

## Boundary Spanning PR of the Ministry of Health Through Community Engagement in Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle at the Event "Ayo Sehat Fest 2023"

**Ruvira Arindita, Dandy Rayhan Kharisma**

Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia

Email: ruvira\_arindita@uai.ac.id, dandykharisma002@gmail.com

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### Abstract

*The post-COVID-19 surge in healthy lifestyle trends has coincided with the rise of health-focused communities across Indonesia. Despite this, non-communicable disease (NCD) rates remain high, and the influence of these communities is often limited to local areas. To broaden their impact, the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) collaborated with health communities and various partners during the national event Ayo Sehat Fest 2023, aiming to promote healthier living and extend outreach. This initiative reflects the Ministry's boundary spanning efforts through public relations to engage and educate the public. This study examines how the Ministry utilizes boundary spanning through community engagement to encourage healthy lifestyles. Adopting a constructivist paradigm and a qualitative descriptive approach, the study involved Kemenkes employees who participated in the event. Boundary spanning was implemented in three stages: pre-event, during the event, and post-event. In the pre-event stage, activities included explaining, monitoring, and two-way communication. During the event, only monitoring and two-way communication occurred. Meanwhile, in the post-event stage, only monitoring activities were carried out, which did not yet include an evaluation of the event's implementation in terms of content and technical aspects. Community engagement was applied across three dimensions. The content dimension emphasized cross-sector collaboration and consistent, evidence-based health messaging. The source dimension involved experts representing all life stages—pregnancy, breastfeeding, children, teenagers, adults, and the elderly. The process dimension reflected openness and transparency, as Kemenkes regularly consulted partners on event-related matters. Academically, this study shows that the concept of community engagement aligns well with boundary spanning, especially amid the growing trend of health-related communities. Practically, organizing a collaborative event is a commendable step by the government that deserves support. However, there is room for improvement in promoting and evaluating the event to increase its visibility and make its impact more measurable.*

**Keywords:** Boundary Spanning, Community Engagement, Government Public Relations, Health Promotion, Special Event

## INTRODUCTION

There is growing trend of healthy lifestyle post Covid-19 era in Indonesia, with over 50% of the population now regularly engaging in physical activities such as walking, cycling, or yoga. Awareness of mental health has also grown significantly, reflected in the increasing use of meditation and online therapy apps. By 2025, health trends are expected to be dominated by technologies like wearables and digital fitness. Support from the government and private sector is anticipated to further encourage a healthier and more balanced lifestyle among the public (Prameswari et al., 2025). A recent survey of 600 respondents from Generations X, Y, and Z found that while awareness of health risks is increasing, actual healthy habits remain low. Only 53% consume fruits and vegetables daily and just 32% exercise weekly (Naurah, 2023).

The growing awareness of the importance of health aligns with the increasing number of health-focused communities across all age groups. These include youth-oriented communities on health education (Young on Top, 2024), mothers' groups focusing on parenting and women's and children's health (KumparanMom, 2021), father-led initiatives encouraging fathers greater involvement in family health and parenting (Arisandi, 2024; PPID, 2024) and communities for the elderly that provide social spaces to support mental well-being (Alamanda, 2024). Researches have shown that health information shared among community have proven to be effective in building positive attitude towards health (Arindita et al., 2023; Arindita & Hasna, 2024; Novianty & Hadjam R, 2017; Widarini, 2019).

Despite the increasing understanding on public's health awareness, recent data still indicates that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected non-communicable disease (NCD) cases in Indonesia, with a rise in conditions like diabetes, hypertension, and mental disorders due to increased stress and anxiety (Prameswari et al., 2025). Most NCDs result from preventable and modifiable risk factors. The World Health Organization (WHO) aims to reduce NCDs by addressing key behavioral risks—such as alcohol and tobacco use, high salt intake, and physical inactivity—as well as metabolic risks like obesity and high blood pressure. The preventive effort starts by improving the public health educational (Arifin et al., 2022).

