

PROMISING APPROACHES TO

Engendering Development

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES TO INCREASING WOMEN'S VOICE IN CDD PROJECTS: EXAMPLES FROM INDONESIA

Why this is a promising approach:

- Transparency tools and regulations help to avoid social and gender bias in CDD projects, and where designed specifically to increase women's voice in community decision-making, can help to ensure project responsiveness to women's needs.
- Transparency tools such as social mapping of households classified by well-being, separate women's meetings, public vote tallying, and monitoring for equitable procedures and outcomes can enhance community satisfaction with project outcomes and improve sustainability of results.
- By ensuring that all community members, not just the more powerful and better off, have a genuine voice in CDD projects, gender-sensitive transparency tools and regulations help to achieve the primary goal that underlies the CDD approach, namely, reflecting the community's priorities regarding local development.

Well-designed community-driven development (CDD) projects are an effective tool for empowering women at the local level in developing countries. When these projects ensure that women and men have an equal voice in and gain equal benefits from the community's development decisions, CDD projects can become more effective and sustainable by meeting the needs of both women and men, and by giving both women and men a stake in the success of the community's projects.

Ensuring that all community members have a voice in CDD decisions is a challenge, given the inherent inequalities that are nearly universal in decision-making at the local level. In Indonesia, several successful CDD projects, most notably the Kecamatan Development Projects (KDP)¹ and the Water and Sanitation for Low Income Communities Projects (WSLIC), have experimented with approaches to ensure that women—who, as a group, have traditionally been discriminated against—gain a voice in CDD decision-making.² Although the techniques used in these projects were designed to meet the specific conditions found in Indonesia, many of the problems encountered and solutions devised can be (and have been) applied elsewhere. This note highlights key features of the approaches used in Indonesia to ensure women's voice in CDD projects.

¹ Kecamatan are sub-districts. The Indonesian Urban Poverty Projects (UPP), the urban equivalent of KDP, also helped to develop the approaches described here. There have been successive phases of each of the KDP, WSLIC and UPP projects, with the lessons learned in the first phase applied to the design of subsequent phases.

² These projects also were designed to give voice to the poor and other groups who normally have relatively little say in community decisions in Indonesia.

KDP and WSLIC

KDP, which now reaches nearly 28,000 poor communities in 30 of 34 Indonesian provinces, is a multipurpose community development project. Communities may propose infrastructure projects (for which they receive technical assistance from project engineers) or can fund micro-enterprises through a revolving fund that is replenished when loans are repaid. WSLIC is a community water and sanitation project in which communities plan and implement community water and sanitation improvements of their choice.

Ensuring Women's Voice

Both projects began with affirmative action rules and project requirements aimed at widening community participation in decisions and specifically targeting women for greater involvement in project processes. For example, whenever a KDP community submitted more than one infrastructure proposal, at least one proposal had to be initiated by women. Both projects also required that the specially formed community decision-making committees have gender balanced membership.

The initial rounds of KDP and WSLIC (also UPP) found that rules and requirements of this kind, although a necessary beginning, were in some cases insufficient to ensure that women had a genuine voice in project decisions. For example, women were sometimes forced to submit men's proposals in their name, and men sometimes dominated the decision-making in the committees on which women sat.

For this reason, both KDP and WSLIC worked with project stakeholders to design and implement additional transparency-promoting participatory tools and project requirements. These tools and requirements included:

- Social mapping of all community households, classified by socioeconomic status and sex of household head. This mapping was then used during the meetings at which the community determined the location of new infrastructure.³ The mapping was intended to ensure that infrastructure was located where it benefited poor and female-headed households, not just relatively better-off male-headed households.
- Holding separate community meetings for women to identify their priorities and formulate their proposals, a strategy that helped to overcome men's tendency to dominate in mixed-sex meetings.
- Requiring that the ideas selected for community proposals be evaluated and ranked using three criteria (poverty impact, potential sustainability and majority's preference), with final selection being made through public tallying of votes in a village meeting where each community member present had one vote.
- Requiring that water and sanitation projects demonstrate equity in three key areas—community processes, plans for service improvement, and the composition of water management committees—before being eligible to receive project assistance, and monitoring for such equity at several stages of the project cycle, with further disbursement of funds linked to satisfactory performance.

Conclusions

The KDP and WSLIC experiences suggest that gender and social inclusion can be

³ Local men's and women's groups establish the criteria used to classify households' socioeconomic status.

achieved in CDD projects when affirmative action rules and equitable project processes are combined with participatory tools and regulations. Evaluations of KDP a year after the participatory tools were introduced in a sub-sample of communities found that all categories of community members, including women and the poor, were highly satisfied with the project. This is in contrast to the communities in which the tools were not used, where satisfaction was much lower among the poorer households, especially among poor women. This increased satisfaction enhances project sustainability by lowering the potential for social conflict and giving all community members a stake in ensuring continued project success.

Similarly, project supervision has shown that women's preferences are reflected in the design of WSLIC community facilities, and that women gain greater voice in water management committees through increased access to training.⁴ Both projects' experience suggests, however, that gender inclusion needs to be incorporated into all aspects of the project, including in project operation manuals, technical guidelines, supervision and monitoring systems. The likelihood of effecting a more permanent change is increased when gender-inclusive procedures can be institutionalized with local governments.

World Bank CDD website:

<http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/sdvext.nsf/09ByDocName/CommunityDrivenDevelopment>

⁴ Women in committees are frequently chosen as treasurers because communities trust women more than men in this role. This ensures that women gain greater access to financial management training from WSLIC.

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