

Development Communication Efforts by the Government of Eureunpalay Village, Cibalong Subdistrict, Tasikmalaya, in Addressing Unemployment

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Abstract

Unemployment is one of the primary issues in Eureunpalay Village, Cibalong Subdistrict, Tasikmalaya. Low education levels, limited access to skills training, and a lack of economic opportunities are the main contributing factors. The Eureunpalay Village Government implements development communication strategies to address unemployment through participatory and inclusive approaches. This study aims to analyze the development communication efforts carried out by the village government in tackling the unemployment problem. The research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques including observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The results indicate that development communication is conducted through various strategies, such as village deliberations, utilization of social media, and community economic empowerment programs. The village government actively socializes programs such as cash-for-work initiatives, skills training, and the development of agrotourism-based village tourism in Pasir Hantap. Moreover, open and collaborative communication between the village government, the Village Consultative Body (BPD), and the community contributes significantly to the effectiveness of the implemented programs. The study concludes that effective development communication can enhance community involvement in efforts to reduce unemployment. Therefore, it is necessary to optimize village communication media, strengthen the communication capacity of village officials, and conduct regular evaluations of the communication strategies applied.

Keywords: Communication; Eureunpalay Village; Organizational Communication; Unemployment; Village Head

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment is one of the many pressing issues faced by developing countries such as Indonesia (Alifah & Imaningsih, 2023), including in rural areas like Eureunpalay Village in the Cibalong District of Tasikmalaya. The high rate of unemployment in various villages is caused by several factors, such as low levels of education, lack of skills relevant to the demands of the labor market, and limited access to opportunities for improving economic prospects. This condition not only affects individual or family welfare but also significantly influences the social and economic stability of the village as a whole (Hidayat, 2025). According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) of West Java, the unemployment rate in rural areas remains relatively high, particularly in regions that face limited access to education and skills training aligned with the needs of the labor market (BPS Jabar, 2023).

This situation presents a substantial challenge for village governments in their efforts to improve community welfare.

In this context, the village government—especially the village head—plays a crucial role in addressing unemployment issues through effective development communication. Development communication refers to a process used by governments or local leaders to disseminate information, facilitate community participation, and promote the social changes necessary to enhance the quality of life in the area. It is essential to create shared understanding and foster community involvement, both of which are critical to the success of development initiatives (Vellayati et al., 2016). Through appropriate communication strategies and initiatives, the village government can educate residents about available employment opportunities, provide mentoring and skills training, and motivate the community to actively participate in development programs initiated by the village administration (Ramadhania, 2024).

However, the success of development communication efforts is highly dependent on how well the messages delivered are received and understood by the community. Therefore, it is essential for village governments—particularly village heads—to adopt an inclusive and participatory communication approach that enables community members to contribute meaningfully to the development process (Setiade et al., 2025). Such an approach facilitates community involvement at every stage of the communication process, from planning to evaluation of programs carried out by the village government. This, in turn, fosters a sense of ownership and encourages active participation from the community in addressing unemployment issues (Rizqiani, 2023).

According to Mefalopulos dari (Anisti et al., 2022), effective development communication in practice must be capable of overcoming various communication barriers that may arise in rural communities, such as low literacy levels, limited access to information, and minimal community involvement in decision-making processes. Consequently, any initiatives undertaken by the Eureunpalay Village government to address unemployment through development communication must be carefully designed with due consideration of the local characteristics and the village's social dynamics. Based on the above background, this study aims to explore the development communication efforts of the Eureunpalay Village government in Cibalong District, Tasikmalaya, in addressing the issue of unemployment.

METHOD

To obtain a comprehensive and holistic understanding, this study employs a descriptive

qualitative research approach aimed at analyzing the development communication efforts undertaken by the government of Eureunpalay Village, Cibalong District, Tasikmalaya, in addressing unemployment. The descriptive qualitative approach is utilized to establish a connection between the research subjects and objects in order to examine them empirically, non-empirically, and theoretically. This method is intended to explain and describe the categories of data used (Pradhana et al., 2023). Moreover, the descriptive qualitative approach seeks to construct a systematic, accurate, and factual depiction of all observable phenomena. Data will be collected through transcripts of observations and interviews with the Head of Eureunpalay Village, located in Cibalong District, Tasikmalaya. The data obtained will be descriptive in nature, and the analysis will be conducted inductively—beginning with observations of the research object.