Health communication serves as a strategic platform for promotive and educational initiatives in public health (Candrasari & Kurniasari, 2021). Within this framework, public relations (PR) functions are integral to supporting educational campaigns that aim to shape public attitudes and behaviors toward greater health awareness. The Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) employs PR strategies to advance preventive measures, particularly in addressing the prevalence of NCDs, by promoting a prevention-oriented approach (Rokom, 2013). These efforts are operationalized

through health promotion and education programs that encourage physical activity and the adoption of healthy dietary practices (Rokom, 2013).

Government PR can be utilized to disseminate information, clarify policies, and implement specific activities as part of fulfilling governmental duties and responsibilities (Cahyani, 2020). Within the realm of health communication, various educational strategies can be applied, including special events that aim to influence public behavior. PR practitioners can organize such events to promote healthy lifestyles. According to Ruslan, a special event is intentionally designed or packaged to create prestige, set trends, and raise awareness in the minds of the public or target audience (Hasybullah, 2019).

Event management and public relations are closely linked disciplines that play essential roles in shaping public perception, fostering relationships, and supporting organizational goals. Public relations is a key component of event management, involving the strategic planning, coordination, and implementation of communication efforts to build a positive image and effectively engage target audiences (Chukwu, 2023).

In 2023, for the first time in its history, the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) organized “Ayo Sehat Fest 2023,” a nationwide public event in collaboration with various health-related communities across Indonesia. The initiative was part of the Ministry’s broader effort to support healthcare transformation by emphasizing promotive programs across all segments of society (Kemenkes, 2023). By actively involving diverse community groups, the event demonstrated Kemenkes’s boundary spanning function and commitment to community engagement through health education and participatory activities.

Boundary spanning refers to a function that facilitates interaction between an organization and its environment. In public relations, this function involves engaging with the external environment to monitor, select, and gather relevant information (Kriyantono, 2017). Past studies have shown that government public relations practiced boundary spanning function when dealing with their publics. In the Special Region of Yogyakarta, this is demonstrated by the provincial public relations office's active role in assisting other provincial government institutions in building and managing their relationships with the public (Maulida, 2022). In the context of cross sector collaboration, boundary spanners and their activities are crucial for enabling cross-sector collaboration, with successive boundary spanning emphasizing the importance of strategic networking, interactive framing, shared commitment, reflexivity, and adaptability (Högberg, 2024). Five key themes emerged in the local boundary spanning context: (1) physical proximity, (2) local

complexity, (3) power imbalances, (4) frontline activities, and (5) relationship dynamics (Stephens et al., 2024).

This boundary spanning role is further embodied in community engagement (CE), which represents the relational aspect of public organizational interactions—emphasizing elements such as trust, reciprocity, and mutuality. To ensure that the concept of CE is both meaningful and valid, its implementation must embrace, preserve, support, and facilitate societal diversity and a range of perspectives (Johnston & Lane, 2019). In recent years, engagement has emerged as a leading paradigm in 21st-century public relations, offering both a challenge to and a contribution toward the prevailing functionalist, instrumentalist, and critical approaches that have traditionally shaped the field (Johnston, 2014).

Community engagement and communication play a vital role in understanding the cultural and social practices related to health and well-being, identifying the key factors driving the epidemic, and collaborating with vulnerable communities to develop a response that is locally appropriate and accepted (Storey et al., 2017). Community engagement (CE) is also a widely recognized concept in public health. As emphasized by the WHO, a key lesson from major public health events in the 21st century is that risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) are essential components for effective health emergency response (Tambo et al., 2021).

Events and community engagement are also closely interconnected. Community engagement serves as the foundation for the realization of events, while events can also act as a medium to foster community engagement (Stevenson, 2020). In the context of special event, the community engagement process creates transparency in decision-making, building long lasting and trusting relationships between communities and event organizers (Senevirathna et al., 2023). In the Australian local event context, there are various community engagement practices, which were categorized into three main types: transactional, transitional, and transformational. The engagement process also involved a wide range of both formal and informal community groups (Piazzi & Harris, 2016).

