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Aminah Swarnawati: Participatory Communications in The Strengthening Community–Based Forest and Watershed Management Program (SCBFWM) on Dieng Plateau
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# PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATIONS IN THE STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY–BASED FOREST AND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (SCBFWM) ON DIENG PLATEAU

**Aminah Swarnawati**

*University of Muhammadiyah Jakarta, Indonesia*

aswarnawati@yahoo.com

## Abstract

*This paper discusses the critical lands in the Dieng Plateau as a result of large-scale exploitation of land for potato crops, through community-based forest management and watershed management programs (SCBFWM), government together with NGO Non-Governmental Organizations and other stakeholders seeking solutions overcome the condition. The purpose of this paper is to describe how the success of a community development program is the participation of the target group and the establishment of dialogical communication among stakeholders. As a step to answer the objective, the analysis is done by using participatory communication theory,, dialogical communication and the concept of community development. In Freire's most participatory communication is the dialogue between the stakeholders involved, the type of participatory communication that is built is empowerment participation, of course, by following the stages in communication participation. The method used is literature study, both about SCBFWM program as a form of community development program and literature about participatory communication and dialogical communication. As a result of this program which has ended in 2014, it is considered quite successful in giving awareness to the farmers, and even has resulted in policy in the form of Local Regulation (Perda Daerah Aliran Sungai / DAS) in Kabupaten Banjarnegara. As a CD program, although terminated, the program should continue, if the program stops and community activities as a result of the program does not change or return to old habits, the program is not successful.*

*Keywords: Participatory Communication, Community Development, Dialogical Communication*

## INTRODUCTION

The big concept of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is over in 2015. Currently MDGs have been transformed into SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), also known as the Global Goals. SDGs are a set of targets related to international development in the future. The targets are made by the United Nations and promoted as a global Goal for Sustainable Development. They replace the MDGs that are no longer valid starting from the end of 2015. Active SDGs from 2015 to 2030.

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Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs program is concerned not only with human development, but also economic and environmental development as part of its agenda. The MDGs are considered top-down while the SDGs are structured by involving countries that enforce SDGs, be it government or civil society. There are three important objectives of SDGs that need to be addressed: firstly, SDGs are expected to end all forms of poverty in any country; second, SDGs aim to end all forms of hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Third, the target of SDGs is to ensure a healthy life, and to promote the welfare of all people in the world at all ages.

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In relation to 3 indicators related to SDGs, especially related to environmental development, this paper tries to raise environmental problems in Dieng Plateau which developed into critical land due to large exploitation especially of potato farm. Dieng mountains are areas in the border area between Banjarnegara District, Wonosobo Regency, Batang Regency and Temanggung Regency with a forest area of approximately 20,161 hectares of state forest managed by Perhutani and 19.472 hectares of community forest. This area is located at an altitude between 1,500 to 2,095 meters above sea level with a slope of more than 15-40% and in some areas> 40% of the population's livelihood is mostly farmed. Administratively Dieng Plateau is located in two districts of Banjarnegara District and Wonosobo Regency (Suara Merdeka, 30 August 2005).

As a Protected Area Function, the Dieng Plateau should be protected from production activities and other human activities that could damage its protected functions. But in fact this area is used by humans to meet their needs by exploiting the land on a large scale to be cultivated seasonal crops of potatoes. Potato plant is a pre-eminent commodity for farmers in Dieng Plateau.

Potato plants have been excellent for people in the Dieng Plateau. But because in the cultivation technique does not pay attention to the rules of conservation then the cultivation of potatoes has changed the face of Dieng Plateau. In addition, the pattern of cultivation with the gulu system and downhill and not circular hill is an action that can accelerate erosion. Exploitation of land that is less attention to conservation efforts that obviously will damage the ecology, (Suara Merdeka, June 19, 2006).

