

Does the Special Allocation Fund Reduce Rural Poverty?

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the fields of water, sanitation, and the field of settlement and housing on poverty in rural areas. The data collected by secondary data is number of poor people in rural areas is accessed through the BPS website, and special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the fields of water, sanitation, and settlement and housing are collected by accessing the Simtrada website (Information System Transfer to Regions and Village Funds) <https://djpk.kemenkeu.go.id/simtrada/>. The population of 34 provinces and the sample of 25 provinces in Indonesia that experienced a decrease in rural poverty were analyzed in this research. The data were analyzed by multiple regression analysis techniques. The results showed that special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the water sectors, and in the field of sanitation sector, did not significantly affect poverty reduction, (sig p-value $0.461 > 0.05$ and sig p-value $0.751 > 0.05$ respectively). The value of special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the field of the housing sector had a significant effect on reducing rural poverty (sig p-value $(0.007 < 0.05)$). This study recommends that poverty reduction funds in rural areas, especially in the field of housing, continue to be distributed and managed appropriately, so that poverty in rural areas is alleviated.

Keywords: allocation, fund, poverty, reduction, rural, special.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a common phenomenon in today's world and is becoming big business (Banerjee, 2017). The World Bank defines poverty as "*pronounced deprivation in well-being*." Poverty can also be associated with certain types of consumption. For example, people can be poor in their homes, poor in food, or poor in health. Malnutrition or low literacy can be used as be indicator to measure poverty (Haughton, 2009). Economic ability is the other indicator that is used as poverty measurement. If people have expenditures every month below the poverty line, the people can be in poverty condition, (BPS, 2019). The magnitude of poverty can be measured by referring to the

poverty line. Factors causing poverty, including: output growth rate and rate; net wage rate; income distribution; employment opportunities; filth rate; taxes and subsidies; investment; allocation and quality of natural resources; availability of public facilities; use of technology; level and type of education; physical and natural conditions; politics; natural disasters (Binti, 2016). Poverty is one of the challenges facing the world, and poverty alleviation is a shared responsibility for humanity (Su, 2022).

Poverty alleviation is one of the main development agendas of all countries in the world as outlined in the sustainable development goals/SDGs (Solomon, 2023); (Agatha &

Uliansyah, 2021). The poverty alleviation agenda has been set by all countries in the world since decades ago, but until now poverty is still a national problem of countries in the world (Sudipa & Nurjani, 2021); (Saragi, 2021). Poverty reduction is a priority agenda and one of the strategies for achieving sustainable development goals (Bununu, 2020). The Government of Indonesia has implemented various poverty reduction programs including “Program Keluarga Harapan” (Family Hope Programs), school operational assistance, poor student assistance, public health insurance, rice for poor families, national community empowerment programs, programs for the expansion and development of productive employment/labor-intensive opportunities, people's business loans, joint business loans and special allocation funds for poverty reduction (Prabowo, 2014).

Population poverty by region is divided into poverty in urban areas and rural areas. Tackling poverty in rural areas is one of the development priorities of the government in Indonesia Country (Modjo, 2017). Report of (BPS, 2023) said that the percentage of people in poverty condition especially in urban areas (7.53%) is lower than in rural areas (12.36)%.

Research on rural poverty reduction in various countries around the world has found several programs that have been proven to reduce rural poverty. Poverty alleviation funding programs in the form of energy distribution such as solar to remote villages have been found to reduce rural poverty in India (Yadav, 2019). The poverty alleviation funding program is carried out through training to increase innovation and use of e-commerce among farmers and businesses in China. This program is proven to be able to increase the income obtained so that by increasing the income of farmers and business actors, especially in rural areas, the poverty rate in rural areas can be reduced (Huang et al., 2020).