From the background above, there is still a research gap in term of boundary spanning practice by government PR in Indonesia with the concept of community engagement in conducting event with the aim for public health promotion. Therefore, the research objectives are as follows: (1) to understand the boundary spanning practice of Kemenkes RI in conducting the “Ayo Sehat 2023” event; (2) to understand the community engagement process by Kemenkes RI and related communities at the “Ayo Sehat 2023” event; (3) to know how the boundary

spanning practice in community engagement at the “Ayo Sehat 2023” event in promoting healthy life style to public.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **1. *Boundary Spanning***

Boundary spanning is defined as a function in the interaction between an organization and its environment. In the field of public relations, this function is essential for interacting with the environment to monitor, select, and gather information. Boundary-spanning activities characterize organizations that implement an open system. An open system refers to a system that facilitates the exchange of information and resources with its environment (Kriyantono, 2017).

Public relations practitioners engage in boundary-spanning functions, including: (1) Explaining organizational information to the public: Public relations practitioners must interpret the organization’s philosophy, policies, programs, and management perspectives to ensure they are understood by the public; (2) Monitoring the environment: Practitioners need to be aware of external developments and interpret potential issues that may impact the organization’s activities; (3) Establishing two-way communication: Creating a two-way communication system with the public enables the organization to adapt to its environment. Public relations practitioners act as communication facilitators (Kriyantono, 2017).

Organizations that adopt an open system approach can adapt more easily to change, whereas closed-system organizations are more vulnerable to disruptions in the face of significant environmental shifts. To address emerging issues, organizations require a public relations subsystem to maintain communication between the organization and the public (Kriyantono, 2017).

### **A. *Community Engagement***

Community Engagement describes the phenomenon of the community-organization relationship, both as a process and a state, which enhances social outcomes through relationships, interactions, meaning-making, and ultimately, the conclusions derived from the communication process (Johnston & Lane, 2019). In practice, Community Engagement (CE) is relational in nature, reflecting the relational dimensions of public organization relationships, including trust, reciprocity, and mutuality. Therefore, for the concept of CE to be meaningful and valid, its implementation process must embrace, preserve, support, and facilitate the diversity of society with all its differing perspectives (Johnston & Lane, 2019). In its representation, certain communities require the identification and involvement of various perspectives expressed through the voices of the

community. The following are the concepts or dimensions of community engagement:

**Table 1.** Dimensions *Community Engagement*  
**Dimensi**

<b>Content (message)</b>	Factual (truthfulness)
	Consistent
	Social significance
	Authenticity (aligned with what is stated)
	Orientation towards others (goods intentions)
	Moral character, integrity
<b>Source (person)</b>	Expectations
	Honesty
	Representation (what they communicate)
<b>Process</b>	Transparent and open
	Implementation
	Trust
	Legitimacy
	Channels

The use of the Community Engagement (CE) concept in a program requires significant responsibility from public relations practitioners in designing engagement initiatives. Therefore, they are responsible not only for ensuring that the voices of the community are authentic but also for maintaining diversity and social harmony (Johnston & Lane, 2019).

## **2. Special Event**

The Oxford English Dictionary describes an event as "an occurrence of some importance" (Vol. III, p. 338), while defining the term special as "additional to the usual or ordinary" (Vol. X, p. 542). According to Getz, these definitions can be somewhat ambiguous, as the idea of something being "special" is already implied in the meaning of an event. Nevertheless, interpreting these definitions together implies that a special event is a significant occurrence, with a strong emphasis on its importance. At its core, a special event can be understood as an experience that stands out from the routine of daily life (Goldblatt, 2005).

The role of Public Relations (PR) in event management has been a topic of study for years, with attention given to how PR strategies and methods contribute to achieving event goals. In more recent studies, researchers have started to approach event management from a PR perspective, exploring how PR principles and

techniques can shape and improve the planning and execution of events (Chukwu, 2023).

On this study, the special event organized by the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) is a celebration of National Health Day, which is commemorated annually. Ayo Sehat Fest 2023, conducted by Kemenkes, is part of the organization's Calendar of Events, which regularly marks significant occasions such as National Health Day.

