DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION OF KOTAKU PROGRAM IN COMPLETING SLUMS IN CILEGON CITY

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ABSTRACT

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| This study aims to examine the form of development communication in the implementation of the Slum-Free City Program (KOTAKU) in Karangasem Village, Cilegon City as an effort to overcome slum areas. The approach applied is descriptive qualitative with a case study method. Data collection was carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using a participatory communication approach that includes monologue, dialogue, and multitrack communication. The results of the study indicate that development communication in the KOTAKU Program is not fully participatory. There is still a tendency for one-way communication (monologue) from program implementers to the community. Although there is a dialogue space such as a community discussion forum, community involvement from the planning process to evaluation has not been maximized. Meanwhile, the multi-track communication approach has not been implemented optimally, due to the lack of synergy between stakeholders. |

*Keywords: Development Communication, Participation, KOTAKU, Slums, Cilegon*

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of uninhabitable residential environments is one of main challenges in urban development. The efforts to overcome this problem are often directly proportional to sustainable growth and new slums appearance, if it is not be surmounted with effective steps, incentives, and a comprehensive and targeted approach. (Handika & Yusran, 2020)

Cilegon City is one of regions that has problems with less habitable areas, and this is confirmed in the Decree (SK) regarding Slum Areas from the Cilegon Mayor No. 600/Kep.314-DPU/2016 which assigns the settlement locations and slum housing. This region includes 10 sub-districts spread across 7 districts, such as Bulakan, Karangasem, Deringo, Lebak Denok, Tegal Ratu, Grogol, Jombang Wetan, Lebak Gede, Mekarsari, and Pabean. The slum areas are managed through the KOTAKU Program.

The Slum-Free City Program (KOTAKU) is a national initiative and plays the role of a "platform" to develop slum areas, which unites various resources and financing, including the central government, provinces, cities, or regencies, donors, the private sector, communities, and other stakeholders. ([www.pu.go.id](http://www.pu.go.id)).

In its implementation, the KOTAKU Program management collaborates with various stakeholders. Such as city government, sub-district government, youth organizations, and other private institutions. The local government leads and collaborates with policy makers starting from the planning phase, implementation, utilization, until prioritizing participation. The main purpose of the KOTAKU program is for repairing access to infrastructure and basic services in underprivileged areas, while supporting the productive creation and sustainable settlements. (Zethary & Purnaweni, 2019).

Development communication that focuses on participatory communication is really important, because it enables active society involvement in the development process. In this approach, communication does not only occur in one direction from the government or authorities to the public, but involves the society as the main subject who has a role in determining the direction, process, and development result. (Syifa Rohimah, Muh. Ilham, 2019).

In an attempt to resolve social problems, participatory communication is an essential approach because it provides equal space for the society to deliver opinions, feelings, experiences and information to reach a joint solution. This communication not only guarantees access and expression freedom, but also encourages active society involvement in every decision-making process. (Bordenave, 1972 in White, 2004; White & Ascroft, 2004).

Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) emphasize that the core of participatory communication places in four main components, there are dialogue, voice, educational media, and action-reflection. Dialogue is an important foundation because it encourages horizontal communication, that is all parties can convey ideas through the action-reflection-action cycle. This process begins with the problem identification, which often shows information gaps and social or economic injustice. Furthermore, the voice element refers to critical awareness in interpersonal relations, which emphasizes providing space for marginalized groups to express concerns, formulate solutions, and act. The media also has a central role in supporting participatory communication, particularly, media communities which can be a channel for marginalized groups to get involved in public discussions and voice relevant issues. Unfortunately, the important role of the media is often not explicitly explained in participatory communication practices. Finally, action-reflection describes the society empowerment process after through dialogue and joint consensus. The actions taken are the result of collective reflection on the conditions faced, so the rising solutions that truly appear from the society needs and awareness itself.

2. methodology

The method applied is qualitative research with descriptive characteristics. The collected data will be interpreted to obtain results. In this research, several methods were used to collect data, including: Observation, interviews, and documentation obtained from the Cilegon City Government, the KOTAKU Program Coordinator, and the society that received benefits from program.

Qualitative research is an exploratory activity to understand social conditions through complex descriptions, formed with language, providing in-depth reports about respondents, and conducted naturally, ([F Fathurokhmah](https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=fE04eZ4AAAAJ&hl=id&oi=sra), 2024)

The analysis is produced by performing data reduction, all data or information obtained by the author in the field will be taken from the object being studied so that it becomes part of the themes that will be explained. Then after the author selects the data according to the theme, it will be presented and described by referring to the concepts or theories used (data display). Finally, after a discussion based on the field situation and concepts, a conclusion will be drawn, (Widodo & Permatasari, 2020). The location of this study was in Karangasem Village, Cibeber District, Cilegon City, Banten Province. Karangasem Sub District is an area experiencing major slums and is handled by the KOTAKU Program.

