

ASSESSING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

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Abstract

Since 2007 Government of Indonesia implementing mass National Community Empowerment Program, well-known as PNPM which is reaches thirty three provinces. This program has become an important development program for national as well as local and regional level across Indonesia. The program using bottom up approaches since it implemented based on fostering local community participation; strengthening local community organization with the ultimate goals is to reduce poverty at local level. The regulation and technical guidance affirmed by ministry and it is running by local community organization. The study goes to examine the research findings that the Indonesia CDD's program is effective to enhance local participation. It also examines the extent to which research findings used to increase higher public participation on this project since the program focus on small scale infrastructure and mostly it has taken up uniform activity of the program agenda all over the countries. The program basically focus on building basic need infrastructure projects, such as, piping drinking water project, paving small roads at rural or paving narrow 'labyrinth' at dense urban area. However, hardly to find innovation program from the local governments since they have no adopted anything remotely near the 'National Package'. Moreover, the quality of participation is still questionable. This study concludes with a discussion of the limits to evaluation and recommend stragies for promoting forther practice and methods of The Urban-Poverty Project public participation evaluation. Based on the literature study, this paper try to give contribution on an understanding of the successful of project implementation, in turn could be used to formulate future public participation project.

Keywords: Empowerment, Poverty Reduction, Local Participation, Community Driven Development

INTRODUCTION

According World Bank terminology, the Urban-Rural Poverty Project-PNPM classified as Community Driven Development or CDD refer to community based-approaches project as it is commonly known has come to dominate thinking about how it affect on local development in developing countries. Some have hailed CDD as a new approach other assumed it is only as an effective program based approach to deliver International development aid. There has been a debatable about the advantages and disadvantages of the Community Driven Development.

The debate tends to focus on the desirability or otherwise of CDD result in principle. Though there are differing interpretations of what that common response consist of. But there is general agreement that key components of CDD are: decentralize of authority; giving control over planning decisions to community groups or individual. Pro and cons alike often accept the assumption that the CDD is determinant factor to lead local development for less-develop countries. The universality assumption is encouraged by strong evidence fact that CDD become feature prominently in the policies among developing countries. But has the 'Determinant Factor' gone beyond rhetoric? This study looks at precisely this question in relation to Indonesia. To what extent can the Urban-National Program Community, called as PNPM genuinely affected of local participation?

Community Driven Development answers the fundamental issue on what kind of local development and for whom. Local development has become an increasingly important program at national and local governments since Indonesia enacted decentralization policy in 2000. In parallel, the context for local development has been significantly changed and more challenging. First, Indonesia shift from 'centralized to decentralized' on fiscal-politics and administrative (ADB, 2004). When authoritarian rule was deposed in 1998, his regime fell apart as well. Under new administration regime, the new government enacted reforms to transfer power to the hundreds of districts that make up the archipelago. Wide Authority is given to local level through the elected local elites as decision-maker. National transferred responsibility and resources to lower levels of administration. Though decentralization viewed as a vehicle to promote participatory decision making, local infrastructure development and service delivery (Wekwete in Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007) but it was not impacted significant on local development. Second, the reshaped environment of local governments has stimulated new intervention, through instruments and public policies, seeking harness both internal and external forms of local growth and development. However, different geographical landscape, culture and resources have been able to exercise differing result on development speed among localities. The decentralization started in 1999 has

been viewed to increased the disparities, rather than decrease it. (Aritenang,2008). Decentralization makes disparities among regions wider and eastern part of Indonesia still severe concerning basic services. Third, decentralization boosts democratization at local level. Direct election local leader by local people replaced the 'rubber stamp' election system. It is aimed as a drive for local elite's accountability to their constituents.

Moreover, democratization at local level ideally is expected to become more accountable and responsive to the local people need. But, decentralization implementation in Indonesia creates corruption at local level, the number corruption among local elites increase along with decentralization policy. Wide authorities put at local elites lead on rent-seeking behavior as they begin to extract public budget for their own interest, the number of head elected executive accused on corruption case is increasing year by year. Those local predatory (Vedi, 2004) are contradictive with decentralization goal and it hinders local development (Sukadana, 2009). Moreover, decentralize corruption is worst that centralize corruption on economic growth since it creates high uncertainty. Fourth, local development only will achieve intended result if local participation exist (Hyden in Cheema & Rondinelly, 2007). Though community participation are not panacea but it works for some projects at weak government. ADB, 2001)

DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Started in 2007 The Government of Indonesia supported by International agency launch the PNPM initiatives emphasize community driven development (CDD) as a means of ensuring sustainable livelihoods, good governance and poverty. The PNPM reveals the complexity and difficulty of achieving effective participatory. The PNPM is a national program for community empowerment for accelerating poverty reduction. The ultimate goal of this program is to empower diverse rural and urban communities to be actively participated in development. The program concern on the slow local development progress made after the enactment of decentralization policy in 2000. Weak capacity of local governments when Big-Bang decentralization enacted viewed as one of influential factor on the slow progress on local development. National intervention-international agency aid and community participation create as a prominent formula to enhance local development while strengthen local institution capacity. This comprehensive approach leverage whatever amounts of administrative capacity exist heavily on individual and community groups capacity to implement development process at local level. Those play important role not only as beneficiaries but act as active forces supporting development. Hence the PNPM programs believe as national breaking through policy to enhance basic economic growth and development at local level through community

participation. PNPM proposed as intervention policy or as an important pillar of the local economic development. Some of the common characteristics of local governments in Indonesia are low per capita income, slow growth, underdeveloped infrastructure in both rural and urban areas. The PNPM's comprises on financial aid, infra structure investments related to roads, drainage, irrigation, water supply, sanitation, waste disposal, power supply, and other service (World Bank, 2012). Based on World Banks report after a year implementation it showed that a community-driven development approach was effective to reach poor households and reduced unemployment rates. Vulnerable households near the poverty line were also less at risk to fall into poverty.

PNPM's program supported by International agency implementing poverty reduction program through direct-community grants as a paradigm development program based on community participation. In the view of the Keynesian's concept that the paradigm development through intervention of government policy is an attempt when public services can not provided through private market. Government involves the maintenance of a legal framework for the enforcement of contracts and a mechanism for the settlement of disputes. Government has responsibility for provision of a limited set of goods which is not attractive or difficult to supply through the market.

PNPM use different approach in any other national program, it is classified as community driven development program since it need direct local people involvement. Based on World Banks report after a year implementation it showed that a community-driven development approach was effective to reach poor households and reduced unemployment rates. PNPM gives great public participation in development on management cycle, from planning to evaluating, as a planner-implementer-evaluator and also as beneficiaries. The PNPM aids in general delivers block grants to the urban poor for small scale infrastructure and to a lesser extent, small projects for social and economic development, currently serves all urban areas in Indonesia with the aims of fostering community participation, improving local governance, and delivering basic needs at the community level (World Bank, 2012). The program requested by local community based on their plan-development plan through community forum which institutionalized by national guidance. Generally the instrument for participatory and community-driven development programs in PNPM based on the program scheme and the institutions in charge of the program. They responsible to provide data and development proposals based on community's need. The program is a core part of the country's poverty reduction strategy as well as national urban strategy toward Millennium Development Goals.

As mention above that centralize system and slow local development speed post decentralization era in Indonesia foster the PNPM to use bottom-up approaches. The PNPM introduce heavy participatory processes based on assumption of interest and capacity on the part of local people. The PNPM provide wide space for people to be directly involved in addressing the problems of poverty, ranging from planning, and determination of the program, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Community participation believes as a key factor in achieving the success and sustainability of development programs. The PNPM basic principles are: Pro-poor oriented, Participation, equality and gender justice, Democratic, Transparency and accountability and project based on priority. The PNPM approaches which promote local participation in basic services and management generated a picture of participation in local governments patterned by inequitable social structures which is dominated by elite local (Sukadana, 2009). On the other side, top-down approach claimed have created elitist development process within which large sections of society are marginalized, while small elite enjoy and grow more powerful (Hadiz, 2004). Moreover, by participation at the grassroots-level that marginalized people allow to be contributed to economic progress in their areas.

Participation in the context of PNPM is a process through which all individual-marginalized and community group are involved directly in and have influence on

decisions related to particular development activities that will perceive them. In the broader development context, that these opportunities for people participation in the design of projects enhances the probability that people will begin to appreciate the value of participation and may lead to be active in other projects. That implies that PNPM projects will address those community or group needs on which members have chosen to focus, and that all phases of the PNPM process characterized by active involvement of community or organization members through particular meeting among them. By technical guidelines, PNPM is committed to the concept that every single project on PNPM's spot is based on local people request. A year evaluation on PNPM in 2006 shows that the development projects are most likely to succeed when there is active involvement and commitment among local people. Concerning transparency, through meeting among people provide free and open exchange information among them.

The PNPM project proposal will require active involvement and transparency of all members. The proposal result from different hierarchical steps from identification need-discussion within group-Discussion with Facilitator-Technical consideration-List of project. From those steps all members of community understand fully the goals and objectives of the project; know detail on each project proposal and understand the roles and responsibilities each member has in the implementation of the project. PNPM acknowledges the right of

communities to control their development project including the decision over what and how development activities should be pursued. Thus, ideally, projects funded by the PNPM show clear evidence that the project has been initiated by grass root that has broad based participation of its members in decision making processes. As a result of this participation, all members of the group will take a part as owners of the PNPM project.

But how do we measure public participation? Does people who attend on PNPM's meeting give significant contribution on every single steps of the project or just put as rubber stamp for 'national-package project'?