### **3. Health Promotion**

Promotion refers to the act of showcasing or conveying a particular message to an audience. Health promotion, as is an effort to communicate health-related messages from a communicator to influence others and enhance awareness of their health (Schiavo, 2014). Health messages can be easily received by individuals and the public, especially when supported by appropriate media (Mandaru et al., 2023). Health promotion should be intensified through social media due to its effectiveness in reaching a broad audience. Campaigns that encourage a healthy lifestyle and educate the public on disease prevention have great potential to improve public health in Indonesia. Through health promotion efforts, individuals can become more aware of habits that may negatively affect their health, ultimately fostering better understanding and healthier behaviors in the future.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research adopts a constructivist paradigm, which ontologically views reality as socially constructed (Neuman, 2015). It employs a qualitative method to conduct a holistic investigation aimed at achieving a comprehensive understanding of the social issue (Hennink, 2020). Specifically, the study explores the social reality of boundary spanning activity and community engagement process by government PR (Kemenkes) through the special event in promoting healthy lifestyle.

The research strategy is phenomenology, with in-depth interviews as the primary data collection method. Additional sources such as field observations and documentation are also considered (Cresswell, 2013). The PR team of Ministry of Health were interviewed to gain their perception about the information on boundary spanning, community engagement and special event in promoting healthy lifestyle. This strategy takes the basic concept of phenomenology in which the conscious perception of the subject is the key words in understanding the lived-experience.

The selection of informants focused on the PR team from the Ministry of Health or the Directorate of Health Promotion at the Ministry of Health who are directly involved in organizing the "Ayo Sehat Fest 2023" event and have a deep

understanding about the background and the purpose of this event. Kemenkes has directed the researcher to these following informant regarding this matter:

- 1) Informant IO: Ira Octa, Female, an employee in the Ministry of Health's Directorate of Health Promotion. She was part of the Partnership Team during the "Ayo Sehat Fest 2023" event.
- 2) Informant RA: Riri Astasari, Female, acted as the Event Coordinator for "Ayo Sehat Fest 2023."
- 3) Informant DR: Danu Ramadityo, Male, served on the Communication Strategy Team during the "Ayo Sehat Fest 2023" event.

Data analysis method on this study uses eclectic analysis method, which means will be adjusted to the condition and the needs of discovery and information digging through qualitative data processing (Hennink, 2020). The result of interview from Kemenkes employee regarding boundary spanning through community engagement on special event in promoting healthy lifestyle, will be coded, categorized and classified based on the main concepts of this research. After that, the theme and sub-theme will be constructed and then make reduction to build comprehensive understanding (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, the findings will be displayed in accordance to interesting, significant and relevant structure of topics as the objective of this study.

Validating data in qualitative research involves several strategies to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings. One key approach is triangulation, which involves using multiple data sources, methods, or investigators to cross-verify information. In this study, the researcher interviewed more than one informant to cross-verify the information given. Another essential method is member checking, where researchers return to participants to confirm the accuracy of interpreted data or summaries. This was also applied in the study, particularly when some responses required further clarification—prompting follow-up with the informants to gather additional data (Cresswell, 2013).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher found several findings related to the study and categorized them into several sub-concepts. The following are the results obtained from the three informants:

### **1. Kemenkes RI's Boundary Spanning Efforts**

Boundary spanning activities are used as a way for the organization to apply an open system, which includes openness, networking, and involving others in activities. In this case, Kemenkes' public relations (PR) team used boundary spanning to

strengthen relationships with their community as part of the organization's culture of openness during the organization of the "Ayo Sehat Fest" event. In the beginning, Kemenkes explained the key message of this event:

*"The event says one important message to people that from the beginning of life to the end, everything is managed by the Ministry of Health, and to take care of all of that, it's no longer just the responsibility of the Ministry of Health—every member of society has their own role to play"* (Informant RA, 2024).

With regards to the public that Kemenkes targeted, they represent all the important members of society as follows:

*"The business sector, community organizations, professional associations, as well as universities and mass media all play a role in promoting the changes initiated by the ministry"* (Informant IO, 2024).