The area of potato plants in the Dieng area continues to grow from year to year. On the one hand this condition is very beneficial for improving farmers' standard of living. But on the other hand the effect on environmental damage caused greater. Mountainous areas with a slope of more than 40%, have been heavily exploited for potato plantation. Even more than 900 hectares of protected forest in Wonosobo have been cleared.

The face of Dieng Plateau as a nature reserve and heritage area has been much different. Mountains that used to panorama beautiful with various Hindu relics temple, now change the face into bald mountains. The site of the Dieng Temple complex, which covers 259,866 square meters in Wonosobo, has been looted and the protected forest in the temple complex has been converted into agricultural land (Suara Merdeka, 2005).

Land conversion in Dieng Plain has caused severe land degradation. Critical land that is above the tolerance threshold occurs everywhere due to the use of forest land into agricultural land. Based on data from Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) ARUPA who care about Dieng, currently there are 4,758 ha. potato plants in Dieng that enter Banjarnegara region, and 3,000 ha more in Wonosobo.

So about 7,758 ha more Dieng land has become a critical land. Critical land in Dieng Plateau can still produce because potato plants are driven by manure or chemical fertilizers in large doses. This indicates that the actual level of soil fertility is very low. The critical land conditions indicated by the low level of soil fertility indicate high environmental damage in the Dieng Dieng highland area.

In connection with the circumstances described above, this paper would like to see how the community is involved in various efforts to protect ecosystems and reduce critical land due to excessive use of chemical fertilizers that in the long run will certainly affect the lives of farmers there. Indeed, the Regional Government of potato plant is a fruit simalakama because it is a profitable commodity and enough to prosper the farmers in the Dieng Plateau, but the excessive land exploitation will also be bad in the future.

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## Literature Review

1. PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

Participatory communication is a term that denotes the theory and practices of communication used to involve people in the decision-making of the development

The term "participatory development communication" is often used to draw attention to an emphasis on two-way communication processes, and to distance them from one-way communication approaches that involve disseminating messages, transmitting information, or persuading people to change their behavior. It wants to give preference to horizontal approaches that encourage dialogue centered on problem analysis and a search for solutions, as well as bottom-up approaches that aim to raise the awareness of decision-makers (Otsyina & Rosenberg, 1997 and Srampickal, 2006: 6)

Participatory communication is an approach based on dialogue, which allows the sharing of information, perceptions and opinions among the various stakeholders and thereby facilitates their empowerment. ... Two-way **communication** should be adopted from the beginning and be applied consistently (Tufte, 2009:199, Servaes, 2005: 93)

A. Six stages of Participatory Communication

1. Preliminary situation assesment
   Situation assessment could be done most effectively in a participatory manner through PRCA or participatory rural communication appraisal. Three kinds of analysis are done in PRCA: audience analysis, programme analysis, and situation analysis. Audience analysis Audience analysis is essentially "listening" to what potential users of information need. They are the ones whom the communication program intends to reach. Users of information are also referred to as stakeholders of a communication program. Collecting baseline information about these stakeholders is an essential preliminary step towards developing a communication strategy. Segmentation, or dividing large groups of stakeholders into smaller groups, helps achieve focus in communication strategy development. Segmentation is usually done in two ways

2. Communication strategy design
   Data that have been collected need to be analyzed and interpreted carefully as these will serve as bases of the communication strategy. Communication strategy is the combination of methods, messages, and approaches by which the planner seeks to achieve the communication objectives. The second phase of the process charts the direction of the communication program. It is at this stage where objectives and the corresponding standards and indicators for monitoring and evaluation are formulated. The very word strategy suggests a unique combination of techniques or approaches by which to achieve program goals and objectives. During strategy design formulation, planners also begin thinking of the following: a) Preliminary action plan; b) Communication modes/approaches; and c) Basic messages and discussion themes.