According to Noeng Muhadjir, data analysis is an effort to systematically search for and organize records of observations, interviews, and other sources in order to enhance the researcher's understanding of the studied case and to present it as findings for others. To deepen this understanding, the analysis must be followed by efforts to interpret and derive meaning from the data (Rijali, 2019). Accurate data collection techniques are essential for generating credible data, and conversely, improper techniques may compromise data credibility (Daulay et al., 2022). In this study, in-depth interviews were conducted with the Secretary of Eureunpalay Village, acting as a representative of the Village Head, serving as the key informant. These interviews involved individuals directly connected to the research objectives. A key informant is defined as someone who possesses specific knowledge and is willing to share that knowledge with the researcher (Abdillah & Novikha Putri, 2020). This study also employed documentation as a data collection technique, particularly during interviews with the key informant. Documentation serves not only as a record or archive but also as concrete evidence that supports the validity of the information provided (Siagian et al., 2024). Once the necessary data were collected, the researcher analyzed the findings using the theoretical frameworks and concepts previously outlined in this study. Through this process of data analysis, it is expected that the research problems identified can ultimately be addressed and answered.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Village Government of Eureunpalay has undertaken various development communication efforts to address unemployment in the area. Before discussing the specific measures implemented, it is important to understand the process of village head elections in

Eureunpalay. In an interview with the Secretary of Eureunpalay Village, Mr. Agung explained, “The village head is elected every six years. In 2019, Mr. Yadi Suryadi was elected for his first term. However, with the recent legislative changes extending the term of village heads to eight years, incumbents are now eligible to serve for the extended duration. As for the village secretary, there is no election; the position is filled through a selection process in accordance with prevailing regulations. In our village, there is no deputy head, so the secretary directly reports to the village head.” Based on this interview, it can be concluded that the village head in Eureunpalay was initially elected for a six-year term, which has now been extended to eight years under the new regulation. Meanwhile, other village officials, including the village secretary and hamlet heads, are appointed through an open selection mechanism. Changes in village apparatus are not automatically triggered by the election of a new village head but follow mandatory retirement at the age of 60 or are prompted by specific conditions, such as legal infractions or resignation.

Mr. Agung also described the primary livelihoods of village residents: “Most villagers work as agricultural laborers, primarily cultivating rice. There are also seasonal agricultural products, such as timber, coffee, and cardamom, but due to their seasonal nature, they are not the main sources of income.” In addition to agricultural labor, some residents work as construction workers, porters, and civil servants—primarily as teachers. Others are employed as drivers on a monthly rotational basis or as factory workers. Thus, agriculture remains the backbone of the village economy, while other occupations serve as supplementary income sources. When asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Agung stated, “During the pandemic, unemployment increased. To address this, the village government implemented labor-intensive cash-for-work programs funded by the Village Fund. Unemployed residents were employed in activities such as cleaning village roads. In addition, capital assistance was provided to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) through banking cooperation schemes. This support was given to individuals who had already established businesses, such as food vendors.” These programs enabled residents to maintain income despite the difficult circumstances brought on by the pandemic. Regarding the village government's communication with the community, Mr. Agung said, “We use WhatsApp groups for quick communication but also hold monthly meetings with neighborhood and community unit leaders (RT and RW), members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD), and hamlet heads. These meetings are used to share the latest information and discuss various village issues.” Weekly coordination meetings are also held at the village government level to

ensure more intensive communication. Mr. Agung also elaborated on the village's organizational structure: "There are eight hamlet heads, each overseeing six to seven RTs and a maximum of two RWs. If there is important information from the central government or policy plans, the village head communicates it first, followed by BPD members." The BPD, consisting of nine members, functions as a partner to the village government, supervising and coordinating policy. In every meeting, BPD members are given the opportunity to express criticism and suggestions before the village head provides responses. Concerning the village head's campaign strategy, Mr. Agung explained, "Mr. Yadi consistently maintains good communication with village officials and the community. He is known as an open, respectful leader who consults before making decisions. His humility and respectful treatment of subordinates have earned him the community's trust." His inclusive leadership style and effective communication have been key to building public confidence.

In terms of programs already implemented, Mr. Agung stated, "Mr. Yadi's vision and mission cover four main areas, one of which is village security. He reactivated neighborhood watch posts (pos ronda) and provided incentives to community security (Linmas) members who previously received no allowances. They also received specialized training in security and agriculture." Another program being developed is a tourism village in Suka Asih Hamlet, specifically the Pasir Hantap tourism area. "This will be an agrotourism site with various fruit-bearing plants such as coconuts, mangoes, and oranges. Currently, we are in the early stages, which include land clearing and infrastructure preparation. The project is expected to yield results within the next seven years," said Mr. Agung. The land used belongs to the village and is managed through agreements with the community, allowing the village to reclaim it if necessary. Mr. Agung also reported that unemployment in Eureunpalay Village has started to decline: "After the pandemic, many residents returned to work, both in urban areas and in agriculture. Although some are still unemployed, the number is not significant, as they can still earn income through informal work." This indicates that the village economy is gradually recovering, with more residents returning to productive activities. Overall, development communication in Eureunpalay Village has been effectively implemented through various economic empowerment programs and open communication mechanisms between the village government and the community. The village administration continues to strive for improved community welfare by adopting policies that emphasize transparency, participation, and empowerment.



