

DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS: THE MANAGEMENT AND PERCEPTION OF STAKEHOLDERS (A CASE IN WEST SUMBAWA DISTRICT, INDONESIA)

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Abstract

Development Block Grant (DBG) Program aims to develop society's participation and empowerment. The research was aimed to study the management of DBG and the perception of stakeholders on DBG. The research was conducted in West Sumbawa District (WSD), Indonesia. The research method was qualitative descriptive. Data collection was conducted using interview technique and focus group discussion (FGD).

The management of DBG program has placed societies as actors by giving opportunity to the societies to participate in planning and implementation up to monitoring and evaluation stages. However, DBG of private sectors still put the societies as the receivers, in which the implementation was tended to be the implementation of corporate social responsibility to its surrounding societies. The perception of participation for communities was similar to *gotong royong* (working together toward a common goal) practice developed in the societies. Whereas, for the program implementer, the participation more likely to be a tool achieving the goals instead of the final goal of the developed social process.

Keywords: Development Block Grant, Management, Perception, Stakeholders

INTRODUCTION

Decentralization and autonomy of a region are efforts to improve societies' welfare and empower societies. Societies' welfare improvement is conducted by reducing bureaucracy level; therefore, local government will provide closer, faster and on target public services to the societies. Societies' empowerment, on the other hand, is conducted by giving more opportunity to all societies' level to participate in each stage of development process.

West Sumbawa District (WSD) is one of districts in West Nusa Tenggara Province, Republic of Indonesia. It is a new autonomy region formed on December 18, 2003 and the second largest production area of gold and copper in Indonesia. With its status as new autonomy region and mineral producers, societies in WSD expect to have their welfare to be improved. WSD government responds to the societies' expectation by innovation on development policies with focus on societies' participation named *rukun tetangga* (neighborhood unit)-based development program (*Program Pembangunan Berbasis Rukun Tetangga-PBRT*).

In the implementation, PBRT gives development block grant (DBG) in form of stimulant grant to every *rukun tetangga* (RT) annually and encourages the formation of

Rukun Tetangga-based Cooperative (KBRT) through Economic Stimulus Grant Program. This DBG completes previous DBGs, which was provided by Central Government through National Program for People Empowerment (PNPM Mandiri), and block grant from private sector where mining corporations operated in WSD gave the grant to develop infrastructure and societies development programs as part of their corporate social responsibility.

Based on the purpose and beneficiaries, block grant policy in Indonesia is divided into two forms, grant and social protection programs and development block grant. In grant and social protection programs or known as Social Safety Net (JPS), the government gives direct assistance, cash, food, social assistance, etc, to the targeted societies and it is characterized as a charity program. Whereas, DBG is given in form of societies' empowerment program as efforts to increase societies' capacity toward autonomy in a development based on from, by and to the societies (Sumodiningrat, 2007).

DBG is an effort to build mutual trust between government and societies and among societies. Mutual trust development is an important component to form social capital (Fukuyama, 2002). DBG is grouped as a planned change where innovation for change comes from external of the communities and communities are expected to adopt the planned change with intervention from external parties (Lippitt and Wesley, 1958; Leeuwis, 2006). Diffusion innovation policies in Indonesia before 1990s was on how an intervention of innovation is adopted by the societies based on government will. In this participative development era, innovation paradigm has shifted where societies are the main actor in the development process; therefore, societies' aspiration and needs should receive more attention.

Leeuwis (2004) described current innovation as a communication process to develop network, social learning and negotiation. As a communication process, it is important to build common perception on innovation between societies as client who are the target of innovation and stakeholders external from the societies, such as government as regulator, program management as program facilitator and private sector that give DBG as part of their corporate social responsibility.

The management of DBG by societies is a learning process, either for societies who are the target and implementer of the program or stakeholders involved in DBG management. Success story and lesson learned from DBG management can be an input for societies and stakeholders in developing participation and empowering the societies. The lesson is increasingly important since in 2014 Government of Indonesia issued Act No. 6, 2014 on Villages where one of the important decisions in the Act is the allocation of DBG from the State Budget (APBN) directly to the Village Government. It is estimated that every village will receive the allocated fund of Rp 1.4 billion and every village will have their own autonomy to manage the fund based on the village needs and potential.

Various societies' empowerment programs conducted in WSD have the same philosophy despite the implemented institutions are different. The philosophy is "give the hook not the fish" or help the societies to have them help themselves through the development of societies' participation in DBG management. However, each program implementer will have different policies, approaches and methods in the implementation. Different perception, interest and purpose of stakeholders will result in various responses toward DBG management (Herawati, Widjayanto, Saharuddin and Eriyatno, 2010).

