation for human resource development in the APBDes, and (4) accelerating the adoption of simple but functional village information systems.

Thus, this study not only maps the actual conditions of governance in two villages in Bacan, but also provides empirical evidence that the optimization of apparatus resources is an absolute prerequisite for effective decentralization. Without systematic intervention at the human capacity level, village bureaucratic reform efforts will continue to face the same structural barriers transparency without access, participation without oversight, and accountability without competence.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion on the optimization of apparatus resources in improving governance in Sawadai Village, South Bacan District and Labuha Village as the capital city of Bacan, it can be concluded that village apparatus resources have a very important role in determining the quality of village government implementation. The condition of the village apparatus resources in both villages in quantity has met the needs of the village government organizational structure. However, in terms of quality, there are still limitations, especially related to technical competence, understanding of village government administration, financial management, and the use of information technology.

These limitations have an impact on the implementation of public duties and services that have not been optimal. The optimization of village apparatus resources has been carried out through the division of tasks, coaching, and training of village apparatus. However, these efforts have not been carried out optimally and sustainably. The lack of equal training, the lack of optimal performance evaluation system, and the limitation of facilities and infrastructure are factors that hinder the optimization of the performance of village apparatus.

Village governance in Sawadai Village and Labuha Village has shown efforts to implement good governance principles, especially in the aspects of transparency and community participation. However, the aspects of accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency still need to be improved along with increasing the capacity of village apparatus resources. Thus, it can be concluded that the optimization of village apparatus resources has a significant effect on improving village governance. Improving the quality of village apparatus through continuous training, affirmation of duties and functions, strengthening the coaching and supervision system, and utilizing information technology is a strategic step in realizing effective, transparent, and accountable village governance.

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