

The Role of the Community in Improving the Quality of Slums in Pematang Siantar: The Case of the Bantan Area


Edi Saputra¹, Abdi Sugiarto²

^{1,2}Urban and Regional Planning Study Program, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi
Email: abdi_sugiarto@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the Role of the Community in Improving the Quality of Slums in Pematang Siantar: The Case of the Bantan Area. This research uses a qualitative approach. The type of research used is a case study. The Bantan area in Pematang Siantar is used as a study location to obtain empirical data on the role of the community in the process of improving the quality of slums. Data analysis is carried out with a thematic analysis approach. In this study, data from interviews, observations, and documents were compared to ensure the consistency and validity of the information obtained. The results of the research of the community in the Bantan area, Pematang Siantar, play a very important role in efforts to improve the quality of slums. Active involvement of residents in every stage, from planning to implementation and maintenance of program results, is the key to the success of settlement improvement. Several obstacles faced by the community in participating, such as limited knowledge, economic limitations, and unequal access to information, are the main obstacles in achieving maximum results. Strategies such as community counseling and education, mutual cooperation revitalization, strengthening the citizens' economy, and simplifying access to bureaucracy and information, have been proven to encourage community participation more effectively. Good collaboration between the government, local organizations, and the community can accelerate the process of improving the quality of slums in the Bantan area.

Keywords: The Role of the Community, Improving the Quality of Slums and Cases in the Bantan Area

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Corresponding Author:

Abdi Sugiarto,
Urban and Regional Planning Study Program
Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi
Jl. Gatot Subroto KM. 4,5 Medan 20122, Indonesia.
Email : abdi_sugiarto@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id

Article history:

Received Oct 25, 2024
Revised Oct 29, 2024
Accepted Nov 02, 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

Slums are one of the main problems faced by many cities in Indonesia, including in Pematang Siantar. Slums are characterized by inadequate infrastructure, poor sanitation, low quality of housing, and lack of access to basic facilities such as clean water and electricity. This condition not only lowers the quality of life of the community, but also contributes to health problems, social order, and increases the burden on the government in providing basic services. The Bantan area in Pematang Siantar is one of the areas that experienced this condition. This area is characterized by dense population, low quality of infrastructure, and complex socio-economic problems. The government, through various programs such as the City Without Slums Program (KOTAKU), seeks to reduce or even eliminate slums. However, the government's efforts will not run optimally without the active participation of the local community. The role of the community in improving slums is very important because they are the parties who feel the most impact from poor environmental conditions. By involving the community directly, environmental improvement programs will not only be more relevant and effective, but also more sustainable. Participating communities will feel responsible for maintaining the improved environment and preventing the recurrence of slum problems.

In the context of the Bantan area, the potential for community involvement includes various forms, ranging from mutual cooperation activities, active roles in empowerment programs, to involvement in decision-making related to environmental improvement. Therefore, this study aims to dig deeper into the role of the community in improving the quality of slums in the Bantan area, Pematang Siantar. Law Number 1 of 2011 concerning Housing and Settlement Areas has one of its scopes, namely the prevention and improvement of the quality of housing and slums. This emphasizes that the state must prevent the emergence of new settlements and slum housing and improve the quality of existing

settlements and slum housing which is carried out with the principle of certainty of settlement that guarantees the right of every citizen to have a proper place to live. The alleviation of settlements and slum housing is a national development priority because it is included in the National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN) 2005-2025 and the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2015-2019 which mandates the development and development of urban areas through handling the quality of the residential environment, namely improving the quality of slums, preventing the growth and development of new slum settlements, and sustainable livelihoods.