3. Participatory design of messages and discussion themes
   The main activities under the message design phase are selection of message appeals and approaches and selection of communication channels and media. The big challenge at this stage is the development of the big idea or the creative concept around which the whole communication program would revolve. Professional communication outfits are often tapped to develop messages and communication materials for the above-mentioned processes. The disadvantage of this approach, aside from the huge expense involved, is the lack of participation from the stakeholders themselves. Involving the stakeholders in message and materials development increases the likelihood that the communication program would help achieve the bigger development goals.

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4. Communication methods and materials development

    Actual development of communication methods and materials is undertaken once the communication strategy is in place. A useful reminder to planners concerns the importance of pretesting not only the materials themselves, but also the creative idea and the messages. Pretesting allows for adjustments in the communication activities before substantial time, efforts, and resources are spent on their actual production. Pretesting measures potential effectiveness of communication messages, methods, and materials in terms of their being able to attract attention, to be understood, to be accepted, and to generate the feeling of self-involvement among the stakeholders.

5. Management and implementation

    Management of the organization carrying out the communication program and networking are two of the most important activities in this phase. A manager's internal task entails preparing or training people for their respective tasks in the organization within a positive organizational climate. The external task calls for forging linkages with key organizations engaged in the same area of development work. After all the preparatory stages, launching and carrying out the communication campaign or program now takes priority. Together with this come monitoring the process of dissemination, transmission, and reception of programme inputs. The management aspect also covers the management improvement process and the concept of leadership as they affect implementation of communication programmes.

6. Evaluation

    Although the last step is labeled evaluation, it is not complete without its twin concept of monitoring. Monitoring enables the planners and implementors to answer the question: Are things going all right? Evaluation, on the other hand, provides answers to the question: So, did it work? Together, monitoring and evaluation help planners and implementors: a) Achieve better understanding of how the communication programme is working; b) Make informal decisions regarding operations and adjust to changing conditions; c) Ensure most effective and efficient use of resources; d) Look at the extent to which the program/project is having or has had the desired impact; and Fine-tune future programme impact. (Tufte & Mefalopulos, 2009: 5-6)

B. Types of participatory communication
Participation can be used as a goal or as a tool for. The four categories below indicate different levels of participation and communication:

a. Passive Participation

    The stakeholders of a project essentially act as "empty vessels" and receive information. Feedback is minimal if at all and participation is assessed through methods such as head counts.

b. Participation by Consultation

    Researchers or "experts" pose questions to the stakeholders. Input can be provided at different points in time but the final analysis and decision-making power lies in the hands of the external professionals whom may or may not take the stakeholders decisions into consideration.

c. Participation by Collaboration

    Groups of primary stakeholders are formed in order to participate in discussion and analysis. Objectives are predetermined. This method incorporates components of horizontal communication and capacity building among all stakeholders.

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    d.  Empowerment Participation

Primary stakeholders are capable and willing to become involved in the process and take part in decision-making. Outsiders are equal partners, but the stakeholders make the final decisions as ownership and control of the process rests in their hands. Knowledge exchange leads to solutions (Tufte & Mefalopulos, 2009).

## C. Two Major Approaches to Participatory Communication

There are two major approaches to participatory communication that everybody today accepts as common sense. The first is the dialogical pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1970, 1973, 1983, 1994), and the second involves the ideas of access, participation and self-management articulated in the UNESCO debates of the 1970s (Berrigan, 1977, 1979).

Every communication project that calls itself participatory accepts these principles of democratic communication. Nonetheless there exists today a wide variety of practical experiences and intentions. Before moving on to explore these differences it is useful to briefly review the common ground. The Freirian argument works by a dual theoretical strategy. He insists that subjugated peoples must be treated as fully human subjects in any political process. This implies dialogical communication. Although inspired to some extent by Sartre's existentialism –a respect for the autonomous personhood of each human being–, the more important source is a theology that demands respect for otherness –in this case that of another human being. The second strategy is a moment of utopian hope derived from the early Marx that the human species has a destiny which is more than life as a fulfilment of material needs. Also from Marx is an insistence on collective solutions. Individual opportunity, Freire stresses, is no solution to general situations of poverty and cultural subjugation. These ideas are deeply unpopular with elites, including elites in the Third World, but there is nonetheless widespread acceptance of Freire's notion of dialogic communication as a normative theory of participatory communication. One problem with Freire is that his theory of dialogical communication is based on group dialogue rather than such amplifying media as radio, print and television. Freire also gives little attention to the language or form of communication, devoting most of his discussion to the intentions of communication actions.

