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**Participation and  
Project Sustainability:  
Participatory Integrated Development in  
Rain-fed Areas (PIDRA) Project in East  
Java-Indonesia**

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the requirement for the degree of

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the relationships between participation and project sustainability. By using the Participatory Integrated Development in the Rain-fed Areas (PIDRA), an integrated rural development project, in three districts of East Java, Indonesia, as a case study, it addresses the question about what kind of participation will lead the intended beneficiaries to continue to use and benefit from the services that remain beyond the project period.

The research found that the project mostly targeted the poor, marginalised, and vulnerable people, and widows as household heads. However, some high school graduates and wealthy villagers were also included as target beneficiaries. Most participants were actively involved and participated in the project implementation activities, but rarely participated in project planning and design as well as monitoring and evaluation. The results also show that factors influencing participation of the intended beneficiaries of the PIDRA Project in the target areas were: the responsibility of the beneficiaries to the groups as members and as leaders part of the management team; the level of education, knowledge, and skills of participants; incentives provided to access credits; the availability and use of sanctions; the geographical situation; poverty; age; support from the government; and the role of facilitators.

Analysis of the case study shows that the PIDRA Project in East Java will likely have some sustainable activities and benefits in the short term. Furthermore, participation is likely lead to the project sustainability of some project elements when participation is not only used as a means but also as an end. However, the results also suggest the increasing cooperation and collaboration of government and the NGOs, and defining participant groups based on similar educational background and socio-economic situation will enhance participation and project sustainability. This study would also raise the attention of development practitioners of the dangers of the participatory approach in their practice because it could be manipulative, harm people who are supposed to be advantaged, and hence create “new tyranny” in development interventions.

*This thesis is dedicated to Apa, Emih, and Mbah Caca,  
my beloved parents, D. Subardja and N. Sumiati,  
and to my loving brothers, Dian and Raihan,  
as well as my lovely cousins, Niar and Tika*

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The Background of the Research

In the 1950s, the success of the Marshall Plan after Second World War for the recovery of Europe led to the notion that planned development intervention could stimulate rapid development if it was rationally conceived and scientifically managed (Brohman, 1996, p.10). Soon thereafter, the idea of development emerged, specifically through the inaugural speech of President Truman of the United States in 1948 (Rist, 1997). The Cold War between the United States of America and Soviet Union resulted in a struggle for influence of 'Third World' countries. The need for development became a justification for intervention and assistance from both superpowers (Brohman, 1996, p.10-11). From that time on, development projects were implemented and foreign assistance delivered to the 'Third World' countries.

In the 1990s, after more than four decades of providing foreign assistance to developing countries, the major donor communities started to raise more concern on the sustainability of activities and benefits achieved after the withdrawal of foreign assistance (Bossert, 1990). Increasingly it was thought that it would be better to help people to be self-reliant and independent rather continued dependence on the charity from foreign assistance.

Project sustainability has increasingly been of importance to donors because there is a mounting pressure from domestic constituencies to drastically reduce, or possibly halt, foreign aid programmes (Brown, 1998, p.55). At some point, then donor organisations may cease development cooperation with the 'Third World' countries (Stockmann, 1997, p.1767). Furthermore, donors also started to see that the aid being delivered in the past few decades gave few benefits to the recipient countries and that the benefits often ended with the withdrawal of foreign assistance from the project or programme.

Local participation was seen as one of solutions to this problem of project sustainability. Not only would participatory approaches assist project sustainability but it was also argued that participation would make projects more efficient and effective (McGee, 2002, p.95). Since the 1980s, participation has been seen as an

antidote to the failure of development assistance, but it was only in the 1990s that multilateral agencies such as the World Bank placed greater emphasis on stakeholder participation as a way to ensure development sustainability (Gonzales, 1998, p.2). It is now regarded as a critical component which could promote the chances of development initiatives being sustainable through community capacity building and empowerment (Korten, 1984; Botchway, 2001; Brett, 2003; Australian Agency for International Development, 2000; Bigdon & Korf, 2002; Lyons, Smuts, & Stephens, 2001). Empowerment in this context means giving people who are marginalised, vulnerable, and excluded from development, the ability to be self-reliant to manage their own resources. It is believed that participation would lead to empowerment through capacity-building, skills, and training (Lyons et al., 2001). By increasing the ability of people, projects, and/or communities to be self-reliant, they are then able to contribute towards the sustainability of development projects which in turn could contribute to the broader notion of sustainable national development.