The attention of the Indonesian government to rural development to reduce the gap between urban and rural areas can be seen in the *nawa cita* program, especially the third *nawa*

cita, which is to develop Indonesia Country from the village and make rural people more Empowered (Setiawan, 2019). The follow-up of the program to build Indonesia from the periphery is the distribution of funds carried out to villages called village funds. The number of funds that are distributed to the village is increasing from year to year (Center for Budget Studies-Expertise Agency of the DPR RI, 2020). Another fund transferred to the Regions/to each Province in order to alleviate poverty in rural areas is the Thematic Special Allocation Fund (SAF) for Poverty Reduction. The SAF for Infrastructure, hereinafter referred to as SAF for Infrastructure, is a fund originating from the State Budget, budgeting for certain regions with the aim of financing activities that are regional affairs and refer to center government priorities, especially to finance the infrastructure needs and facilities of the community infrastructure sector that have not achieved the Minimum Service Standards or to encourage the acceleration of regional development (Regulation of the Minister of Public Works and Public Housing Number 47/PRT/M/2015, 2017). Special allocation funds for thematic assignments, in addition to being allocated to overcome poverty, are also allocated to encourage a sustainable economy (Pambudi et al., 2022).

The website of the Ministry of Finance, especially the Regional Transfer Information System and Village Fund shows that the funds transferred to the Province to alleviate poverty are SAF for Poverty Reduction in Water, Sanitation and Housing and Settlement <https://djpk.kemenkeu.go.id//simtrada/>. Another fund transferred to the regions to alleviate rural poverty is the Social Food Assistance fund (BPS, 2022).

The funds allocated by the central government to alleviate poverty can be in the form of general allocation funds and special allocation funds. General and special allocation funds were found to have a negative significant effect on poverty in Papua Province (Vitara Agatha & Uliansyah, 2021). Different findings state that equalization funds and transfer funds to regions have not been significant for

poverty (Ismail & Hakim, 2014); (Khomaini, 2020). Other research on poverty alleviation funds found that the education budget and the health budget had a negative significant effect on poverty in West Sumatra (Borrego, 2021). The government's fiscal policy in the form of tax revenue-sharing funds was found to reduce rural poverty (Hardinandar, 2020). The allocation of village funds is one of the funding programs carried out by the central government in an effort to overcome rural poverty. The allocation of village funds has proven to reduce poverty (Arham & Hatu, 2020).

Studies on poverty reduction have been widely conducted, but studies on the effect of SAF for thematic poverty reduction assignments on poverty reduction in rural areas are still limited. The limitations of research on the effect of special allocation funds for poverty reduction on rural poverty reduction motivated this study to be conducted. The two main differences between this study and previous studies that examined poverty reduction are that the first previous research was conducted qualitatively (Viyulia et al., 2023); (Social et al., 2017); (Solomon, 2023); (Murdiyana & Mulyana, 2017); (Rasbin, 2018); (Suprpta, 2019), and these two studies examined SAF for poverty reduction consisting of SAF thematic poverty reduction assignments in the fields of water, sanitation, settlement, and housing. This study aims to analyze the effect of special allocation funds for poverty reduction on rural poverty reduction. The research findings are expected to contribute to the determination of government policies, especially in the field of poverty alleviation fund distribution.

METHODOLOGY

This research is quantitative, especially in an associative approach, in which the purpose is to determine the relationship between two or more variables (Sugiyono, 2010). This research

used secondary data by accessing the website of the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) and the website of the Ministry of Finance, especially the Regional Fund Transfer Information System and Village Funds (Simtrada). Documentation and non-participant observation is the way to collect the data. The study population is all provinces in Indonesia consisting of 34 provinces and the samples are 25 provinces. Samples are determined by purposive methods, namely determining samples using certain criteria. The sample criteria are: a) Provinces that experienced a decrease in the percentage of rural poverty from 2020 to 2021; b) obtained poverty reduction assignment funds. The sample determination of this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample determination criteria

No	Information	Number
1	All Provinces in Indonesia	34
2	Provinces that did not experience a decrease in poverty in 2020 to 2021	(8)
3	Provinces that did not receive poverty alleviation assignment funds	(1)
4	A total sample of provinces in Indonesia	25

Source: BPS (data processed)