Slums are an urban disease that must be addressed. Population growth is one of the factors that encourage settlement growth. Meanwhile, social, economic conditions and the ability to manage the city can determine the quality of settlements. Slums are a major factor in the growth of the poor population and the lack of government attention in controlling growth and in providing adequate urban services to the community. Slums are cities that were initially small-scale residential areas, and then there were developments as a result of population growth, changes in socio-economic conditions, and cultural conditions and interactions between one city and another, (Sobirin, 2014). The factors that cause slums are divided into 2 things, namely direct factors and indirect factors. According to (Heriyanto, 2017) The direct factors that cause the emergence of slums are physical factors (housing conditions and environmental sanitation), Housing environmental factors that cause slums include house conditions, land ownership status, building density, Building Base coefficient (KDB), etc., while environmental sanitation factors that cause problems include clean water conditions, toilets, waste management, household wastewater disposal, drainage, and roads. While indirect factors are factors that are not directly related to slums but these factors have an impact on other factors that are proven to cause slums, including economic factors related to slums, namely the economic level of the community (community income) and community employment, social factors where the social condition of the population includes the number of family members, education level, and health level, as well as cultural factors related to the problem of habits and customs. In addition, the habit factor is also a driver of the emergence of slums. This habit factor is also what causes people to feel more comfortable throwing their wishes in waterways and gardens even though it is not healthy, than throwing their wishes in public toilets.

The development carried out by the government certainly aims to achieve a prosperous society. So that the position of the community is an important position in the process of implementing development carried out by the government. Development will never achieve its goals if it always leaves the community. Therefore, community participation is very necessary. However, in reality, currently many people are participating, but not all of the people who participate have a sense of concern for their environment. Therefore, in addition to inviting the community to participate, the facilitator must also instill a sense of community concern for their environment because this sense of concern is very necessary in development, because the development carried out is a long-term development. Thus the community will maintain the results of the development In the initial observations made by the author, the method applied by the facilitator team in increasing public awareness in handling slum areas in the research area is the adult education approach method, where this adult education approach method is carried out in a relatively short time because considering that they (adults) in addition to having a lot of experience, feelings and self-esteem (which is not easy and does not want to be patronized), and in general they also have a lot of activities (not much time to study), so this method must always consider: the time of the organization that does not interfere too much with the main activities/work, the shortest possible time and the use of more teaching aids.

However, the phenomenon is that people living in slum areas still have a lower level of concern. This can be seen from the condition of the drainage network in residential locations that have poor quality/inadequate, garbage that accumulates out of place, and residential areas are not served by an adequate environmental road network. The City Without Slums program uses the synergy of a collaboration platform between the Regional Government and other stakeholders in the Regency/City as well as community-based infrastructure development to accelerate the handling of urban slums in order to realize livable, productive, and sustainable settlements. The role of the Regional Government in the implementation of housing and urban slum handling must of course be supported by other parties, so that the handling of the slum can be integrated and become a joint movement and support from the community is obtained from the involvement of the active role of the community, through the role of the Community Self-Help Agency (BKM) to achieve the desired program. In the midst of the government's efforts to overcome the problem of slums, the role of the community is one of the key factors in the success of programs to improve the quality of settlements. The community has an important role, both

as implementers and as beneficiaries of various settlement revitalization programs. However, in the Bantan area, active community participation in efforts to improve the quality of settlements still faces various challenges. Many factors contribute to low community participation in environmental improvement in slums, including low levels of awareness, limited access to information and resources, and high dependence on external assistance. These problems pose obstacles in realizing a more livable environment in the Bantan area.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Slum Settlements

Slums are residential areas that have characteristics of an uninhabitable environment, both in terms of sanitation, access to clean water, and infrastructure quality. According to Law Number 1 of 2011 concerning Housing and Settlement Areas, slums are areas that do not meet the eligibility requirements in terms of building safety, population density, and inadequate basic infrastructure. Turner (2016) stated that slums reflect an imbalance in the urbanization process accompanied by limitations in the provision of decent housing. Slums are characterized by limited access to basic facilities such as clean water, sanitation, and adequate drainage. Dovey (2012) added that slums are often places to live for low-income people who do not have access to formal housing and are integrated into the urban structure.

The Role of the Community in Improving the Quality of Slums

Community participation is an important component in improving the quality of slums. According to Arnstein (2016) in his theory known as the Ladder of Citizen Participation, community participation can be divided into various levels, ranging from non-participation to full community control over the decision-making process. In the context of slums, the expected participation is the active involvement of the community in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of environmental improvement programs. Paul (2017) defines community participation as the direct and active involvement of citizens in the decision-making process related to issues that affect their lives. In the context of slums, this role includes community contributions in infrastructure planning, environmental hygiene programs, and waste management and sanitation. Rifkin (2016) stated that community involvement in the development process, especially in slums, is very important to ensure that the programs implemented are in accordance with local needs and conditions. People who are actively involved are also more likely to have a sense of ownership of the program, thereby increasing the sustainability of improvement efforts.

