

**Third Party Evaluator's Opinion on
SMALL SCALE IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT PROJECT (3)**

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Criteria-1 IMPACT

Indonesian currency devaluation during program implementation brought enormous impact to the program outcome. This external factor must be underpinning as main factor which is widen the program area and result. Program report shows that there is positive impact on farmer income. There is rice production increase up to 128% in total five program area. On the other side, after the project farmers are able to cultivate other profitable crops. In generally, farmer incomes in 5 provinces are increase between 10 to 20 % after the project implementation.

Survey methodology which only chooses 132 farmers from 16 locations at 5 provinces is lack of validity and less representative. That makes all data not shown real condition in project area. Furthermore, there were several category of farmer. First we call it as farmer, they who have land to cultivate. Second is peasant, they who become farmer employee and don't have land to cultivate. By taking 132 persons as respondents, this survey is only picturing program impact to farmer not to peasants. This irrigation project seems only give impact on increasing farmer income but not to the peasant life condition. Unfortunately, the worst poverty is take place on peasant hand not at farmer.

Microfinance approach can be other solution to empower the peasant life condition. By this approach empowerment will happen for farmer as well as peasants. By adopting microfinance approach this program will be the real empowerment program for the poor.

Criteria-2 SUSTAINIBILITY

Program sustainability face big constraint especially on society support on tertiary irrigation canal operational and maintenance. Unfortunately, program sustainability depend on society support especially their financial support.

Lack of support from the society is due to their less participation at the beginning of program implementation. Water User Association (WUA) is created only for program sustainability purpose. Lack of society ownership to the irrigation facility and loose group cohesion are result of these approaches. Finally those will lead to bad program sustainability.

Participatory must be main approach when program want to establish group. Secondly, those groups must be considering the existing groups or community in society. It is much better if these groups creation is using these existing groups. Those groups must involve to the program since the early stage of irrigation unit planning, building, and maintenance. This approach will create the sense of ownership to irrigation system within groups and drive to better program sustainability.

Bina Swadaya's experience shows that not all groups are ready and able to manage the project follow up. Communities will require further assistance on technical and non-technical aspect as tool for society empowerment. Technical aspect assistance contain of education to operate and maintain irrigation unit. The non-technical aspect refers to group management and strengthens.