There are 8 provinces that did not experience a decrease in poverty (experienced an increase in poverty from 2020 to 2021), namely Aceh, South Sumatra, Bali, Southeast Sulawesi, Gorontalo, West Sulawesi, Papua, West Papua, and there is one province that did not receive poverty reduction assignment funds, namely DKI Jakarta Province. Researchers did not find data on rural poverty in DKI Jakarta Province, so the sample of this study became 25, namely provinces other than those that did not meet these criteria. The variables and measurements of research variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Variables and measurements of variable

No	Variable Type	Name of Variable	Data Source
1	Independent Variable (X1)	Special Allocation Fund for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Water Sector	Information System Transfer to Regions and Village Funds https://djpk.kemenkeu.go.id/simtrada/
2	Independent Variable (X2)	Special Allocation Fund for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Sanitation Sector	Information System Transfer to Regions and Village Funds https://djpk.kemenkeu.go.id/simtrada/
3	Independent Variable (X3)	Special Allocation Fund for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in Settlement and Housing Sector	Information System Transfer to Regions and Village Funds https://djpk.kemenkeu.go.id/simtrada/
4	Dependent Variable (Y)	Decrease in the Percentage of Poor People in Rural Areas	BPS 2020 and 2021

Source: <https://djpk.kemenkeu.go.id/simtrada/>

The SAF for Poverty Reduction Assignment is a transfer fund to the regions. This fund is part of the special physical allocation fund for the field of assignment with the 631212 account code. SAF Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment Water Code H01, Sanitation Code 05, Housing and Housing Sector Code 06. The percentage of poor people refers to the percentage of poor people according to BPS, which is the percentage of people who are below the poverty line. The consideration of using semester 1 data (March) is that because the number of population census in semester 1 is more than the data in semester 2 (Vsen et al., 2010). The decrease in rural poverty is

calculated by subtracting the percentage of poor people in March 2020 from the percentage of poor people in March 2021. The data analysis technique used is multiple regression analysis by using software namely SPSS version 25 which is an analytical technique that analyzes the influence of several independent variables on one dependent variable (Sugiyono, 2010).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Classical Assumption Test in this research consists of *first* the *normality* test. The result is shown in Figure 1: It can be seen from Figure 1 that data is normally distributed

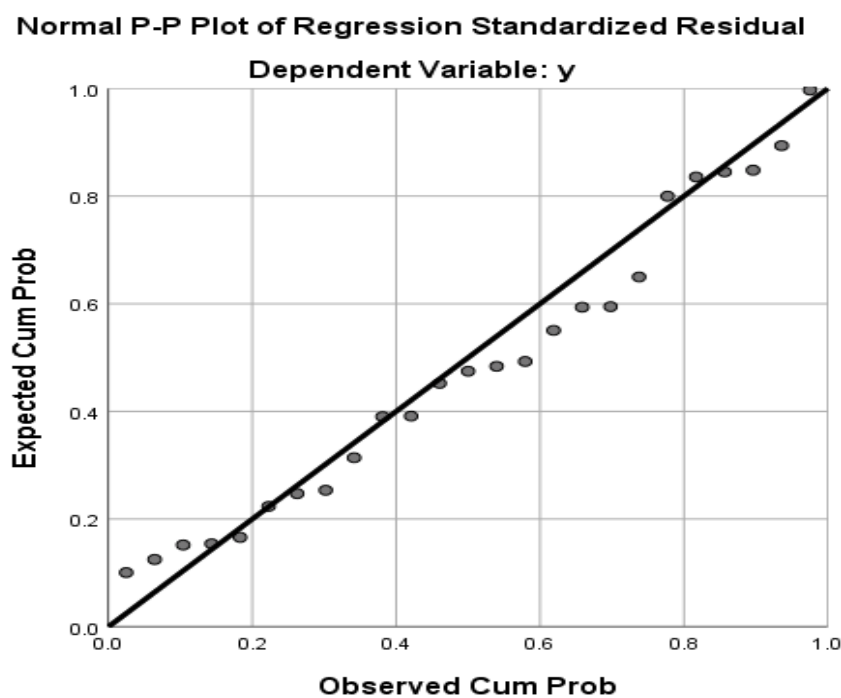


Figure 1. Normally distributed data

Second Heteroscedastic test. The results are shown in Figure 2. It can be seen in Figure 2 that the graph does not form a certain pattern so

the model heteroscedastic is free. Third, the multicollinearity test.