Figure 1. Interview with the Secretary of Eureunpalay Village, Mr. Agung
Source: Personal Documentation, 2025

In the context of development communication, the role of communication in village governance serves as a fundamental aspect in disseminating information and encouraging community participation in village development programs. Communication can be defined as the process of delivering messages from a communicator to a communicant with the aim of producing certain effects, whether in the form of changes in attitudes, opinions, or behaviors (Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2017). The Village Government of Eureunpalay utilizes communication as a tool to foster community engagement in various aspects of development, including local resource management, security improvement, and the development of rural tourism. The communication process in Eureunpalay Village can be categorized into two main forms: primary communication and secondary communication (Gori & Simamora, 2020). Primary communication is evident in the direct interactions between the village government and the community through regular meetings, village deliberations (*musyawarah*), and socialization of development programs. These gatherings enable the government to directly deliver information on village policies, development plans, and various community issues.

Such direct communication allows for immediate feedback, enabling the community to actively contribute input toward the policies adopted by the village government. Meanwhile, secondary communication is facilitated through the use of communication media such as village WhatsApp groups. These channels enable rapid dissemination of information to the community, ensuring that residents remain informed about village developments even if they cannot attend face-to-face meetings. The development communication practices implemented in Eureunpalay Village can also be analyzed through several models of development communication, namely: linear, relational, and convergent models (Mukarom, 52 | International Journal of Environmental Communication, Vol. 3, No. 1, Juni 2025

2020). The linear communication model is reflected in the one-way communication flow where the village government delivers information about policies and programs to the public. Although in this model the community acts as passive recipients, opportunities are still provided for them to ask questions or respond during discussion sessions organized by the village.

The relational communication model is evident in more participatory interactions between the village government and the community. Here, the government not only transmits information but also builds strong social relationships with the residents through personal approaches, such as home visits or informal gatherings. The convergent communication model, on the other hand, is exemplified in joint decision-making processes that involve multiple stakeholders, including the village head, the Village Consultative Body (BPD), and community representatives. In this model, communication goes beyond the mere transmission of information and serves as a collaborative process to reach consensus on the direction of village development. One effective example of development communication in Eureunpalay Village can be seen in the village security improvement program. The village government employed a participatory communication approach by reactivating neighborhood watch posts and establishing a Civil Protection Unit (Linmas).

The implementation of this program followed a hierarchical communication structure, beginning with the village head conveying the initiative to village officials, who then passed it along to RT and RW leaders, and finally to the broader community (Waranti et al., 2024). Through effective communication, the community understood their critical role in maintaining village security and willingly participated in night patrols and training sessions organized by the government. The provision of incentives for Linmas members also served as a persuasive communication strategy to motivate their active involvement.

In addition to the security program, development communication was also applied in the tourism village project located in Suka Asih Hamlet, particularly in the Pasir Hantap tourism area. Through this initiative, the village government aimed to raise public awareness of the potential of local tourism as a new source of income. Communication efforts extended beyond informing residents about the development plan to educating them on the concept of agrotourism and its long-term economic benefits for the village. Using the convergent communication model, the village government engaged the community in every stage of planning—from land clearing and planting fruit trees to managing tourism operations through the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes). This approach fostered a cooperative relationship

between the village government and the community, contributing to the long-term sustainability of the project. In terms of employment, development communication also played a key role in reducing post-pandemic unemployment. The village government used communication as a tool to disseminate information about available job opportunities in agriculture, industry, and informal sectors. Moreover, communication was crucial in the implementation of cash-for-work programs, in which the village government socialized the program's mechanisms and benefits to residents affected by the pandemic (Gori & Simamora, 2020).

Through effective communication, previously unemployed individuals were able to access relevant information on job opportunities aligned with their skills, gradually reducing unemployment rates in the village. From the various programs implemented, it is clear that communication plays a crucial role in the development process in Eureunpalay Village. By applying multiple communication models, the village government ensures that policy and development program information is effectively conveyed to the public. Furthermore, communication facilitates harmonious interactions between the government and the community, enabling an effective and participatory development process. This aligns with the concept of development communication, which seeks to influence public behavior to achieve predetermined development goals (Mukarom, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, communication plays a crucial role in supporting the development process in Eureunpalay Village. The village government implements various forms of communication, including primary communication through direct interactions in village deliberations and secondary communication via digital media such as WhatsApp. Both methods are utilized to convey information and encourage community participation in development programs. The application of various communication models demonstrates that communication functions not only as a means of delivering information but also as an instrument to foster community involvement in the development process. Linear communication is employed in conveying policy information, relational communication is used to build close social interactions with the community, while convergent communication plays a role in joint decision-making between the village government and residents.

The effectiveness of development communication in Eureunpalay Village is reflected in the successful implementation of several strategic programs. The village security enhancement program is realized through the reactivation of neighborhood watch posts (pos

ronda) and the formation of Linmas members. Additionally, the development of agrotourism-based village tourism in Pasir Hantap is one of the efforts to increase the village's economic potential. In the employment sector, the village government implements cash-for-work programs and provides support to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to address post-pandemic unemployment impacts. With effective communication, the community gains a better understanding of the various development programs carried out. Furthermore, good communication also encourages active community participation in program implementation, enabling the village development to proceed more optimally and sustainably.

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