The information gathering technique was carried out through in-depth interviews. This interview aimed to understand the experiences and personal perspectives of the informants about the roles they play as program implementers. The questions in the interview were semi-structured, which provided space to explore themes that emerged as the interview progressed. This interview aimed to understand the experiences and personal perspectives of the informants about the roles they play, (Hikmalia & Cangara, 2022)

3. results and discussion

1. **SLUM MANAGEMENT IN CILEGON CITY**

In this discussion, the author will review the relationship between field data and the principles of ideal communication, entitled "*Communication of The Kotaku Program Development in Clearing Slums in Cilegon City."* Kotaku, which is an abbreviation of Kota Tanpa Kumuh, is an initiative issued by the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing since 2016 under the Directorate General of Human Settlements. The main objective of the Kota Tanpa Kumuh (KOTAKU) program is to improve public access to infrastructure and basic services in uninhabitable residential areas in urban areas. This step is focused on creating a good, useful, and sustainable living environment. This program also proposes to increase active community participation and society collaboration among the central government, local governments, and various other stakeholders in overcoming problems in slum areas. According to data from the Directorate General of Human Settlements, Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing (PUPR), the KOTAKU Program has several specific targets, namely: (1) increasing access for residents in slum areas to basic facilities such as clean water, sanitation systems, local roads, drainage, and waste management; (2) strengthening the capacity of local governments and communities in planning and implementing residential area development with a collaborative approach; and (3) encouraging the participation of all parties in an integrated and sustainable manner in handling slum settlements (Ministry of PUPR, 2020).

TABLE 1. One of the slum areas that has been completed is Karangasem Village, Cilegon City with a total slum area of ​​6.3 Ha with the following slum profile:

| **Parameter** | **%** | **Score** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Building Irregularity | 45% | 1 |
| 2. Building Density Does Not Comply with Provisions | 0% | 0 |
| 3. Non-compliance with Building Technical Requirements | 50% | 1 |
| 4. Coverage of Environmental Road Services | 21% | 0 |
| 5. Environmental road surface quality | 30% | 1 |
| 6. Availability of Safe Access to Drinking Water | 98% | 5 |
| 5. Unfulfilled drinking water necessity | 4% | 0 |
| 8. Inability to Drain Water Runoff | 0% | 0 |
| 9. Lack of Drainage | 12% | 0 |
| 10. Drainage Construction Quality | 55% | 3 |
| 11. Wastewater Management System does not comply Technical Standards | 16% | 0 |
| 12. Wastewater Management Infrastructure does not comply Technical Requirements | 16% | 0 |
| 13. Waste management infrastructure does not comply with technical requirements | 0% | 0 |
| 14. Waste Management System that does not comply with Technical Standards | 100% | 5 |
| 15. Unavailability of Fire Protection Infrastructure | 70% | 3 |
| 16. Unavailability of Fire Protection Facilities | 100% | 5 |

Based on information from the slum area profile, the government through the KOTAKU Program intervened in Karangasem Village with various approaches. This includes improvements to physical conditions such as infrastructure and also changes in the way people think, all aimed at achieving a better living environment.

The discussion on participatory communication is described through research using three approaches, there are monologue communication, dialogic communication, and multi-track communication.

1. **Monologue Communication in the KOTAKU Implementation Program in Karangasem Village, Cilegon City**

In the implementation of the Slum-Free City Program (KOTAKU) in Karangasem Village, Cilegon City, the communication approach used in the initial stage tends to be a Monologue. Monologue communication is a form of one-way communication that is oriented towards conveying information without providing space for direct feedback from the audience. In this context, information is conveyed by one party\_in this case the government or program implementer—to the community as the recipient of the message (Wijaya, 2000). Communication is considered successful if there is a common understanding between the communicator and the recipient, although in the Monologue approach, the process is more informative than interactive.

The first form of Monologue communication appeared in the issuance of the Decree (SK) of the Mayor of Cilegon Number 600/Kep.364-Disperkim/2020 dated December 30, 2020.

Table 2. SK Slums of Cilegon City

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Subdistrict | Ward | Slum Area (Ha)  2016 | Slum Area (Ha)  2020 |
| 1 | Cibeber | Bulakan | 2,75 | 2,75 |
| 2 | Karangasem | 6,3 | 3,3 |
| 3 | Citangkil | Deringo | 5,80 | 5,80 |
| 4 | Lebak Denok | 2,39 | 2,39 |
| 5 | Ciwandan | Tegal Ratu | 1,90 | 1,90 |
| 6 | Grogol | Grogol | 6,3 | 6,3 |
| 7 | Jombang | Jombang Wetan | 0,80 | 0,80 |
| 9 | Pulomerak | Lebak Gede | 2,9 | 2,9 |
| 9 | Mekarsari | 14,12 | 14,12 |
| 10 | Purwakarta | Pabean | 0,30 | 0,3 |

In the decree, Karangasem Village is categorized as a slum area with an area of ​​6.3 hectares in 2016 and has been reduced to 3.3 hectares in 2020. This decree is the formal and administrative basis for Karangasem's inclusion in the priority handling of the KOTAKU Program.