When asked about the specific health-related communities invited to the event, below is the explanation from Kemenkes officer:

*"We have existing partners from past projects, but with Kemenkes' new focus on health transformation, communities are now grouped by life stages—pregnancy, breastfeeding, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and the elderly. Each group follows a stage-specific schedule."* (Informant IO, 2024).

The openness practiced by Kemenkes is expected to build public trust. This trust is crucial for Kemenkes so that the public fully trusts and accepts all health information provided, contributing to the creation of a Healthy Indonesia. In the "Ayo Sehat Fest 2023" event, boundary spanning activities can be seen in Kemenkes' efforts to involve the community.

*"The pre-event is definitely discussed with the partners because, in reality, the main stars, or the main focus, are them. So, we have open discussions, and we explain what our health concerns are, and then they can fill in accordingly. Of course, we can't force these partners to provide content that exactly aligns with our desires, but it should match their expertise."* (Informant DR, 2024).

*"Then we invited them to present their ideas for the "Ayo Sehat Festival" concept. After understanding the concept, of course, they would consider whether or not they wanted to support it — and so far, they all have shown their support. This includes details such as what the activity is about, when it will take place, who the speakers are—if any—and who will serve as the moderator"* (Informant IO, 2024).

During the event there was a lot of coordination between Kemenkes and the partners involved as there were things that were not running as it was planned, in the following:

*“At the event there was a bit of hurdle during registration as the visitor should show their registration barcode. In the end, the registration was opened for everyone who would like to visit, even if they haven’t registered online earlier. There was also an issue regarding the logistics for example on the dentistry booth which required water, the organizer must prepare it”* (Informant IO, 2024).

*“There are certain hours that tend to be more crowded, likely because some partners have conducted more intensive publicity during those times. On the other hand, there are also periods that are less crowded. However, in principle, one of our key strategies to attract public attendance is selecting a strategic location — one that is close to the community and easily accessible to people from all social background”* (Informant RA, 2024).

On the post event, there were number of things to evaluate by Kemenkes and partners. For example, on the issue of the following up steps and the aspiration for the next event.

*“We launched the #JanjiHidupSehat (Promise for a Healthy Life) campaign to promote healthy lifestyle changes, encouraging people to commit and document their progress. While the idea includes recognition for successful transformations, it remains a concept for now, with no concrete action from participants or the committee. Implementation is likely in 2024.”* (Informant IO, 2024).

*“We can not really say whether the event has succeeded in achieving our goal to create healthier lifestyle in society or whether the public and the partners were satisfied about the event. There should be a-follow-up-research to measure the public’s attitude. But overall, seeing the number of visitors that reach over 1000 on two days and the positive response from the partners, we can say it was quiet successful for the first time event”* (Informant RA, 2024).

The boundary spanning efforts by the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) with the involved communities can be categorized into three phases: pre-event, during the event, and post-event. The pre-event phase is marked by Kemenkes conducting open discussions with the communities to ensure their willingness to participate in the event. By community here is not only the health-related community but also business sector, academics, professional and mass media.

On the pre-event phase, Kemenkes open the opportunities for public communities, by explaining first the organization information to the public which is the health transformation that focuses the role of Kemenkes on preserving people's health at every stage of human's life. After that, partners were gathered to discuss together on the content and activity they would like to present at the event. Kemenkes then monitor what each partners need and communicate and accommodate their needs for the event, for example about the need to align the schedule for all partners. Two-way communication was always mandatory thing for Kemenkes to conduct, including on this phase.

During the event, partners were given the freedom to contribute by providing health education based on each stage of life they are interested in. On this part, the boundary spanning function served by Kemenkes involved monitoring and two-way communication. For example, making sure all the logistics and space for the partners were well provided. PR of Kemenkes were acting as communication facilitator during this phase.

In the post-event phase, the monitor part which supposed to be implemented on the form of evaluation on the event, both on the substantial and technical parts were not conducted yet. Explaining and two-way communication part were also not visible on this part.