The second discourse about participatory communication is the UNESCO language about self-management, access and participation from the 1977 meeting in Belgrade, the former Yugoslavia. The final report of that meeting defines the terms in the following way. » Access refers to the use of media for public service. It may be defined in terms of the opportunities available to the public to choose varied and relevant programs and to have a means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organizations. » Participation implies a higher level of public involvement in communication systems. It includes the involvement of the public in the production process, and also in the management and planning of communication systems. » Participation may be no more than representation and consultation of the public in decision-making. » On the other hand, self-management is the most advanced form of participation. In this case, the public exercises the power of decisionmaking within communication enterprises and is also fully involved in the formulation of communication policies and plans (Servaes and Malikhao, 2005)

The paradigm of participatory communication is characterized by the accommodation of the aspirations of the (top) parties (the Government) and the bottom (community) in the local development program. Therefore, the participatory approach is more appropriate in the era of globalization, because according to Sumardjo (1999), the approach is more likely to establish the integration between national interests with the interests of society and the potential (and problems) of the local environment. The approach puts the human dignity more equitably, the existence of the society with its aspects of interests and abilities become more recognizable and appreciated, thereby promoting greater community participation (in Gita Mulyasari, 2009).

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## 2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Aworking definition of community development in simple but broad terms is:

> "A process: developing and enhancing the ability to act collectively, and an outcome: (1) takingcollective action and (2) the result of that action for improvement in a community in any or all realms: physical, environmental, cultural, social, political, economi, etc" (Philips & Pittman, 2009).

There are four other form of "community capital" often mentioned in the community development literature (Green and Haines, 2002 in Philips and Pittman, 2009):
1. Human capital: labor supply, skills, capabilities and experience, etc.
2. Physical capital: buildings, streets, infrastructure, etc.
3. Financial Capital: community financial institutions, micro loan funds, community development banks, etc.
4. Environmental capital: natural resources, weather, recreational opportunities, etc.

All five types of community capital are important. However, it is difficult to imagine a community making much progress without some degree of social capital or capacity.

Usually in community development can not be separated from ecosystem components. these components at least cover four aspects. components of the ecosystem include at least four aspects: 1) ecological aspects, ie community development associated with the dimensions contained in the ecosystem itself. especially in the utilization of resources useful for the benefit of community life. the resources consist of biological resources and non-biological resources. both forms of resources serve as a source of energy for community life. 2) economic aspects, namely community development closely related to the increase in the welfare of the community is characterized by the level of income gained in the size of time and goods. 3) socio-cultural aspects; ie community development related to human or institutional capacity building by joint learning to build groups, create communication networks between groups and mobilize joint forces to advocate according to the capacity and needs of groups in order to utilize existing resources for their survival. 4) political aspect; ie community development is closely related to human consciousness to be able to develop a decent and harmonious life by utilizing existing resources in the right ways (Hasim and Remiswal, 2009)

## 3. DIALOGUE COMMUNICATION

Dialogue is a descriptive and evaluative term. As a descriptive term, dialogue is a synonym for conversation. This descriptive meaning is rooted in Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian scholar who wrote in the first half of the 20th century. Every speech, the basic and fundamental unit of speech, is dialogical: responding to what was said before and at the same time about something new (Eadil 2009)

There are different definitions of dialogue that complement each other. Bohm (1996) defined discourse as an exchange of opinions and information in three forms: everyday (ordinary) conversation, discussion and dialogue. The discourse of conversation is a spontaneous movement between asking and answering questions about each other's lives. The aim is to establish, maintain or develop social contact. The discourse of discussion is an exchange of opinions in a negotiationcontext. Discussion emphasizes analysis, but will not take us very far beyond our various points of view. The aim is to decide how things are or should be. The discourseof dialogue is an exchange of ideas and meanings, and the purpose is learning, more than judging (Karlsson, 2001)