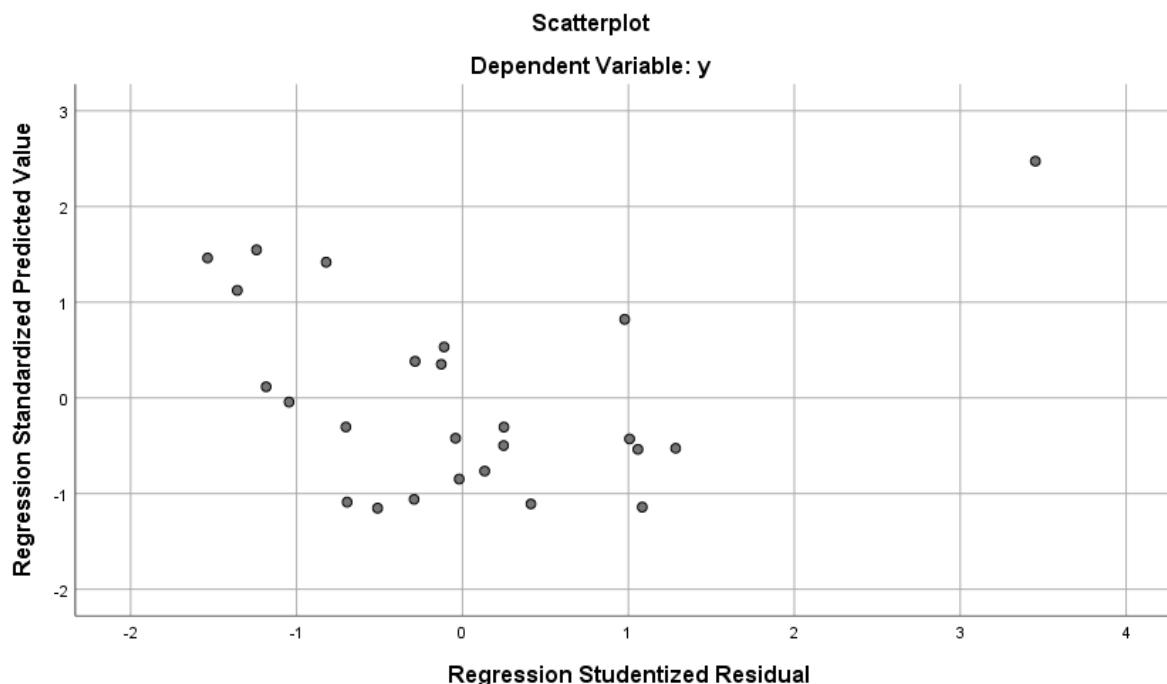


Figure 2. The result of the heteroscedastic test

Decision-Making Criteria: Reject H_0 if the tolerance value is < 0.1 or $VIF > 10$. The results of multicollinearity testing are presented in Table 3

Table 3. Multicollinearity test results

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
X1	.253	3.949
X2	.237	4.215
X3	.877	1.141

Note: X1 (SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Water Sector), X2 (SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Sanitation Sector), X3 (SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in Settlement and Housing Sector)

Seen for all models, both model 1 to model 4, VIF values < 10 and tolerance > 0.1 , the model can be tied free of multi-col assumptions Coefficient of determination (Adjusted R Square)

Table 4. Value of determination coefficient

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.591 ^a	.349	.256

The value of the coefficient of determination of 0.256 means that the variation of the dependent variable (Y), namely the reduction in rural poverty, can be explained by an independent variable (Special Allocation Fund/ SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in Water, Sanitation, Settlement) of 25.6 percent, the remaining 25.6 percent by other variables outside the model.