## **2. Implementation of the Community Engagement Concept**

According to Johnston, the concept of community engagement involves three dimensions considered to represent the authenticity of a community. Johnston explains community engagement by dividing it into three dimensions: content (message), source (person), and process (Johnston & Lane, 2019). The researcher applies the interview results to these dimensions, which are explained as follows:

### **a. Content (Message)**

Content includes messages that are factual (truthful), consistent, socially significant, authentic, oriented towards others (good intentions), and characterized by moral integrity. Kemenkes team consistently involved communities in all their activities. Through "Ayo Sehat 2023" event, Kemenkes has a message to convey to the public like the following:

*"Now we focused on the health transformation on every stage of life and we involve the "pentahelix". This is to let people know that health issue belongs to everyone and Kemenkes is open for collaboration to tackle this issue together" (Informant RA, 2024).*

Another message that Kemenkes would like public to understand is that the event itself could serve as the medium for further collaboration among partners involved. As explained by the informant below:

*“Because on this event the collaborative aspect is more visible. This also serves as an opportunity for them to expand their partnership networks—not only between us at the Ministry of Health and our partners, but also among the partners themselves”* (Informant IO, 2024).

The three informants (IO, RA, and DR) agreed that Kemenkes has consistently provided factual information and regularly involved communities as intermediaries for public information. However, large-scale involvement was only realized during the “Ayo Sehat Fest 2023” event.

The content of the event promotion was disseminated through cooperation with other internal division at Kemenkes as stated by the informant below:

*“The Communication, Information, and Education Division mainly supports the dissemination of information related to events and helps with pre-event promotions. However, their role isn’t to advertise the events directly, but rather to focus on health education as a way to generate public engagement. This approach aligns with our role in managing the Ayo Sehat social media channels”* (Informant DR, 2024).

Each community also posted the content on event promotion and build their own narration regarding the content with the basic direction from Kemenkes as stated below:

*“The partners are welcome to help spread the word through their own social media channels. If they’d like to create content using their own concepts, that’s absolutely fine as well. The idea is to leverage the partners’ platforms to broaden our reach.”* (Informant RA, 2024).

#### **b. Source (Person)**

Source or the person responsible in communicating the message of the event were Kemenkes employee in Partnership Division as well as the representatives from partners and communities involved on the event. According to Johnston, there are dimension of source in the concept of CE, namely expectation, honesty, and representation. Below is the explanation from informants:

*"In the pre-event stage, the Ministry invited representatives from the business sector, academia, professional organizations, communities, and mass media to explain the event's purpose and concept. This task was led by the Partnership Division. Meanwhile, the Communication, Information, and Education Division promoted the event through the AyoSehat Instagram account. All participating partners and communities also shared the responsibility of promoting the event through their own channels, reflecting the collaborative nature of the initiative."* (Informat DR, 2024) .

*"During the event, each partner served as a source of health information tailored to different life stages. For example, the business sector was represented by Lemonilo, which focused on children by providing a facilitator to deliver health-related storytelling at their booth. Medical professional associations conducted health screenings for pregnant women while educating them on potential health issues relevant to their stage. In this way, each partner and community shared health knowledge aligned with their target audience."* (Informant RA, 2024).

*"On the post event Kemenkes asked the feedback from the partners and communities informally. Most of participant felt satisfied but note that they want bigger space if they are about to join the event again in the future"* (Informant IO, 2024).

All parties involved on the event was well represented on each stages of the event. Kemenkes also tried to meet the expectation of partners as stated below:

*"The benefit for communities is related to collaboration opportunity. At the end of the event, we also gave appreciation to the supporting partners who have contributed to health efforts, providing them with certificates of recognition."* (Informant IO, 2024).

*"The business sector was mainly looking for partners for their CSR programs. For example, someone from Astra Corporate asked me to introduce them to a community whose work matched their CSR focus."* (Informant RA, 2024)

*"Clearly, they became more known to the public, and public trust in them generally increased."* (Informant DR, 2024).

All three informants agreed that by involving communities in the "Ayo Sehat Fest" event, those communities could develop networks with Kemenkes, which would facilitate future collaborations. Furthermore, Kemenkes ensures that each involved community receives ongoing support, particularly for those with established memorandums of understanding with Kemenkes.