Case Study: Bantan Area in Pematang Siantar

Slums in the Bantan area, Pematang Siantar, reflect problems that are often found in many urban areas of Indonesia. The area has experienced a variety of problems, ranging from poor infrastructure to inadequate sanitation. Based on the theories that have been explained, community participation in Bantan is an important factor in efforts to improve the environment. However, problems such as low education levels, low social awareness, and limited access to resources are the main obstacles. Through the implementation of community empowerment strategies involving education, training, and collaboration with various parties, it is hoped that the quality of slums in Bantan can be significantly improved.

METHOD APPROACH

This research uses a qualitative approach. According to Creswell (2014), a qualitative approach aims to understand social phenomena through the perspective of the individuals involved. In this context, the research focuses on the role of the community in improving the quality of slums, where researchers seek to explore the understanding and experience of the community regarding the condition of their settlements. This research uses a qualitative approach with the aim of understanding and exploring the role of the community in improving the quality of slums in the Bantan area, Pematang Siantar. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on social aspects and community interaction, and tries to understand the community's perspective on slum problems and their improvement efforts.

The type of research used is a case study. The Bantan area in Pematang Siantar is used as a study location to obtain empirical data on the role of the community in the process of improving the quality of slums. This case study aims to provide a deep understanding of social phenomena that occur in the

environment. This type of research is a case study, as expressed by Yin (2018). Case studies allow researchers to delve into complex phenomena in the context of daily life. The Bantan area was chosen as the location of the case study to understand how the community interacts and contributes to the process of improving the quality of the slum environment.

This research was carried out in the Bantan slum area in Pematang Siantar. This location was chosen because it has significant challenges in terms of infrastructure, sanitation, and quality of life. As explained by Nunan (2019), local context is very important in qualitative research to obtain relevant and accurate data. The research subjects consisted of local community members, including community leaders, residents living in the Bantan area, as well as representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the government. Miles and Huberman (2014) emphasized the importance of selecting informants purposively to obtain in-depth and quality information.

The data collection techniques in this study include:

1. **In-Depth Interviews:** Interviews are conducted with the local community and other stakeholders. According to Kvale (2017), in-depth interviews allow researchers to explore an individual's views, experiences, and motivations in more depth.
2. **Participatory Observation:** The researcher is involved in the daily activities of the community in the Bantan area. Spradley (2018) explained that participatory observation provides a better contextual understanding of social behavior and interaction.
3. **Documentation Study:** The researcher collects related documents, such as reports on settlement improvement programs and government policies. Bowen (2019) states that documents can provide additional evidence and useful context in qualitative research.

Data analysis is carried out with a thematic analysis approach. According to Braun and Clarke (2016), thematic analysis is an effective way to identify, analyze, and report patterns (themes) in data. The analysis process includes:

1. **Data Collection:** Data from interviews, observations, and documents are collected systematically.
2. **Transcription:** The interviews conducted will be transcribed for easy analysis.
3. **Data Coding:** Data is grouped into categories based on emerging themes.
4. **Theme Interpretation:** The identified themes will be analyzed to understand the role of communities in improving the quality of settlements.

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses a triangulation **technique**. Denzin (2018) stated that triangulation can be done through various data sources to strengthen research findings. In this study, data from interviews, observations, and documents were compared to ensure the consistency and validity of the information obtained. In carrying out research, the researcher adheres to the principles of research ethics. As stated by Orb, Eisenhauer, and Wynaden (2011), researchers must maintain the confidentiality of informants, ask for permission before conducting interviews, and ensure that informant participation is voluntary. Researchers are also responsible for reporting research results accurately and honestly.

3. DISCUSSION

The Bantan area in Pematang Siantar is one of the areas that has experienced significant challenges related to slums. In this context, local communities play an important role in efforts to improve the quality of the environment. This discussion aims to analyze the role of the community and its impact on improving the condition of slums.