The stage of research after the data meets classical assumptions and is tested for the coefficient of determination is to test the hypothesis. The results of testing the research hypothesis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Hypothesis testing results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients			
		B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.137	.220	.626	.538
	X1	1.993	2.652	.751	.461
	X2	1.127	3.141	.359	.723
	X3	3.010	1.009	2.983	.007

$$Y = 0.137 + 1.993X_1 + 1.127X_2 + 3.010X_3$$

Table 5 data shows that there is not enough evidence to state that X1 (SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Water Sector) has a significant effect on Y (Decrease in the Percentage of Poor People in Rural Areas) because $t_{stat} = 0.751 < t_{table} = 1.96$ and $sign\ p\text{-value} = 0.461 > 0.05$ so that hypothesis 1 is rejected, meaning that SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Water Sector has not significantly affected the decrease in the percentage of poor people in rural areas. The second hypothesis of the study has not been accepted, because there is not enough evidence to state that X2 (SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Sanitation Sector, has not significant impact on Y (Decrease Percentage of Poor People in Rural Areas) because $t_{stat} = 0.359 < t_{table} = 1.96$ and $sign\ p\text{-value} = 0.723 > 0.05$. Hypothesis three accepted X3 (SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in Settlement and Housing Sector has a significant positive effect on Y (Decreased Percentage of Poor People in Rural Areas), because $t_{stat} = 2.98 > t_{table} = 1.96$ and $sign\ p\text{-value} = 0.007 < 0.05$. SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Settlement and Housing Sector has a positive and significant effect on reducing the decreased percentage of Poor People in Rural Areas.

The effect of the Special Allocation Fund (SAF) for the assignment of thematic poverty reduction in the water sector on reducing rural poverty.

The statistical results for SAF for the Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in Water Field showed that the Beta coefficient was positively marked 1.993; the ^{statistical} t value of 0.751 was smaller than the t_{table} (1.96); the Sig value of 0.461 was greater than 0.05. This figure means that SAF for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the water sector has a positive effect on reducing rural poverty but has not been significant. The special allocation fund for thematic poverty alleviation assignments in the water sector is part of the special allocation fund for assignments (code 631212). The special allocation fund is part of the physical special

allocation fund code 6.3. There are two parts of the allocation of physical special allocation funds, namely regular special allocation funds and special allocation funds for regional public infrastructure and assignments. These funds are allocated from central government funds through the Ministry of Finance to each Province. Special allocation funds for thematic assignments in the water sector are prioritized for the irrigation handling sub-field and the drinking water sub-sector. The irrigation sub-sector is prioritized to support the fulfillment of food sovereignty. Its implementation is carried out by carrying out development activities and irrigation management. The drinking water sub-sector is prioritized to increase the number of house connections by optimizing installed drinking water sources, increasing the capacity of drinking water system provision and building drinking water supply systems in special areas of small islands, outermost areas, water-vulnerable, underdeveloped, remote, and border areas.

The findings of this research suggest that special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the water sector have not been significant in reducing rural poverty. Special allocation funds for thematic assignments in the water sector that are prioritized for the development and management of irrigation systems have not been able to reduce the percentage of poor people, especially in rural areas. The special allocation fund for poverty alleviation in the water sector that is prioritized for optimizing installed drinking water sources has not had an impact on increasing the quantity and quality of clean water consumption by villagers who have difficulty accessing clean water. The provision of clean water in water-prone areas requires large funds and a long process of work to find a water center. The distribution of water from springs to the houses of villagers living scattered requires very high funds for the purchase and installation of pipes. Water poverty alleviation funds that are not sustainable will still leave poverty in villages.