### C. Process

The process in community engagement involves transparency and openness, legitimacy, trust, and communication channels. The community engagement process in the “Ayo Sehat Fest” event has already been implemented. Kemenkes consistently maintained transparency and openness with the communities regarding the event’s concept and execution.

*“During the implementation, if there are challenges, obstacles, or differences of opinion, we hold a discussion forum with the partners to align the zones or expectations of the partners”. (Informant RA, 2024).*

Informant RA explained that Kemenkes prioritizes openness, and feedback and suggestions are always welcomed. If a community faces challenges or differences, Kemenkes promptly provides a discussion forum to address the issues together. Additionally, Informant DR mentioned that during the dissemination of information, Kemenkes also involved the participating communities.

*“The communities also helped by posting about this event on their respective social media platforms.” (Informant DR, 2024).*

They hold regular meetings and submit periodic reports as well. Usually, before carrying out any activity, they coordinate with us first—it’s never done without prior discussion. Coordination typically happens at the beginning, during the implementation, and again at the end of the activity (Informant DR, 2024).

### 3. Special Event as a Healthy Lifestyle Promotion

A special event is one of the efforts to promote certain topics to the public, such as health promotion or healthy lifestyle promotion. The “Ayo Sehat Fest 2023” event, which was held for two days on November 11-12, 2023, at the Aquatic Parking Lot, Gelora Bung Karno, was attended by thousands of registered visitors.

The informant explained that the “Ayo Sehat Fest” was an effort by the Ministry of Health to persuade the public to start living healthier. The health system transformation in Indonesia now focuses on life cycles. There are six life cycles identified by the Ministry of Health, starting from pregnant mothers, breastfeeding mothers, infants and toddlers, children, adolescents, adults, to the elderly. Based on these six life cycles, Kemenkes created a segmentation by dividing the festival into six zones. Around 54 communities participated in the event and around total of 1000 people attended the event as stated below:

*“The enthusiasm from our partner organizations and the target audience was quite high, with over 1,000 attendees on the first day alone, and more than 1,000 on the second day. These numbers are based on those who registered, but many others who did not register were also allowed to attend”.* (Informant IO, 2024).

Although “Ayo Sehat Fest” was held for the first time in 2023, it was met with great enthusiasm by the public. This shows that although the promotion was limited, the concept of “Ayo Sehat Fest 2023 ” event was interesting thus attracting people to come and attend. Informant RA added that the “Ayo Sehat Fest 2023” not only promoted healthy lifestyles but also served as a platform to socialize the transformation of the health system.

*“Ayo Sehat, because the Ministry of Health is now focusing on health according to life cycles. So, it's no longer disease-specific. The Ayo Sehat Festival aims to socialize the fact that the Ministry of Health has now shifted its focus to a life cycle approach”.* (Informant RA, 2024).

Given that Ayo Sehat Fest 2023 was a debut event, the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) acknowledged that there is still room for improvement, as outlined below:

*“We still haven’t found a clear or consistent pattern for the event. Right now, it's still quite open—each partner varies, and for every program cycle, the partners aren't always the same. Moreover, the budget and time constraints as well as the unpredictable schedules of the high ranking officials tend to be challenges for the committee in delivering the event”* (Informant RA, 2024).

The finding of this study is aligned with previous study. Swedish scholars noted that boundary spanners and their activities are recognized as essential for facilitating collaboration across different sectors. In forming a Civil Society Public Partnership (CSPP), boundary spanners from various organizations engage in ongoing negotiations to align perspectives and meanings (Högberg, 2024). In this research, both the Partnership Division and the Communication, Information, and Education (KIE) Division of the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) performed public relations’ boundary-spanning functions during the ‘Ayo Sehat Fest 2023. They facilitated the needs and objectives of various stakeholders through what they termed a ‘Pentahelix Collaboration’.