Buber (1961) posited three types of dialogue: technical, debate and genuine. Technical dialogue is a form of parallel monologues where two or more people come together in the same room, but in fact are talking to themselves without interest in what the others have to say. The debate is also a 'false' dialogue, very similar to a discussion in a negotiation context, i.e. most often a situation where various people state their opinions, theories and whatever reasons or evidence they have to support their opinions. The communication that takes place often resembles bargaining or negotiation. The aim is to decide about how things are or should be. A genuine dialogue, on the other hand, is an exchange of ideas and meanings that develops our thoughts and promotes awareness of our thoughts

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and values. In a dialogue nobody is trying to win; and everybody wins if nobody wins (Karlsson, 2001).

## SCBFWM Program On Dieng Plateau

Seeing that ensuring environmental sustainability is one that does not meet its targets in the MDGs, it is relevant to look at how programs related to it are done. This paper is limited to the SCBFM program, which is a community-based forestry and community-based strengthening program.

The objectives of the SCBFWM project are to support government efforts to reduce forest and land degradation, restore / rehabilitate watershed functions and environmental services for the improvement of people's welfare. The efforts undertaken in the SCBFWM program are to build models of forest and river basin management by involving the community and strengthening the capacity of the parties, ie communities and government (Bina DAS, 2014)

SCBFWM in the period 2010 to 2014 has established and revitalized several community groups (CBOs) in the Write Sub-waters precisely in Kabupaten Banjarnegara and Wonsobo. These groups are provided with assistance by field facilitators and trainings ranging from administration to other thematic trainings. In addition, SCBFWM also developed a small grant scheme for forest and river basin management activities that the planning is entirely undertaken by the group (Bina DAS, 2013) Large-scale conversion of land into agricultural land (for potato cultivation) causes dangers to land degradation in the Dieng area. Currently, farmers are faced with problems of water scarcity, soil erosion and degradation of land quality. The total cover of forest land in Sub Hutan Tulis Hulu is only 1.46%, while the remaining land cover is dominated by agricultural land (70.86%), (5.90%), and resettlement (21.77%). Prior to the arrival of potato farms, local communities in Sub Hutan Tulis Hulu manage their lands as mixed gardens, mixing woody trees, fruit trees, and many other tree plants. Today, many of the mixed gardens have been transformed into potato farmlands (Bina DAS, 2014)

Many local farmers have very small or no landless land because of massive potato farming. The huge economic profit of potatoes (lucrative) has brought large farmers, large corporations (including Indofood), and elites from different regions invested in potato farming by buying land and hiring local farmers into wage labor in potato fields the newly awakened. Some of the land they purchase is largely individually owned land closely covered with wooden tree species.

After selling the lands to elite farmers or to "large" farmers or large landowners, local farmers seeking to continue practicing potato farming are keen to acquire new lands for potato fields. Most of them started clearing State forest land (production forests and protected forests) into potato fields. In doing so, they usually pay some dues to low-ranking government employees. So far, there are no sanctions for the two groups (government employees who conduct illegal activities by requesting commissions in the form of illegal money and local farmers who convert forest lands into potato fields). This action has expanded almost all over the Dieng Plateau (Dieng Plateau), including throughout the Sub-Das Tulis.

Local governments in 6 (six) districts in Central Java province have worked together to produce a Grand Plan to rehabilitate the degraded Dieng Plateau, which includes Upper Sub-Das Tulis Hulu, through a scheme to build institutional capacity. To develop this General Plan, a Working Team, the Dieng Recovery Team (TPKD), has been established, consisting of multi-stakeholder representatives. In doing its work, the team has worked with NGOs, universities, and other stakeholders. The development of the General Plan is funded by several donors, including DFID and JAVLEC (local NGOs).