However, there are a wide range of definitions and interpretations of participation. To some extent this has broadened the understanding of participation but, on the other hand, has also seen attempts to package it neatly into a single statement or formula (FAO, 2007; Oakley, 1991a). Some concepts of participation are vague and poorly defined causing confusion over expectations and the evaluation of the outcomes of the participatory development process (McArthur, 1995 in Lyons et al., 2001, p.1233). Additionally, this simplification of complex issue demonstrates a poor understanding of the concept of participation and its linkage to sustainability; itself an intangible concept (Lyons et. al., 2001, p.1233).

This research will examine the likely sustainability of a development project by examining participation in a project in Indonesia. The Participatory Integrated Development in the Rain-fed Areas (PIDRA) project in three districts of East Java, Indonesia is used as a case study for the research because it has some groups that appears to be likely to sustain the benefits of the project, and some that likely will not. Other experiences from different rural development projects are taken into consideration and used as further support for the research results gained.

## **1.2 Research Justification**

This topic was built upon my concern over how projects and programmes are implemented, specifically in my home country, Indonesia. Based on my working experience as a staff member in the Evaluation Division of the Food Security Agency (FSA), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), I have seen many programmes and projects implemented without any significant positive results for the target participants, specifically to rural communities who are poor and marginalised. Most projects and programmes just delivered aid in the form of money or agricultural inputs such as fertilisers, seeds, or irrigation system to the target areas without really knowing whether it would be useful for target participants. One problem was that projects or programmes were centrally planned without any involvement of the communities or project participants, with intended participants only involved in the implementation of the project or programme. When the projects and programmes finished the communities generally did not want to continue the introduced activities and did not want to be responsible for maintaining the services provided, meaning that at the end of the day, there was no significant long term impact on the target participants.

Aside from my experience working with the FSA-MoA, I became particularly interested in this topic when I began studying Development Studies, in particular after learning about the different aid paradigms. I read that there are now some donor countries and bilateral or multilateral agencies that are questioning the impact of aid delivered to developing countries as part of their accountability to the tax payers in their countries. This seems reasonable as the aid delivered to developing countries, whether in the form of grants or loans, comes from the tax paid by the people in these countries. If the aid delivered does not give significant improvement to the livelihood of participants in the recipient countries, it seems reasonable that giving aid will be regarded as a waste of tax payers' money. Thus, there is a need to make sure that aid delivered benefits to people in developing countries in the long term and subsequently, there has been a rising concern from bilateral and multilateral agencies about the sustainability of development projects or programmes, meaning the continuation of the benefits and services provided by the programme or project after the departure of project managers.

Further, my interest in participation developed through the work of writers such as Kamarah (2001) in his study on rural projects in North Western Sierra Leone (1985-1995), and Oakley (1991a) in his book about the practice of participation in rural development. Oakley (1991a) stated that the project or the programme will successfully achieve its targets when target participants are involved actively in the project or programme. This active participation is not only critical in the implementation but during all stages of the project or programme from planning to evaluation.

These writers also discuss examples of projects or programmes that were not able to achieve their objectives and benefit the real project participants because they did not involve the participants from the beginning. The lack of involvement of participants has caused the delivery of services or activities not needed by the participants. The arguments of these writers made me curious about whether participation does or does not really influence the sustainability and the achievement of the project or programme objectives. Furthermore, I wanted to explore the best type of participation likely to enhance the sustainability of a project or programme.