Fourteen indicators of poor people according to the BPS. The special allocation fund for poverty alleviation thematic assignment in the water sector when related to fourteen indicators of poor people according to BPS, is aimed at reducing the use of drinking water sources from wells/unprotected springs/rivers/rainwater. But the reality and the distribution and the program that does not continue still leaves many residents who consume water from unprotected springs, river water and rainfed water. This condition rationalizes research findings that state that special allocation funds for poverty reduction in the water sector have not been significant for reducing rural poverty. These findings are in line with the research (Ismail & Hakim, 2014) which found special allocation funds had no correlation to poverty in Bali Province; (Khomaini, 2020) which states that the direct cash transfer program has no impact on the subjective welfare of recipients because this assistance only provides benefits for short-term consumption. These findings did not successfully support the findings (Von Braun & Gatzweiler, 2014) which states that the transfer funds provided to the regions are able to encourage economic growth and free people from the shackles of poverty in Malawi Moscow.

The Effect of SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Field of Sanitation on Poverty Reduction in Rural Areas.

Special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the field of sanitation are prioritized to increase the coverage of sanitation services, especially for wastewater management facilities, in the form of community-based communal and individual facilities and/or the addition of house connections to centralized systems and improving the quality of local systems (Regulation of the Minister of Public Works and Public Housing Number 47/PRT/M/2015, 2017). The priority of using poverty alleviation funds in the field of sanitation for wastewater management, both individual and communal, is

related to the sixth poverty indicator out of fourteen poverty indicators, namely water consumption derived from drinking water sources from wells/unprotected springs/rivers/rainwater. Poverty alleviation funds in the sanitation sector prioritized for Wastewater management have not been able to reduce water consumption from unprotected spring sources, water consumption from rivers, and rainwater consumption. This fact is an affirmation of statistical findings that have not significantly assessed poverty reduction funds, or thematic assignments in the field of sanitation to reduce rural poverty. These findings did not support the research (Najmuddin & Rizkiyani, 2022) who found special funding assignments in the field of Education increase economic growth where economic growth will reduce poverty. This finding is also not in line with the research (Agatha & Uliansyah, 2021) which found that special allocation funds hurt poverty in Papua Province. Other findings that also contradict these results state that special allocation funds can improve sanitation and health and reduce poverty in Aceh, Indonesia (Yusri, 2022).

The Effect SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignments in the Field of Settlement and Housing on Rural Poverty Reduction.

The results of Statistical analysis show that the value of the Beta coefficient is 3.010. The statistical value of 2.983 > from t table 1.96 and the sig value of 0.007 < 0.05. This shows that special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the field of housing have a positive and significant effect on reducing rural poverty. This research found that special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the field of housing and housing positively affect rural poverty. Positive influence means that an increase in the amount of funds leads to an increase in the percentage of rural poverty reduction, a decrease in the amount of funds will decrease the percentage of rural poverty reduction. Special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the field of settlements and

housing are prioritized to improve community access to livable houses through improving the quality of self-help housing for low-income people (*Masyarakat Berpenghasilan Rendah/MBR*) to prevent housing and slum areas in disadvantaged areas, borders, and small and outer islands (Regulation of the Minister of Public Works and Public Housing Number 47/PRT/M/2015, 2017).

In the implementation of this ministerial regulation, poverty alleviation funds are used for self-help housing stimulant assistance or in the community known as the house renovation program. The house renovation program is a housing assistance provided to low-income people to reduce the number of uninhabitable houses in Indonesia. Self-help housing stimulant assistance is divided into two, namely the construction of new self-help houses and the improvement of the quality of independent houses. Improving the quality of Self-Help Houses is an activity to repair uninhabitable houses into habitable ones which is carried out on the initiative and efforts of the community either individually or in groups (Stimulan & Swadaya, 2021). The four indicators of habitable houses are building resilience, adequacy of residential area, ability to access adequate drinking water, and ability to access proper sanitation. Houses that do not meet the four indicators are declared uninhabitable houses. The criteria for an uninhabitable house are: a) roof structures that endanger occupants such as fragile, broken and leaking, b) frames and walls are not suitable so as not to protect the occupants of the house, c) the floor of the house is soil, d) no air ventilation and no natural light is penetrating the room in the house, e) does not have bathing, washing and latrine facilities, and f) does not have a landfill.