Another boundary spanning case in Indonesian context shows that The Public Relations unit of the D.I. Yogyakarta Provincial Office serves a vital boundary-spanning function by bridging the provincial government and its external environment, although it lacks formal authority in policy-making processes

(Maulida, 2022). A similar case was observed in this study, where Kemenkes employees acted as communication technical officers, performing boundary-spanning and community engagement roles during 'Ayo Sehat Fest 2023.' However, they had limited authority in policy-making, which could have enabled the event to achieve a broader impact and reach a wider audience.

When implemented in the case of facilitating policy work, boundary spanning was also applicable. In the case of Australian people, since the 1990s, models like 'joined-up government,' 'whole-of-government,' and 'horizontal governance' have emerged in many industrialized countries, decentralizing government functions to policy networks. In response, the annual Power to Persuade symposium and online forum fosters understanding of these challenges and builds the capacity to address them (Carey et al., 2018).

On the community engagement aspect, earlier studies have shown that the concept was closely related to health and event management sectors—the two sectors that are combined altogether on this study. First on the health front, community engagement was relevant in the case of risk communication of health case on the outbreak of Ebola and Covid-19 (Adebisi et al., 2021; Storey et al., 2017; Tambo et al., 2021). As on this paper, the community engagement was used a tool in boundary spanning effort in doing the special event with the purpose of promoting healthy lifestyle to the public.

Comparing to the earlier research on community engagement role in event management, the finding of this study also reveal that the two concepts are closely interrelated. Event management required collaboration from various parties and the concept of community engagement is in line with the nature of event. The content, source and process that stressed the importance of factual (truthful), consistent, socially significant, authentic, oriented towards others (good intentions) content, srce that value honesty, expectation and representation as well as the process that involves transparency and openness, legitimacy, trust, and communication channels (Johnston & Lane, 2019).

The result of this research supported the point of view of study that noted that community engagement refers to the process of integrating public concerns, needs, and values into the decision-making practices of governments and corporations, thereby enabling communities to participate in initiatives that impact their lives (Senevirathna et al., 2023). From this study this can be seen in the way the Kemenkes sought to engage the public on health issues across various life stages through the 'Ayo Sehat Fest 2023' initiative. The target audience extended beyond a specific community, encompassing a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including the health sector, business community, academia, professional and religious

organizations, and mass media. When previous studies focused on the community engagement in the event at local context (Piazzzi & Harris, 2016), this study has contributed to the community engagement in the national event context.

## CONCLUSION

The central message of 'Ayo Sehat Fest 2023,' organized by the Ministry of Health (Kemenkes), emphasized that all segments of society possess both the right and the responsibility to actively manage their health across all stages of life. In the era of collaboration, this initiative represents a bold and meaningful step by a government institution to foster public engagement in health promotion.

To achieve this objective, Kemenkes employed a range of boundary-spanning strategies through community engagement. Several elements stood out in the implementation. In the boundary-spanning dimension, monitoring and two-way communication were more prevalent than purely informational or explanatory approaches. In terms of community engagement, the most prominent aspects included content that was factual, consistent, and socially significant. The credibility of the message was further supported by source attributes such as honesty and accurate representation. Throughout the process, values such as transparency, openness, and the use of accessible communication channels were clearly demonstrated. While the event and its health promotion goals were successfully executed, the committee's limited authority in policy-making constrained its potential to create a broader and more impactful outcome.

This study is subject to certain limitations. The primary limitation lies in its focus on a single perspective—that of Kemenkes—while excluding the viewpoints of other key stakeholders such as partner organizations, community participants, and event attendees. Additionally, the research employed a qualitative methodology, which provided depth in understanding the processes of boundary spanning and community engagement. However, a quantitative approach could have been beneficial in measuring the event's impact more precisely. Future studies could address these limitations, especially as the event was held again in 2024, providing an opportunity for comparative or mixed-methods research.

Academically, this study contributes to the literature on government public relations by examining boundary-spanning functions in conjunction with community engagement and special events—concepts increasingly relevant in the context of growing public participation in government initiatives. Practically, the findings may serve as a useful reference for other government institutions seeking to implement similar public relations strategies to fulfill their organizational goals through public-facing events.

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