Based on the above description, the research statement was how DBG management is especially that of conducted by the societies who are the target and actor of DBG management and how the perception of stakeholders on DBG program related to the development of societies' participation and empowerment. The purpose of the research was to study the management of DBG program and stakeholders' perception on DBG program.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research was conducted in West Sumbawa District (WSD) West Nusa Tenggara Province on March to June 2012. WSD was chosen as research location based on consideration that WSD is a DOB (New Autonomy Region) with innovation of policies to empower societies and develop societies' participation in the development through DBG for *Rukun Tetangga* communities.

The research was planned as qualitative descriptive research. Descriptive research is a research describing a situation or event from sample to population in order to arrive with conclusion on characteristics, behaviours and facts within the population (Babie, 2004). Qualitative research is an observation to people in their environment, interact with them and tend to understand their language and interpretation on their surrounding world (Nasution, 1995). According to Strauss and Corbin (1990) one of the advantages of qualitative researches is that it can be used to explain complicated detail of a phenomenon, which is hard to explain by quantitative approach.

Data collection was conducted using in-depth interview technique and focus group discussion (FGD). In-depth interview was conducted to policy maker apparatus and program implementer of DBG from related institutions or agencies, Subdistrict Head, Village Head, program consultant and Community Development Section of mining companies. Focus group discussion was conducted in two discussion groups. The first group was FGD with societies who receive DBG and the second group was FGD with policy maker apparatus and DBG program implementer of related institutions or agencies (Regional Development Planning Agency, Village Societies Empowerment Agency, Department of Education, and Related Institutions or Agencies), Subdistrict Head, Village Head, and non-government organizations, *rukun tetangga* communities, which were the research sample. Six *rukun tetangga* communities were chosen purposively as research sample from 695 *rukun tetangga* in WSB by considering learning process in DBG management.

Collected data was descriptively analyzed to describe situations and events found. Presented data was the result of FGD of each group and presented by the researchers who were the FGD facilitators and agreed as the conclusion of FGD result of each group. According to Nazir (1998) through descriptive analysis, a researcher will be able to give description on phenomena, explain relationship, predict, and conclude the discussed meaning on problems.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Management of Development Block Grant Program

Based on its source of fund, DBG in WSD can be characterized into three groups. First, DBG from central government conducted through PNPM Mandiri. PNPM in WSD was started in 2007 through Villages-PNPM Mandiri (PNPM-MP). In 2008, additional programs were started. Those programs were PNPM-Educated and Healthy Generation (PNPM-GSC) focusing on improving the health of mother and children and family education; PNPM-Socio-Economic Infrastructure Development (PNPM-PISEW), a societies' empowerment program to integrate central economic growth with its surrounding areas; and PNPM-Village Agribusiness Program (PNPM PUAP) to foster agribusiness based on agricultural potential of targeted villages.

Second, DBG initiated and implemented by WSD government, which was *Rukun Tetangga*-based Development (PBRT). Based on Regional Government No. 27, 2008, PBRT is an instrument of WSB government policies to foster the participation of all societies'

component in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development to achieve societies' welfare in all aspects of life based on *rukun tetangga* (RT).

Third, DBG from private companies, which was societies' development program and infrastructure development conducted as the implementation of corporate social responsibilities of mining companies operated in WSD. Gold and copper mining activities in Batu Hijau area of WSD started to operate in mid 1999; however, the companies have been starting their communities' development activities since Batu Hijau project construction stage (1997-1998). The communities' development program focused on four main sectors, education, health, economic/agriculture and socio-cultural sectors.

Based on in-depth interview with communities and program management, the implementation of DBG program management in WSB is described in the following Table 1.

Table 1 The Management of Development Block Grant in West Sumbawa District

Management	Central Government DBG	Regional Government DBG	Private Companies DBG
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructures development • Economic activities development • Societies' and local government capacities improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registry and mapping of RT population • Empowerment of RT communities • Improvement in societies' participation • Improvement in basic services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure development • Health, education and economic development • Non government organization development
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participative planning by societies • Pre-planning: socialization, mapping and organizing the societies • Planning process: brainstorming, discussion on village planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participative planning by societies • Pre-planning: socialization, mapping and organizing the RT communities • Planning process is conducted by RT communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participative involvement of societies in plan and strategies formulation • Socialization and formulation of plan and strategies • Regional and village governments propose programs annually • Annual plan is formulated by companies based on plan and strategies
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of villages' idea is conducted competitively in subdistrict • Activities are conducted by Societies' Independence Agency (<i>Badan Keswadayaan Masyarakat -BKM</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs of RT are determined and implemented by societies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are conducted by companies in cooperation with third parties
Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation are conducted by program management • Monitoring by societies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participative monitoring and evaluation by societies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation by companies
Societies' roles	Actors	Actors	Receivers
External role of program management	Big	Moderate	Very big

