

Problem Identification of Regional Development Planning Processes Utilizing Bottom-Up Approach in Malang City

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Abstract—The development planning meeting (*musrenbang*) in the urban village level is a stakeholder forum that generates proposed activities from the lower government level. *Musrenbang* often produces proposals not integrated with regional development priority. It occurs due to the community low understanding of the formulating and prioritizing process in regional development planning. The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze problems on the *musrenbang* implementation in an urban village setting. This research used a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. Data collection used focus group discussions and observations on the *musrenbang* implementation at 57 urban villages located in Malang City, Indonesia. The research result was grouped into 2 (two) main findings. First, the technical problems in organizing *musrenbang*. Second, substantive problems in the development planning process utilizing a bottom-up approach. The research result exhibited an existing problem on the *musrenbang* implementation in urban villages. The research findings could be utilized as the basis for improving future *musrenbang* implementation.

Keywords—*musrenbang*, development planning, participatory

I. INTRODUCTION

The development planning process tends to be divided into 2 (two) main approaches, namely centralistic and participatory [1,2]. The centralistic approach in procedural planning tends to produce top-down planning. Top-down planning produces planning substance uniformity, depoliticizes decision making, and enhances the role and strength of technical experts [2].

On the other hand, the participatory approach involves various stakeholders in decision making. Participatory approaches tend to produce bottom-up planning. The bottom-up approach allows various stakeholders to engage in more roles and encourages a dynamic political process. The top-down and bottom-up approaches exhibit opposing nature [2,3]. Both approaches engage in different process consequences and produce different planning results.

The procedural planning approach is influenced by the adopted government system. Several countries have implemented a combination of the two approaches. Indonesia combines several planning approaches including top-down, bottom-up, technocratic, political, and participatory into the procedural planning stages.

One manifestation of procedural bottom-up planning in Indonesia is *musrenbang* (development planning meeting). The government planning in Indonesia, regardless of level, must be conducted through *musrenbang*. The annual *musrenbang* is held from the village / urban village level to the national level. Local governments have run thematic *musrenbang* to accommodate certain groups.

Urban village *musrenbang* is a stakeholder forum in the context of preparing regional development plans in urban village level [4]. Urban village *musrenbang* is held every January to draw up annual activity plans from the urban village to the city government level. It refers to the vision and mission of the regional head and the regional development plans priority.

The urban village *musrenbang* is a means of communication between the urban village government and residents. The two parties may discuss in preparing the urban village annual program. The constructive discussion was followed up by the agreement on the preparation of programs and development activities in the urban village area. However, the urban village government does not fund all of the proposed programs and activities. The national governance allows urban village programs and activities to be funded by the private sector (CSR) and local government.

The urban village *musrenbang* forum discusses various subjects related to issues, problems, policies, and regulations. These subject's influences community development, especially in the urban village area. Through this forum, the public obtains information and education facilities regarding regional development. *Musrenbang* is a media to synchronize the "Top-

Down" and "Bottom-Up" approach in regional development planning.

The *musrenbang* implementation at the urban village level is a challenge for the local government, especially for the Malang City Government. Malang City Government experience difficulty to control urban village *musrenbang* implementation in encouraging directed activities adhering regional development priorities. National regulations related to *musrenbang* are available and have been explained to the regional head in the form of implementation instructions and technical instructions. However, the urban village *musrenbang* implementation in Malang City exhibits various problems.

One of the efforts conducted by the Malang City government was involving academics in the *musrenbang* forum. Academics were expected to be able to support *musrenbang* implementation and propose innovative activities. The involvement of academics and researchers in the development stage is one of the important steps to generate innovative and solvable activity ideas [5]. Reiterated in the aforementioned journal, there are 3 (three) ways academics influence public policy. One of which is encourage public learning related to public policy.

Nevertheless, *musrenbang* implementation exhibits various problems. The problems and obstacles faced by the government are influenced by several factors: First, the limited human resource understanding at the urban village level regarding regional development priorities and the stages of regional development planning. Human resources in urban villages often do not understand existing data and problems in their respective regions. Therefore, the proposed activity reflects desire rather than need.

Second, rapid regulatory changes are not supported by understanding of the whole society. Not every urban village quickly grasp information from the latest regulations. Therefore, there is a lack of information at the urban village level. Third, the lack of collaboration between Institutions at the urban village level. This is indicated by the unsynchronized policy direction between the urban village government and community institutions. Therefore, the *musrenbang* forum is often dominated by community institutions at the urban village level.

The purpose of this study was to identify and analyze problems in *musrenbang* implementation at the urban village level in Malang City. Problem identification could be utilized as the basis for evaluating improvements. The evaluations could be used for future *musrenbang* implementation. In addition, the problem identifications could be utilized as the basis of analysis in improving the regional development planning stages, both the procedural context and substance context. Therefore, the research result could be utilized as a basis for evaluating the *musrenbang* implementation at the urban village level, especially in Malang City.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a descriptive research method with a qualitative approach. This research was conducted at 57 urban villages located in Malang City, Indonesia. In line with the location of the study, the data collection technique was carried out by observing the *musrenbang* process and 57 urban villages in Malang City, as well as recording the *musrenbang* result in each urban village. Furthermore, the identification results, obtained from observations in 57 urban villages, were analyzed through focus group discussions with related regional apparatus namely the *Barenlitbang* (Development Planning and Research Agency) of Malang City and academics involved in the urban village *musrenbang*.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Governments use planning approaches to draw visions and targets with a set of strategies and policies to drive and to support [6]. One of the planning approaches employed by the Government, participatory approach for instance, is still often regarded as a formality. Participatory planning approaches are considered incapable to meet the leaders' expectations in proposing policy directions. Participatory planning fails in identifying and predicting issues that develop in the future [6]. Nevertheless, in an empirical manner, stakeholder involvement influences the learning process and the changes that occur. The influences are divided into several levels namely individuals, groups, and organizations [7].