To convey this information to the public, the government does not only rely on administrative channels, but also involves community leaders as opinion leaders. The role of opinion leaders is important in a one-way communication strategy to bridge information from the government to the public. According to Rogers in the theory of diffusion of innovation, opinion leaders are individuals who have a significant influence in influencing the attitudes and behaviour of others in their community towards an innovation or new idea (Rogers, 2003). Nurudin (2012) divides opinion leaders into two types, there are opinion giving and opinion seeking. Opinion giving refers to figures who actively disseminate information to their community, while opinion seeking refers to figures who become references for information when sought by the public.

In the context of the KOTAKU Program, Mas Rusdi as a local community figure in Karangasem Village plays an important role as an active opinion leader (opinion giving). This was emphasized by the statement of the Coordinator of KOTAKU Cilegon City, Uso Sutoyo, who called Mas Rusdi a "key figure" who communicates intensively with the community and is the spearhead of changes in behaviour and mindset of residents related to environmental management (Interview, June 9, 2024). Mas Rusdi uses various communication strategies to build public awareness, including a persuasive approach through an invitation to imagine the benefits of an organized environment, as well as a firm approach such as not serving the administrative needs of residents who reject the KOTAKU program. This strategy shows a one-way communication effort carried out actively by community leaders as an extension of the program's authority.

In addition to Mas Rusdi, the role of Mr. Mansur, the Youth Leader and Head of the Community Self-Help Group (KSM), also stands out as an opinion leader in conveying program information to the community. Based on the statement of Nurul Hadi, Senior Facilitator of KOTAKU, Mr. Mansur also serves as the Head of the RW so that he has social legitimacy in directing community activities such as mutual cooperation and environmental maintenance (Interview, June 9, 2024). The existence of opinion leaders in the social structure of the local community is an important element in disseminating program information in a monologue but contextual manner.

Furthermore, monologue communication is also strengthened through the use of visual print media such as banners, posters, and billboards distributed at various strategic points in the Karangasem area. This media is used as a means of conveying information widely to the public regarding the intent and purpose of the KOTAKU program. According to Uso Sutoyo, program socialization is not only carried out through face-to-face meetings, but also through visual media so that information reaches people who cannot attend socialization activities in person (Interview, June 9, 2024). Media such as banners serve as one-way communication that addresses the mental aspects of the community, providing an initial understanding of the importance of collaboration in addressing slum areas.

Picture 1Kotaku Program Socialization Documentation

Results should be clearly described in a concise manner. Results for different parameters should be described under subheadings or in separate paragraph. Table or figure numbers should be mentioned in parentheses for better understanding.

The discussion should not repeat the results, but provide detailed interpretation of data. This should interpret the significance of the findings of the work. Citations should be given in support of the findings. The results and discussion part can also be described as separate, if appropriate.

1. **Dialogic Communication in the Implementation of the KOTAKU Program in Karangasem Village**

The application of dialogic communication in implementing the Slum-Free City Program (KOTAKU) in Karangasem Village, Cilegon City, demonstrates a strategic approach that fosters active community participation in all stages of development. Dialogic communication is a form of two-way communication that emphasizes the interactive and equal exchange of ideas between participants, rooted in the principles of mutual respect, openness, and collaboration (Freire, 1970). This approach is viewed not merely as a tool for conveying information, but also as a process for creating shared meaning between program managers and beneficiary communities.



According to Freire (1970), dialogic communication is the basis of liberating education, where each individual in the communication process is positioned as an active subject. In the context of development, this is in line with the communication strategy implemented by the KOTAKU Program manager in Karangasem Village. In an effort to resolve slums, equal communication is used to align the positions between the facilitator as communicator and the community as communicant. The goal is to avoid unilateral domination and open up space for active society involvement in the development process.

The implementation stages of the KOTAKU Program start from pre-observation activities to implementation and utilization of results. Dialogic communication is the main element in the planning and socialization stages. At this step, program managers conduct dialogue with local governments and sub-districts to align program plans. Socialization is not only intended to convey information, but also to build mutual understanding with the community. This is important in creating social support and active participation from residents.

Furthermore, KOTAKU management provides training to local community elements, including members of the Community Empowerment Agency (BKM), Community Empowerment Groups (KSM), village officials, and builders. This training aims to broaden the understanding that development does not only target physical aspects, but is also oriented towards developing human resource capacity (Uso Sutoyo, personal interview, 2025).