Facilitation	The program gives facilitator support in district and sub-districts level and local facilitator in villages level	The program do not provide any specific guide	If needed, local NGO will provide facilitators
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DBG management from the government, central or regional governments, has placed societies as actors (subject) who are trusted to implement DBG program from planning and implementation to monitoring and evaluation stages. Whereas DBG from companies has placed societies as receiver (object) of the companies' DBG program. Despite the planning of strategic programs for societies development had been conducted in participative way by involving the societies and stakeholders, the companies themselves with reference to plan and strategies conducted the annual planning program. The companies implemented the program directly or by involving third parties. The companies were working with local contractors for infrastructure development and for activities with assistances required, such as agricultural development and micro enterprise group development, the companies were working with local NGOs.

From those three DBG programs in WSB, DBG program from central government was the only programs that specifically provide assistance in district and sub-district levels. Instead of providing specific assistance, DBG program from regional government assigned their apparatus to assist societies as needed. Result from FGD found that local guides had not played their role based on the societies' expectation. It is in line with the result from Danel and Lasimpo's (2008) and Aditjondro' (2010) research that PNPM facilitators do not equipped with societies' empowerment philosophy and focused only on administrative matters. Facilitators were assigned based on program and worked based on guidance determined by the program.

From the communities' point of view, the societies need assistance to help them in understanding the program and their need and to identify their potential to overcome the problems and fulfill their need. As a practice introduced by a system external to the societies, the societies did not familiar with participation practice based on the rules of the program although in reality the real participation practices such *gotong royong*, *basiru*, *rebana ode* have been conducted every day in Samawa Tribe society, which is the native population of WSD (Juniarsih, 2007).

According to Ife (2005), a facilitator should be able to play his/her role and has the ability to facilitate, educate and represent, and has technical capability. A facilitator should understand that developing participation is not merely for the willingness and ability of societies to participate; instead, participation built should adhere to the daily behavior of the community to be aware and response in solving their community's welfare problems.

As an innovation of developmental policies, Leeuwis (2004) stated that communication process and innovation diffusion are processes to build network, social learning and negotiation. The implementation of DBG program has strengthened social capitals. For example, it has strengthened mutual trust between communities and government and among the communities. The mutual trust, however, has not fully developed between communities and mining companies. The communities felt that there was a gap between companies and communities. Regarding DBG provided by the companies, communities considered that it is the companies' responsibility to improve their welfare as a compensation for the exploitation in their environment.

In addition to mutual trust, DBG management has increased cohesiveness among communities after participating in DBG program. Cohesiveness and mutual trust in community level of *Rukun Tetangga* was felt more since people often to meet and interact

each other to implement the program, which was societies' interest and needs. On the other hand, programs in village level have less capital social reinforcement since not all societies involved in and have access to programs. The above finding of FGD is in line with Friedman (1992) stressed that the focus of societies' empowerment is locality since civil societies are more prepare to be empowered through local issues. Based on Friedman's concept, societies' empowerment starts from household empowerment.

Network development has not well implemented in DBG program in WSD. There were no efforts to develop network and cooperation among communities to gain strong impact from the program. PNPM program facilitated the formulation of Inter-Villages Cooperation Agency (*Badan Kerjasama Antar Desa-BAKD*) in sub-district level. However, there was no network among villages within one sub-district. It was due to the determination on accepting proposal from villages in DBG program of central government was conducted by competition among villages. Societies empowerment should have been develop by collaboration instead of competition (Iffe, 2005).

Network and cooperation among *Rukun Tetangga* has not developed despite the potential of doing it, especially in small business economic field. It was related to the existence of WSD government policy to encourage the formation of cooperative in every *rukun tetangga*. WSD government gave stimulant fund of IDR 20 million for every *rukun tetangga-based cooperative (Kooperasi Berbasis Rukun Tetangga/KBRT)*. Up to 2012, there are 280 KBRT with member of 5.600.

Economic development activity should place *rukun tetangga* as common business groups (*kelompok-kelompok usaha bersama/KUB*) without the necessity to form their own cooperative. KUB of *rukun tetangga* can merge to form cooperative in village or neighborhood level. Therefore, it can encourage stronger capital accumulation than having cooperative in each *rukun tetangga*.