Conditions of slums in the Bantan area, Pematang Siantar

The condition of slums in the Bantan area, Pematang Siantar, reflects various complex social and infrastructure problems. Here is an overview of the conditions in the area:

1. **Poor Infrastructure Quality** The condition of the roads in the Bantan area has not been paved or damaged, making it difficult to access, especially during the rainy season. Many roads are muddy and not suitable for motorized vehicles. Inadequate Drainage Waterways are often clogged with garbage, causing waterlogging or flooding during heavy rains. This worsens the conditions of settlements, especially in the rainy season, when water is difficult to drain properly
2. **Housing Quality of Non-Permanent Buildings** Many houses in the Bantan area are built makeshift with materials such as wood, zinc, and plywood. These uninhabitable building structures are vulnerable to extreme weather, such as heavy rain and strong winds. **Population Density:** The settlements in this area are very dense, so the houses stand tightly together without sufficient spacing for good ventilation or lighting.

3. **Sanitation and Environmental Health Lack of Access to Clean Water** Access to clean water is very limited. Many houses rely on water sources from wells or canals that are not always guaranteed to be clean. **Poor Sanitation:** Sanitation facilities, such as public toilets, are very minimal and poorly maintained. Most residents do not have proper private toilets, thus creating unhygienic conditions and increasing the risk of spreading diseases. **Infectious Diseases:** Poor sanitation conditions contribute to the high rate of infectious diseases, such as diarrhea, skin infections, and respiratory diseases.
4. **Poor Waste Management** Waste accumulation often accumulates in various corners of the region, because there is no good waste management system. This causes the area to become dirty and unhealthy, and increases health risks for residents.
5. **High Poverty Rate Economic Limitations** Most residents in the Bantan area live below the poverty line. Their incomes are low, and access to stable jobs is very limited. Many residents work in the informal sector with uncertain incomes. **Limitations of Education and Social Services:** Lack of access to education and social services also worsens the social and economic conditions of the community. This hinders them from improving their standard of living and improving the living environment.
6. **Environmental Challenges of Flood Vulnerability** The Bantan area is often hit by floods, especially during the rainy season. Poorly functioning drainage and garbage buildup in the sewers exacerbate this problem. **Lack of Green Space** This dense settlement also lacks green open space, which has an impact on air quality and the environment in general.
7. **Improvement Initiative by the Gotong Royong Community** Despite the slum conditions, the people of the Bantan area often work together to clean the environment, repair roads, and make simple repairs to their houses. However, these efforts are often hampered by resource limitations. **Collaboration with NGOs** Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local governments have started projects to improve settlement conditions, such as sanitation programs and waste management training.

Challenges and the role of the community in efforts to improve the quality of settlements in the slum area

The role of the community in efforts to improve the quality of settlements in slums is very important and strategic. The people living in the region have in-depth local knowledge of the conditions and needs of their region. Here are some roles that can be taken by the community in improving the quality of settlements in slum areas:

1. **The Community Infrastructure Development Initiative** in the Bantan area shows concern for infrastructure, such as road and waterway repairs. Through forums or community groups, they organize mutual cooperation activities to repair damaged roads and clean waterways from garbage. These efforts not only improve accessibility, but also help prevent frequent flooding in slums.
2. **Provision of Sanitation and Clean Water** Many communities have initiated programs to build wells and public toilets. This is done with the help of NGOs and governments that provide facilities and training for better sanitation management. The existence of better sanitation facilities has a positive impact on public health and reduces the risk of diseases caused by poor sanitation.
3. **Education and Environmental Awareness** The community in the Bantan area is active in increasing environmental awareness through various educational programs. These activities often involve children and adults, to explain the importance of maintaining cleanliness and a healthy environment. Through training and workshops organized by NGOs, the community learned about waste management and the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness.
4. **Collaboration with Third Parties** The Bantan community does not work alone; they often form partnerships with governments, NGOs, and the private sector. This collaboration results in various development programs that are more planned and sustainable. For example, some community capacity building programs involve job skills training, so that people can improve their economy and contribute to environmental improvement.

Challenges faced by the community in efforts to improve the quality of settlements in the slum area:

1. Limited Community Resources often experience limitations in terms of financial and material resources to carry out improvement programs. Many families live in difficult economic conditions, making it difficult to invest in infrastructure improvements.
2. Lack of Government Support Despite initiatives from the community, sometimes government support in the form of policies and funds is inadequate. This hinders the implementation of a broader and sustainable improvement program.
3. Education and Awareness Still Low Despite efforts to increase environmental awareness, there are still many residents who do not understand the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness and health. This is an obstacle in implementing the proposed programs.