In the current era, the community must be able to identify changes due to digitalization development. The communication pattern shifts from conventional to digital. Community meeting forums are replaced by social media forums. The digital technology development, especially public transportation in the form of online motorcycle taxi, can reduce the number of unemployed in Malang [8]. Digitalization has entered all levels of society, as well as the process of the Malang City *musrenbang* forum. It must optimize the application of e-*musrenbang* (information systems regarding proposed activities in the *musrenbang*).

The problem is defined as a statement about an unexpected situation. In short, the problem is the gap between expectations and reality. In the context of *musrenbang*, the problem is the gap between the *musrenbang* expectations (conditions in accordance with Malang mayor circular letter [9] and the reality of the urban village *musrenbang* in 2019.

Based on the planning theory concept by Andreas Faludi [10], there are two planning categories namely procedural planning theories and substantive planning theories. Problem identification was based on the aforementioned theories. The research result was categorized into 2 (two) main findings, namely procedural problems and substantive problems.

First, procedural problems are problem identifications based on *musrenbang* technical implementation. The *musrenbang* implementation technical aspect and stages are the first findings of this study. There are 4 (four) procedural

category problems which are described as follows: a) the urban village *musrenbang* implementation has not fulfilled the normative stages set by the mayor's regulation; b) the implementation time often do not adhere to the schedule, despite the majority of the *musrenbang* implementation is held at night; c) The unequal role distribution of urban village community institutions and government; d) in optimal use of *e-musrenbang*.

In general, these procedural problems indicate that the implementation of the urban village *musrenbang* has not followed the applicable guidelines. In addition, uniformity is crucial for implementing role division between urban village community institutions and government. Role uniformity is intended to ensure the balance of roles and involvement in deciding proposed activities. Uniformity is needed because there are urban villages community institution that plays a dominant role. On the other hand, there are village community institutions that do not possess role.

Second, the substantive problem is the problem identifications based on the substance and content of the *musrenbang*. There are 4 (four) substance category problems which are described as follows: a) the lack of urban village community and government understanding of its potential and problems; b) the lack of community understanding related to regional development planning. Most community proposal is irrelevant and unsynchronized with the regional heads planning; c) the majority of community proposals encourages infrastructure development instead of human resource development; d) there is prevalent regional ego of RT (neighborhood association) and RW (community association), exhibiting reluctance to join the development.

The substantive context problems indicate that the proposed activities are not based on the regional development needs and priorities. Lack of community understanding on the development planning misaligned proposed activities and development priorities. In addition, the community tends to focus on tangible development (infrastructure) rather than intangible (social). Human resource development at the urban village level could be proposed in *musrenbang* programs and activities. The urban village government considers that human resource development is the responsibility of the regional government. However, building human capacity is an equal responsibility throughout all government levels.

In general, participatory engagement is crucial to solving current problems. A participatory engagement planning model was produced by combining participatory planning in infrastructure [11] and participatory evaluation [7] which influences individual, group, and organizational levels.

The participatory engagement model has 4 (four) elements and stages. Step I, Understanding the regulations and systems. Actors involved in the urban village *musrenbang* process must be equipped with an understanding of regulations and systems, minimizing problems in procedural theory. Step II, Mastering data and understanding future needs. It is not easy to master data without data availability. The urban village government

experiences difficulty in obtaining information regarding the development milestone. Without government data mastery, the community will not understand future needs. This condition is exhibited through urban village *musrenbang* proposals that favors tangible development (infrastructure) and tend to be not innovative.

Step III, Monitoring and Evaluation. The third stage exhibits that control and evaluation are crucial to improve the ongoing process. Control is not limited from the government to the community but may be applied the other way around. It would ensure participatory evaluation can be carried out. Step IV, Capacity Building. The implementation of step I to step III becomes a series of stages in step IV where individuals, groups, and organizations may develop and obtain the benefits of participatory engagement planning. The individual, in particular, may obtain good learning facilities. The groups, especially at the urban village level, can propose activities encouraging positive influence. The organization may strengthen its capacity. The individual, group, and organization benefit from the *musrenbang* participatory planning process by applying a participatory engagement planning model.

IV. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Urban Village *musrenbang* at Malang City in 2019 did not adhere to the implementation instructions and technical guidelines. In addition, the urban village *musrenbang* conducted in 2019 has not produced innovative activity proposals and directly solve community problem.

The main problem of the urban village *musrenbang* is the limited community comprehension and urban village apparatus resources in understanding the development planning stages and the regional development focus substance. Therefore, the regional and urban villages development remained unaligned.

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