

Engaging Citizen, Sustaining Service Delivery of Rural Water Supply in Indonesia

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Abstract : Citizen engagement approach has become increasingly important in the rural water sector. However, the question remains as to what exactly is meant by citizen engagement and how this approach can lead to sustainable service delivery. To understand citizen engagement, this paper argues that we need to understand basic elements of social life that consist of social structure, process, and culture within the realm of community's living environment. Extracting from empirical data from Pamsimas villages in rural West Java, Indonesia, this paper will identify basic elements of social life and environment that influence and form the engagement of citizen and government in delivering and sustaining rural water supply services in Indonesia. Pamsimas or the Water Supply and Sanitation for Low Income Communities project is the biggest rural water program in Indonesia, implemented since 1993 in more than 27,000 villages. The sustainability of this sector is explored through a rural water supply service delivery life-cycle, starts with capital investment, operational and maintenance, asset expansion or renewal, strategic planning for future services and matching cost with financing. Using mixed-method data collection in case study research, this paper argues that increased citizen engagement contributes to a more sustainable rural water service delivery.

Keywords : citizen engagement, rural water supply, sustainability, Indonesia

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