

How to have an effective Official Development Assistance (ODA) Water User Group- Farming Irrigation Systems in Cambodia

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Development of farming irrigation is not only the issue of physical infrastructures but it also covers the social issues, especially the water user group. If the group is well organized, the effective ODA will be found. This short presentation is about how to have an effective water user group, by identifying the key supporting factors. I took three archival cases studies from three countries for the references of two types of community- artificial and naturally emerged community. The former can be existed for a certain period then replaced by the latter. Culture and locality are the two reasons of having an effective community to support to ODA in those countries. At Cambodian level, I analyzed the failure of ODA to Cambodia with 500 million USD each year, followed by describing the present artificial grassroots level community which is formulated and supported by Non-Governmental Organization-NGOs, donors and government. Those communities were ineffective according to their formulation methods and their representation. The formulation of artificial community was the result of the majority school of researcher who understood that Cambodian society was shattered and lack of community cohesion but the minority school was saying in another way around and I supported this school with a contribution to strengthen it.

My contribution is the clearer explanation by using two elements: a) the kinship systems and locality which help to have a web in rural society and b). the role of religion and ritual for rural society. Based on these two elements; international development (donors as well as recipient's government) can have an effective grassroots level community to make effective assistance by: i) strengthening the role of religion with gradually adaptation of the religious and ritual rules and regulations to become official and secular or at least community law or regulation, and ii) adding new knowledge to wise men.

References

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- [2] *Irrigation and Agricultural Development in Asia*, Cornell University Press, London, pp: 329-344 (1980)