This approach is in line with the view of Servaes and Malikhao (2015) who stated that participatory communication in social development places the community at the center of the change process. In this view, communication is not positioned top-down, but through a dialogue process to reach understanding and consensus in decision-making. Aunul, Riswandi, and Handayani (2021) also emphasized that participatory communication requires recognition of participants as subjects who have the same rights to speak and listen. Dialogue is the main foundation in development communication, because it ensures the exchange of information and cooperation between parties in the development process.

Community participation is not only evident in discussion forums; it also manifests in tangible actions, such as the construction of vertical gardens and children's playgrounds. This initiative results from collaboration between program managers and residents, with some of the funding coming from KOTAKU and the remainder being a form of community self-help, including donations of plants and flower pots (Nurul Hadi, personal interview, 2025). This type of participation reflects the success of dialogic communication in mobilizing the community to become directly and voluntarily involved.

Thus, dialogic communication in the implementation of the KOTAKU Program in Karangasem Village not only facilitates the technical implementation of the program, but also strengthens social capital and partnership relations between the government, facilitators, and the community. The success of the program is not only measured by physical development, but also by increasing collective awareness, sense of ownership, and community collaboration. Therefore, the dialogic approach can be a model for inclusive and sustainable development communication.

1. **Multi-Track Communication Approach in the Implementation of the KOTAKU Program**

In the implementation of the Slum-Free City Program (KOTAKU) in Karangasem Village, Cilegon City, the communication approach applied is collaborative, by combining monologue and dialogic communication. Although there is a combination of both, field practice shows that the dominant approach is dialogic communication. This strategy has proven to be more effective in building relationships and shared awareness between program implementers and target communities.

Dialogic communication in this program is demonstrated through the intensity of interaction between program implementers, Community Empowerment Agency (BKM), and community leaders with residents directly and continuously. One of the main challenges faced is community resistance to spatial planning, especially related to land ownership and utilization. To overcome this, program implementers take a personal approach, including visiting residents' homes and conveying information through print media such as banners and billboards. This effort aims to educate the community to understand the urgency and benefits of building concrete road access. As explained by the Head of BKM (Informant 3), some residents initially did not agree, but after being given an understanding through the socialization process, they began to realize the importance of the program and were willing to participate.

The communication model implemented by the KOTAKU Program refers to the concept of multi-track communication as proposed by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009). This model emphasizes the importance of flexibility and adaptability in the implementation of development communication. Monologue communication, in this context, is implemented in the form of one-way information dissemination such as campaigns through mass or print media. Meanwhile, dialogic communication focuses on creating a two-way interaction space that allows the community to explore problems, build new knowledge, and find solutions together. The main goal is to produce useful information collectively, not just convey messages in one direction.

A concrete example of this dialogic communication practice can also be observed in the park development activities led by the Community Self-Help Group (KSM). The Head of KSM (Informant 4) shared how he engaged the community in efforts to beautify the environment through voluntary contributions, like donating flower pots or plants and arranging their respective surroundings. The community's involvement in various roles highlights the effectiveness of the dialogic approach in fostering a sense of ownership over the results of development.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

1. Conclusion

The Slum-Free City Program (KOTAKU) is a national initiative aimed at overcoming uninhabitable settlement areas by involving many parties, including the central government, local governments, communities, and the private sector. The focus of this program is to involve the active role of local governments and public participation in planning and implementation, as well as to support the targets of the 2015–2019 RPJMN in overcoming the problem of uninhabitable settlements in urban areas.

According to research conducted in Karangasem Village, Cilegon City;

1. The development communication that is built is still participatory but not yet fully independent and sustainable.

2. The communication method used is a combination of monologue, dialogic, and multitrack approaches.

3. The monologue approach is seen in the delivery of information on the Slum Decree from the Cilegon City Government, through banners installed in the village environment, while the dialogic approach is seen in training with residents, the formation of monitoring institutions and community discussion forums. This dialogical approach not only functions as a medium for disseminating information but also as a channel for exchanging ideas and solving problems in the development process. (Author, 2025).

1. **SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the results of research on development communication in the KOTAKU Program in Cilegon City, the researcher provides several suggestions that are academic and practical. First, the local government as the main actor in development is advised to be more careful in conveying messages and directions of development policies so that they are conveyed effectively to the society. Second, the organizers of the KOTAKU Program need to pay attention to optimizing the information media used, so that the society in each sub-district better understands the activities and objectives of the program. Third, the society receiving the benefits of the program is expected to always be motivated to protect the environment and actively participate in supporting the mission of Cilegon City as a "New, Modern, and Dignified" city (Author, 2025).

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