Since 2003, District Forestry Offices, especially in Banjarnegara district, have supported local communities through the development of demonstration plots for integrated conservation by planting crops combined with forest tree species such as puspa (Schima walichii) with chili and papaya (Carica papaya). Local governments in the districts of Banjarnegara and Wonosobo have ensured some funding (mostly from APBN) and grants (overseas) to help local communities to improve terraces/terasering.

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The main problem faced by society in this area is land damage caused by potato cultivation. Prior to the arrival of potato farms, local communities in Sub-DAS Tulis Hulu manage their land as mixed gardens. Yet all the mixed gardens are now destroyed into deforested and landslide-prone farmlands. Farmers who own a small lot of land even sell the land to large potato farmers.

One important contribution of the SCBFWM program in the region is to facilitate a number of forest and land rescue measures in the Write Sub-Basin. Among them are joint initiatives that resulted in a grand design of Dieng rehabilitation by six districts and facilitated the formation of the Dieng Area Recovery Work Team (TKPD) in Banjarnegara and Wonosobo.

Efforts to eliminate the community's dependence on potato cultivation results are very destructive of the land is realized by providing help seeds Carica, Eggplant Netherlands to Purwaceng. Not stopping there, the SCBFWM program also provides Carica packaging and packaging tools that help the group self-reliant and supplement family income.

One group that received assistance from SCBFWM was CBO Perkasa 2 which is now more confident with their ability to be independent and to organize. Already embedded in their minds a strong determination to restore the fertility of the land and the economic welfare of the family. "We are ready to be independent. What it means is SCBFWM if we can not be independent, "said Ma'ruf, Chairman of CBO Perkasa with confidence.

The long-term commitment of local governments to conserve watersheds also materialized when Banjarnegara District published a Regional Regulation on Watersheds (DAS), making Banjarnegara the first district in Indonesia with a watershed.( Bina DAS, 2014)

In relation to the above problems the position of potato farmers is indeed an economic potential but can be a disaster to the ecology if not controlled, local government trying to find a win-win solution, where farmers do not have to lose their livelihood by not neglecting the environment so that development can sustainable. In this connection, a proper model or communication strategy among stakeholders should be sought. In this case many related aspects, such as socio-cultural aspects of local farmers' communities, economic aspects associated with potato commodities are quite economically valuable and also the political aspects associated with government as policy actors

The bargaining position of farmers with the government certainly can not be ignored, however, the government can not arbitrarily forbid farmers to plant potatoes, but if they reach land that is not allocated to agriculture because it serves as a protected forest then here the government also can not do omission, through the Community-based Forest Reinforcement and Watershed Management project the government seeks to work with communities to address issues related to these issues

Participatory communication here is very relevant to the purpose of this community development program, where communication is built is dialogic communication and there are elements of empowerment, not something forced, but by giving awareness of the long-term effects of morning life of Dieng community itself if they continue continue to exploit the land for the benefit of the present only.

In line with Paulo Freire's opinion that to subjugate society, it must be treated as a fully human subject in every political process. This means dialogical communication. The paradigm of participatory communication is characterized by the accommodation of the aspirations of the upper (government) and the bottom (community) in the local development program. So with the paradigm of participative communication can be achieved the desire of both parties, namely the obligation of the government to preserve the environment and the interests of the community will also meet the needs of eco-economics with environmentally friendly agriculture

## CONCLUSION

SCBFWM is a community development program to address critical land issues in the Dieng plateau due to massive exploitation of land for potato cultivation, the program is over and produces little public awareness of the dangers of farming without regard to the long-term effects on the environment

The program has also succeeded in producing policies such as Perda on DAS (Watershed) in banjar Negara district). Analyzed using participatory communication because the community-based

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program must be able to attract the participation of the community, therefore it is necessary that the right communication strategy so that the community becomes aware and willing to be involved, and participatory communication is the right approach

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