What are the obstacles faced by the community in participating in the program to improve the quality of slums

The obstacles faced by the community in the Bantan area, Pematang Siantar in participating in the program to improve the quality of slums can include various social, economic, and structural aspects. Here are some specific obstacles that may be faced:

1. Limitations of Knowledge and Education Constraints Society may have limited knowledge on how to engage in environmental improvement programs, including ignorance of the long-term benefits of such programs. Low literacy levels can also be one of the factors inhibiting participation. The impact of the lack of awareness has led to low public interest in actively participating in programs offered by the government or local organizations.
2. Economic Factors and Financial Limitations Constraints Many residents in slum areas, such as in Bantan, Pematang Siantar, have financial limitations. Low income makes them more focused on meeting their daily needs rather than engaging in development activities that may require time and cost contributions. The impact of economic limitations causes limited community participation, especially in terms of mutual cooperation or contribution of funds for infrastructure development projects.
3. Complex Social Conditions Community constraints in the Bantan area may face social problems such as high unemployment rates, crime, or internal conflicts between residents. This can lead to low solidarity and cooperation between them. Impact Social conflict or apathy can hinder community cooperation in settlement quality improvement programs.
4. Limited Access to Information on Constraints Not all citizens have adequate access to information about government programs or available assistance. Communication channels may not be effective in disseminating information in the region. The impact of ignorance about existing programs causes the community not to be involved optimally, so that environmental improvement programs do not run as expected.
5. Lack of Supporting Infrastructure Constraints The Bantan area, like many other slums, may have inadequate basic infrastructure, such as damaged roads, poor sanitation, or lack of public facilities. This makes it difficult for the community to gather and coordinate in implementing the improvement program. The impact of infrastructure limitations slows down the implementation of programs to improve the quality of settlements, especially in terms of mobilizing community resources.
6. Culture of Dependence on External Assistance Constraints Communities may be accustomed to receiving assistance from outside parties (such as governments or NGOs) without being directly involved in program planning or implementation. This dependency can reduce local initiatives to engage in improvement projects. Impact Low community participation in the implementation or maintenance stage of program results, which ultimately has an impact on the sustainability of the project that has been implemented.
7. Complicated Bureaucracy Obstacles The complex and slow bureaucratic process in government programs often makes it difficult for people to understand or access existing programs. This administrative obstacle can be a barrier to participation, especially for residents who do not understand the bureaucratic process. Impact Society tends to feel frustrated and reluctant to participate, because they see this process as too complicated or ineffective.
8. Lack of Environmental Awareness Obstacles Public awareness of the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness in slum areas may still be low. Many residents are not used to clean living habits, such as throwing garbage in its place, which can hinder efforts to improve the quality of settlements. The impact of the settlement improvement program is difficult to run effectively if the community itself does not have a mindset that supports a clean and healthy environment.

What strategies can be implemented to increase community participation in efforts to improve the quality of settlements

Increasing community participation in efforts to improve the quality of settlements in the Bantan, Pematang Siantar area requires an appropriate, inclusive, and sustainable strategy. Here are some strategies that can be implemented to encourage active community participation:

1. Community Counseling and Education
 - a. Strategy: Conduct a structured counseling program on the importance of improving the quality of settlements and their impact on community welfare.
 - b. Implementation: Conduct local training and seminars involving community leaders, NGOs, and related agencies to provide an understanding of the benefits of a clean and healthy environment. Educational materials can include environmental cleanliness, sanitation, and waste management.
 - c. Impact: Increase public awareness so that they are more encouraged to be involved in environmental development and maintenance programs.
2. Strengthening the Culture of Mutual Cooperation
 - a. Strategy: Revitalization of the culture of mutual cooperation as a form of collective participation in environmental improvement activities.
 - b. Implementation: Hold routine community service activities in the Bantan area, such as cleaning the environment, repairing waterways, or building simple public facilities. The government and communities can provide incentives for mutual cooperation activities, such as building material assistance or awards for active residents.
 - c. Impact: Strengthening the sense of togetherness and ownership of development results, so that the community is more proactive in maintaining and maintaining infrastructure.
3. A Participatory Approach in Planning
 - a. Strategy: Involve the community directly in planning and decision-making related to the settlement improvement program.
 - b. Implementation: Use an inclusive *Development Plan Deliberation* (Musrenbang) method, where the community is invited to provide input regarding the project to be implemented. This open discussion forum can include the identification of priority needs, such as infrastructure improvements, clean water, or sanitation facilities.
 - c. Impact: Communities feel they have an important role to play in development programs, which encourages them to participate more actively in their implementation and supervision.
4. Strengthening Community Economic Capacity
 - a. Strategy: Develop economic empowerment programs related to improving the quality of settlements, so that the community feels directly benefited.
 - b. Implementation: Develop skills training such as micro-business management, recycling waste into economic value, or local construction services that can support settlement improvements. Encourage cooperation with the private sector to create local jobs related to infrastructure.
 - c. Impact: With the economic opportunities of the improvement program, people will be more eager to participate because they get immediate financial benefits.
5. Simplifying Bureaucracy and Improving Access to Information
 - a. Strategy: Facilitate public access to information and bureaucracy related to settlement improvement programs.
 - b. Implementation: Create a community information center in the Bantan area that provides easy access to information about government programs, grant funds, and participation procedures. In addition, optimize the use of social media or communication applications to spread program information quickly and widely.
 - c. Impact: Communities will be more likely to engage if they have clear and transparent access to program information and know how to participate.
6. Development of Supporting Facilities and Infrastructure
 - a. Strategy: Improve basic infrastructure to support community participation in settlement improvement.

- b. Implementation: Provide adequate public facilities, such as meeting halls, good roads, and access to clean water, so that people can more easily gather and work together. Focus on infrastructure development that is planned jointly with residents.
 - c. Impact: Good infrastructure facilitates the mobilization of community resources and encourages active participation in environmental improvement programs.
 7. Cooperation with Community Leaders and Local Organizations
 - a. Strategy: Involve community leaders, religious leaders, or local organizations in encouraging community participation.
 - b. Implementation: Involve influential community leaders to invite the community to join the settlement improvement program. Collaborate with local organizations or NGOs that are already known to the community to help organize environmental improvement activities.
 - c. Impact: Influential community leaders can be a motivator for the community to participate, especially in overcoming apathy or distrust of the government.
 8. Rewards and Incentives for Active Participation
 - a. Strategy: Provide incentives and rewards to residents who actively contribute to efforts to improve the quality of settlements.
 - b. Implementation: Hold an award program for the individual or group who is most active in maintaining environmental cleanliness, participation in mutual cooperation, or implementation of improvement projects. Incentives can be in the form of material assistance, certificates, or community awards.
 - c. Impact: Increase citizens' motivation to get involved because they feel recognized and valued for their contributions.

4. CONCLUSION

Overall, the role of the community in improving the quality of slums in Banten, Pematang Siantar, is very significant. Efforts that involve multiple parties, accompanied by the right strategies, can create sustainable positive change in the region:

1. The Central Role of the Community in the Banten area, Pematang Siantar, plays a very important role in efforts to improve the quality of slums. Active involvement of residents in every stage, from planning to implementation and maintenance of program results, is the key to the success of settlement improvement. This participation creates a sense of belonging to the changes that occur, as well as strengthening social cohesion among residents.
2. Obstacles to Participation Several obstacles faced by the community in participating, such as limited knowledge, economic limitations, and unequal access to information, are the main obstacles in achieving maximum results. In addition, bureaucratic factors and distrust of the government also reduce people's motivation to be actively involved. However, with the right intervention, these obstacles can be minimized.
3. Strategies to Increase Participation Strategies such as community counseling and education, mutual cooperation revitalization, strengthening the citizens' economy, and simplifying access to bureaucracy and information, have been proven to encourage community participation more effectively. A participatory approach to development planning also ensures that the programs implemented are in accordance with the needs and priorities of local residents.
4. The role of the Government and stakeholders The government and other stakeholders, such as NGOs and community leaders, have an important role in facilitating and coordinating community participation. Good collaboration between the government, local organizations, and the community can accelerate the process of improving the quality of slums in the Banten area.
5. Sustainability of the Sustainability Program The sustainability of the program to improve the quality of settlements in slums is highly dependent on the continuous involvement of the community in the maintenance and management of the facilities that have been built. With a sense of responsibility and ownership, the results of improvements will be better maintained and have a long-term impact on the welfare of residents.

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