The use of special allocation funds for thematic poverty reduction assignments in the field of housing and housing to improve the quality of independent houses and the construction of new independent houses to reduce the number of uninhabitable houses certainly reduces the poor, especially the BPS poor population indicators, number 1, 2, 3 and 4

of fourteen indicators. The first indicator is that the floor area of residential buildings is less than 8 square meter per person. The second indicator is the type of residential floor made of cheap earth/bamboo/wood; the third indicator of the type of wall of the dwelling from bamboo/low-quality wood/wall without plaster; The fourth indicator has no facility to defecate. Special allocation funds for thematic poverty alleviation assignments in the field of housing and housing are used to improve the quality of houses that originally had no facilities for defecation facilities to exist, houses that were originally walled from cheap earth/bamboo/wood to houses with adobe walls and cement floors.

The special allocation fund for poverty mitigation is used for self-help housing stimulant assistance consisting of the construction of new self-help houses and improving the quality of independent houses, increasing the number of habitable houses and thus reducing the number of poor people. Poverty reduction through self-help housing stimulant assistance will be faster in the village because the village community works together to improve their relatives' houses so that the process of building and rehabilitating houses is completed faster. The special allocation fund for poverty reduction in this research is proven to reduce rural poverty in line with several studies that found that poverty reduction funds implemented through house renovation were proven to reduce poverty in rural areas of Tejakula District, Buleleng Regency, and in rural areas in Pandeglang Regency (Viyulia et al., 2023); (Karmini & Arnawa, 2020). Poverty alleviation funds for house renovations in addition to having a positive impact on reducing the number of poor people, turned out to have a negative impact because they made villagers lazy and spoiled (Suprpta, 2019).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The question to be obtained in this study is whether the SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignments in Water, Sanitation,

and Settlement and Housing Fields affects reducing rural poverty. The results of statistical analysis supported by facts and data show that SAF for the Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Water Sector has an effect but is not significant in reducing rural poverty. SAF for the Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the Water Sector is prioritized to increase the development of irrigation systems and increase the number of installed water sources. The development of irrigation systems for now cannot enjoy the results to reduce poverty because it requires a relatively long time. The second priority is the use of water poverty alleviation funds to increase the number of installed water sources. Until now, the second priority has also not significantly reduced poverty with indicators of decreasing water consumption from unprotected springs, river water, and rainfed water. This condition occurs because the process of finding water sources to distribute water to target households requires a long process, a relatively large amount of funds, is sustainable, and is fully supported by the community in its maintenance.

The SAF for Thematic Poverty Reduction Assignment in the field of sanitation was found to have not significantly reduced rural poverty. This fund is prioritized to handle wastewater management both individual and communal. The use of funds for this priority has not been able to reduce rural poverty, especially referring to poverty indicators of water consumption from unprotected springs, river water, and rainfed water. SAF Poverty Reduction Assignment Thematic Assignment in the field of housing has proven to have a positive and significant effect on reducing rural poverty. This special allocation fund is prioritized to improve people's access to livable houses. The priority implementation of use is the self-help housing stimulus program. This program is implemented through two schemes, namely improving the quality of self-help houses and building new self-help houses. Improving the quality and making of new houses reduces the number of uninhabitable houses. The special allocation fund for thematic poverty

assignments in housing and settlements has reduced the number of houses with a floor area of less than 8 square meter, dirt floors, and earth/bamboo/ cheap wood walls as the first, second, and third poverty indicators out of fourteen poverty indicators according to BPS.

The implications of research to realize the first Village Level Sustainable Development Goals/SDGs, namely Villages without poverty, refer to research findings, the special allocation funds for poverty reduction thematic assignments in the field of water and sanitation should be transferred to regions in increasing numbers, especially to areas that still have high rural poverty rates. Special allocation funds for poverty alleviation in the field of housing and thematic assignments that are proven to reduce the percentage of rural poverty should be better managed, to solve all poverty both in rural and urban areas.

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