Various DBG received by WSD societies are an opportunity for developmental funding in WSD. WSD government has tried to integrate various societies' empowerment programs in WSD under the coordination of Bappeda (District's Development Planning Board). Deliberation of Development Planning (Musyawarah Perencanaan Pembangunan/Musrenbang) in district level has accommodated programs from central government, regional government and private sectors. Aspiration from societies was absorbed from the lower level through development planning convention in *rukun tetangga* level. However, their aspiration was not accommodated in regional planning; therefore, it was thought that Musrenbang was merely ceremonial. The reason is that there was no mechanism on securing program proposal from lower level (societies) to legislative where decision on development planning is made.

One example of integrated program conducted up to RT communities is House Make over Program. The number of uninhabitable homes in West Sumbawa District in 2011 is 3,883 units. WSD government has coordinated the funding and 3,000 units of house have been renovated using fund from the Ministry of Public Housing and grant from mining companies. Mining companies through CSR have renovated the remaining 883 units. RT communities were the implementer on field. By convention, societies in RT determined whose house to be renovated. Then, the house will be renovated with *gotong royong*. Fund allocated for each house was IDR 11 million. Result from renovation with *gotong royong* was better than that of conducted by contractor. Funding can be suppressed since workers were people within the RT area and they were unpaid. Materials for renovation were local materials available in RT area.

Perception of Stakeholders on Participation and Development Block Grant Program

Despite the management of DBG has provided the communities with enough room to participate in the program, stakeholders outside the communities tended to place societies as the object of the program. As an innovation in policy, a development program will be better adopted by targeted societies if there is common understanding about philosophy, concept and purpose of the program. Result from in-depth interview and FGD found that the perception of stakeholders on participation and DBG program was different, as presented in Table 2. Stakeholders in FGD were grouped into communities group and program management group (consist of decision makers from related institutions/agencies, head of sub-district, consultants, and facilitators of DBG program).

Table 2 Perception of Stakeholders on Participation and Development Block Grant Program in West Sumbawa District

Element of Perception	Program Management Perception	Communities Perception
Keyword Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Societies' involvement in the program Stakeholders' involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Gotong-royong</i> Working together Participate in the program
Participation position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right and obligation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right and obligation More obligation than right
The purpose of participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficiency Effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the unity Togetherness
Development <i>Block Grant</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct assistance program to the societies Build mutual trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant from the government Build mutual trust

Based on the keyword of participation, it showed that there were differences in the perception between program management and communities as program target. According to Kumar (2002) there are various concepts of participation from mobilization to the concept of action option based on self-awareness and from participation as a tool to improve development projects efficiency to participation as the goal for development.

For communities, participation concept is similar to the original participation practice developed in their communities, such as *gotong royong*, working on the field, building house, preparing customary and religious ceremonies. Participation for the communities is how to work together and involve all people in the community without material compensation because the goals are for the interest of the community itself. With the introduction of DBG program requiring participation from communities who received the program, the definition of participation developed into communities' participation' in a government program.

For program implementer, participation was how to mobilize societies to participate in the program. Participation has reduced into instrumental matter from participation as an ideology and democratic struggle into participation as a program tool. Participation developed by program implementer was merely on how to improve societies' participation in the implementation of the program other than participation development as an effort for democratization and social change. Cooke and Kotahari (2004) stated that the practice has caused participation for not always result in development sustainability, instead, it raises "participation tyranny", which is participation that works without understanding on local order; therefore, instead of empowering the societies, it is weakening them.

Based on keyword of the position and purpose of participation, it showed that participation was more as a tool to achieve goals instead of the goal of social process

developed. The position of participation according to communities and program management was more like an obligation to participate than a right. Refer to the purpose of participation, program management has purpose to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. However, communities showed idealist purpose, which is to build togetherness and strengthen unity (cohesiveness) among societies. The positive perception from the community was based on the real participation practices, such as *gotong royong*, that stay and develop in the communities.

Program management and communities have similar perception on DBG that DBG is government aid to build mutual trust between societies and the government. However, it was interesting that there was no perception from both program management and communities that DBG is an ad hoc program. It is likely due to the big number of DBG programs received by societies; as a result, there is no awareness that DBG is not a long term and sustainable program. Therefore, it should be informed that DBG is a temporary program aimed as a stimulant to develop participation and empower societies. It should be worried that this misunderstanding on DBG will result in societies' dependency on external assistance and cause dependent societies.

The characteristic of DBG program brings various perceptions on a DBG program. DBG program from WSB government through PBRT has different management characteristic to the one from central government through PNPM Mandiri. First, PNPM Mandiri develops project-based participative development with certain term (it will end in 2015). PBRT, on the other hand, develops bureaucracy-based participative development; therefore, it does not depend on project's rule and the implementation is adjusted to the regional development planning.