Participants attendance and their satisfaction seem as participation measurement tool on this projects. It also can be drawn from research that public participation on PNPM's project firstly can be seen from the community attendance on PNPM's meeting. Other results show their active participation leads to enhance their sense of belonging on the project (Nurhayati. et al, 2012, Public Work Ministry, 2011). This present result indicates that individual-community motivation will affect their participation on the project. Though the degree of its participation varied from one place to another since they need to consider what effect the PNPM's program might and will have for them who active and directly involve. Public participation approaches have been shown to enhance project quality and reduce the price, the world bank report on

PNPM's infrastructure'project found that it is 80% lower compare with similar project (Public Work Ministry, 2011). Also improve project's ownership (WB, 2008).

The CDD's project can be more successful when they value the local community and view local individual not as an object but as a development's actor. This result also supports the perspective of people-centered development. Extending development project to local actors and involving them more deep and frequent in information and decision-making had a significant impact on PNPM's project. Eventually PNPM allow public participation expanded from a more specific area to encompass the normative, policy and institutional and organizational aspect of development (Yulianti, 2012; Girsang, 2011; Nurhayati et al, 2012). The challenge remains how to combine top-down, demand-driven development with the current frameworks of national-local governance which unable to provide sufficient solutions, support and direction.

Since PNPM works directly with grass roots groups, it understands that the proposals it receives often require refinement, in this case PNPM provide selected facilitator. A Facilitator for the PNPM will be responsible for setting up, devising and guiding community through a series of PNPM guidelines to achieve their community desired outcomes. PNPM's facilitator takes place at sub-district level and has responsibility to guide PNPM's project at several kelurahan-ward within particular sub-district. Facilitator is the PNPM frontline,

and they have enormous influence and impact on the program's effectiveness. From the World Bank 2012 report on PNPM implementation that facilitator plays a key role in some of the most central elements of the program especially for technical assistance both for construction or financial aspect. Being as PNPM facilitator should meet academic requirement, they are professional and well-paid. The PNPM's facilitator makes a valuable contribution to community and the project in general and more specially can improve access and coverage of communities with basic services delivery through their capability. There is robust evidence that PNPM facilitator share their knowledge to the grass root at urban slum area in Bandung City (Nurhayati et al, 2012). The facilitator be able to give an effective contribution since they selected, appropriately trained and know well all PNPM's guidelines which hard to implement by grass root. By geographical, cultural, ideological and religious nature the PNPM are vulnerable unless it convincing are driven, owned by and firmly embedded in community. Thus, the facilitator should have high adaptive capability in such fragile community. Despite having technical capability, urban's PNPM facilitator come from similar ethnic-at least can speak local language to make strong connection with local people.

Research has found that highly committed PNPM participant may perform better than less committed ones (Girsang, 2011;Yulianti, 2012). Higher levels of participation are linked to higher of education levels, woman

participation still low (Public Work Ministry, 2011; Girsang, 2011; Yakin et al,2011; Scanlon et al, 2011). Research conducted in Bandung confirmed the same result. Researchers express less confidence with the desirable outcome of PNPM on poverty reduction is not straightforward. In particular, its usefulness as a tool for enhancing community participation with varies degree among research spot. However, PNPM can be an excellent means of promoting improved representation of the poor and enhancing the targeting of development. It was proved by all study as the sources on this paper, that the PNPM's project benefit for all community whether they participate or not. The empirical result shows that the level of public participation is on moderate level. Public infrastructure project as the major and main agenda for all PNPM's spot indicates that it was not merely based on their participation but more so because the poor infrastructure availability among PNPM's spot.

CONCLUSION

PNPM's program supported by International agency implementing poverty reduction program through direct-community grants as a paradigm development program based on community participation. In the view of the Keynesian's concept that the paradigm development through intervention of government policy is an attempt when public services can not provided through private market. Government involves the

maintenance of a legal framework for the enforcement of contracts and a mechanism for the settlement of disputes. Government has responsibility for provision of a limited set of goods which is not attractive or difficult to supply through the market.

There is no specific guideline on how public participation measured on this program whether on conceptual or methodological approach. But most PNPM's research review the empirical public participation based on direct interviews to the local community. The elaboration fact findings found that public participation on PNPM's project for individual level remains at the lowest degree on participation (attendance). Although there is guarantee that public participation in a decision-making process will lead

to broad public acceptance of a PNPM's project, there is evidence that similarity on PNPM's projects can both reflect the strong intervention from national and poor basic infrastructure at local areas. If PNPM's research findings shows significant participation of local people, but it should not be put a single key factor since the role of facilitator also give positive contribution.

A comprehensive framework is needed for evaluation of the process, output, outcomes, and impact of public participation. This should be accompanied by capacity-building in skills and techniques for local community to achieve effective stakeholder participation so that the objective of improving decisions about PNPM's program can be attained.

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