Second, PNPM Mandiri places subdistrict as the locus of activities, whereas, PBRT places *rukun tetangga* as its locus. By placing RT as the locus of activities shows that PBRT approaches the lowest institution in regional government structure with direct access to the interest of societies. Regarding the effectiveness of the service, locus on RT is more effective to give services and absorb communities' aspiration than sub-district locus. However, based on the efficiency of development activities, village locus is more appropriate than RT locus in the implementation of infrastructure and economic development.

Third, PNPM concept is characterized with global issues such as democratization and human rights, pluralism and economic liberalization that lead developing countries into transition to market societies. PNPM concept has close relation to the interest of donor institutions such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) developing participative development to improve efficiency and effectiveness of developing countries to pay their foreign debt. PNPM Mandiri is a program funded by loan from the World Bank and it is considered successful; therefore, it is replicated in various countries (Danel and Lasimpo, 2008; Aditjondro, 2010). However, in its implementation, based on Aditjondro (2010), the PNPM has eroded societies' social capital, such as *gotong royong* tradition and self-supporting in development.

On the contrary, PBRT concept is explored from the societies' cultural values such as *gotong royong*, participation, or democracy in the daily life. The rationale behind PBRT policy is that societies in WSD have *gotong royong* values, participation, and democracy in their daily life. However, overtime, those values are eroded and tend to disappear due to the change on fundamental social, economic, politic, culture and technology. To improve the positive values, WSD government felt the need to give motivation and stimulus to the societies to bring back the values of participation, *gotong royong* and democracy through policy such PBRT. With the improvement, those values will be a continue attitude and habit in the societies.

Different to the DBG from central and regional governments that put societies as the

actor of the program, DBG from private companies put societies as the receiver. Companies consider the community development activities as their social obligation to their surrounding communities instead of long-term empowerment based on societies' empowerment principles (Iffe, 2005; Freidmann, 1992). It is in line with conclusion from Sumaryo's (2009) research that CSR implementation by companies is tend to be a charity programs where by implementing it means the companies have conducted their social responsibility. Rosyida and Nasdian (2011) found that low participation from societies, especially societies in the lower level, in savings and loan program from CSR fund is due to the dominant role and function of companies in the implementation of the program.

Related to the efforts to actualize good governance, conceptually, DBG is one of ways to achieve good governance. However, the efforts from WSD government were not supported by improvement on performance and bureaucracy culture. It is similar to almost all autonomy regions in Indonesia.

Holidin and Hariyati' (2012) conducted research in West Bangka District and South Halmahera District and found that the government in those two regions has failed to open local participation. The level of societies' participation in those autonomy regions was low where local bureaucracy and elite reduced societies' power. Related to the finding, Muslim E.S. (2000) conducted a research to bureaucrat who handle the poverty reduction in Bandung Municipality found that there was no significant change on bureaucracy culture where aspects of dominance, paternalistic, patrimonial and do not uphold accountability were still persist among bureaucrats. Local bureaucrat perception on development was not conducive for the implementation of participative development and efforts to poverty alleviation.

CONCLUSION

The management of DBG programs from central and regional governments in WSD has placed societies as the actors by giving an opportunity to the societies to participate in the planning and implementation steps up to monitoring and evaluation steps. However, DBG from private companies still consider societies as the receiver where the implementation was tended to merely implementing the companies' social responsibility to their surrounding communities instead of sustainable empowerment for the societies.

DBG program management from regional government has the opportunity to be a continue program due to its bureaucracy-based PBRT. Therefore, it can be integrated with regional development planning and there was no obstacle related to project rules. In addition, its activities locus was in *rukun tetangga* level and based on local cultural values; therefore, cohesiveness among the societies was strengthening. Limitation of the program is PBRT program has not equipped with guidance for the communities and local guides have no role in strengthening social capital and developing societies' institutions. This problem should receive attention from DBG management in WSD .

Perception on participation for the communities is similar to *gotong royong* practice developed in the communities; whereas, for program implementer, participation is a tool to achieve goals and not the goal of social process developed. The perception of communities and program implementer of the DBG is that the program is merely direct grant to the societies; however, they do not realized that the program is an ad hoc program and it can be stopped if societies shows independence.

Effective social learning occurred in the level of *rukun tetangga* communities with the improvement on cohesiveness and mutual trust among the communities. However, it is not happening in village level. The implementation of DBG program in WSD needs to pay attention on network development.

WSD government has sought to integrate empowerment program in the regional planning and tried to actualize good governance. However, those efforts have not felt in the community level due to the perspective of local bureaucrat on development is not conducive for the implementation of participative development and poverty alleviation.

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