To answer my curiosity about this topic I chose the PIDRA Project as an example because this project was known for its successful implementation in giving significant benefits through the community created self-help groups (SHGs). The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) as the donor has also recognised this success by giving their direct support to PIDRA in Indonesia because they want to make sure that this success will be sustained beyond the life of the project. Furthermore, this project has more complete data and information available for use in literature review and data analysis than other projects or programmes implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. Additionally, I am interested in this project because of the way it is implemented in the target areas as this project has a unique way of providing aid to participants; the project did not promise to give money or services but rather focused on training and capacity building. Furthermore, this project was supposedly strict in selecting the intended participants to ensure only “true” target participants, the poor and marginalised people, and women, got involved in the project. In addition, my position as a staff member in the Evaluation

Division in the FSA-MoA made it easy for me to get access to the project data and information, and target areas.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

Given this background, this thesis has four key objectives. These are to:

- a. Identify the target participants of the project, as well as the intended nature of their involvement in the project.
- b. Describe the factors that influenced participation in the study area.
- c. Examine the likely sustainability of the PIDRA project in East Java based on the participation of target participants in the study area.
- d. Determine the kind of participation that most likely enhances the sustainability of activities and benefits after the withdrawal of the project.

Findings from this research may provide a basis to enhance the likely sustainability of other rural development programmes, and the identification of key issues and examples of how these issues can be successfully resolved can contribute to improving the sustainability of other development projects. This may also be useful for donors to assure them that their financial assistance has been utilised optimally. In addition, the findings may be useful for project managers as guidelines for improving the future performance of their projects.

### **1.4 Thesis Outline**

This first chapter describes the background to why this research is important, including the research question, the objective of this research, and provides a brief outline of this thesis. The literature review in Chapter II gives an overview on the nature of participation, its role in the sustainability of development projects, and the relationships between participation and project sustainability. This chapter also presents some examples of development projects or programmes which are considered sustainable or unsustainable to generate a set of participation indicators that relate participation to project sustainability. Chapter III introduces the background of the research areas and the PIDRA in Indonesia and East Java.

Chapter IV discusses the preparation process of fieldwork, the selection of the case study areas, the implementation of the fieldwork, the methods used, reflections, and conduct of the research. Chapter V presents the results of fieldwork regarding the nature of participation and the perception on the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project. The discussion in Chapter VI compares and contrasts the nature of participation and the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas with the participation indicators and other issues identified in the literature. Finally, Chapter VII concludes the thesis and offers recommendations for the management of the PIDRA Project, other development projects or programmes, and future research.

## **II. THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION AND PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will discuss the nature of participation, sustainability, and the linkage between participation and sustainability. The second section of this chapter discusses the nature and concept of participation. This includes definitions and a discussion of the continuum of participation in practice. The discussion on participation is followed by briefly discussing the nature and concept of sustainability. Additionally, the relationships between participation and project sustainability are further explained in the fourth section on participation and project sustainability. Some examples of studies on participation and project sustainability are given in order to generate some initial participation indicators that appear to lead to project sustainability. The whole chapter is summarised in the conclusion.

### **2.2 The Nature and Concept of Participation**

#### **2.2.1 Definition of Participation**

Participation is a multidimensional and complex concept (Vos, 2005; Sinclair, 2004). It has many forms and can take place in different stages of a project cycle and at different levels of society along a continuum from: contribution of inputs to a predetermined project; to information sharing; consultation; decision-making; partnership; and empowerment (Karl, 2000). The meaning of participation can also differ from one area to another based on cultural norms, amongst institutions based on the institutions' particular interests (Khanye, 2005, p.34), and the way observers perceive and evaluate it in practice (Brett, 2003, p.5). Hence, participation should not be explained with a single definition or interpretation (Oakley, 1991a, p114).

Although participation can not be defined as a single concept, for this thesis the idea of 'popular participation' is used. This is defined as "the organized effort to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in a given social situation on the part of groups or movements hitherto excluded from such control" (UNDP, 1993, p.21 as cited in Mayo & Craig, 1995, p.2; Rudqvist & Woodford-Berger, 1996 as

cited in Bishwakarma, 2002, p.6). Participation in this form can give the power/knowledge of an alternative discourse to people who are marginalised, specifically the poor, those in the Third World, women, and rural dwellers (Sanderson & Kindon, 2004, p.117).

### 2.2.2 Typologies of Participation

In order to understand the various concepts of participation and to assess its quality and impact over time, participation can be analysed based on the nature and extent of participation in development projects or programmes. The earliest typology of participation to analyse the nature and extent of participation was developed by Arnstein (1971) in the participation of citizens in a country. Citizens' participation was divided into eight levels which were arranged in a ladder from manipulation and therapy participation, into partnership, delegated power, and citizen control (See Figure 2.1).

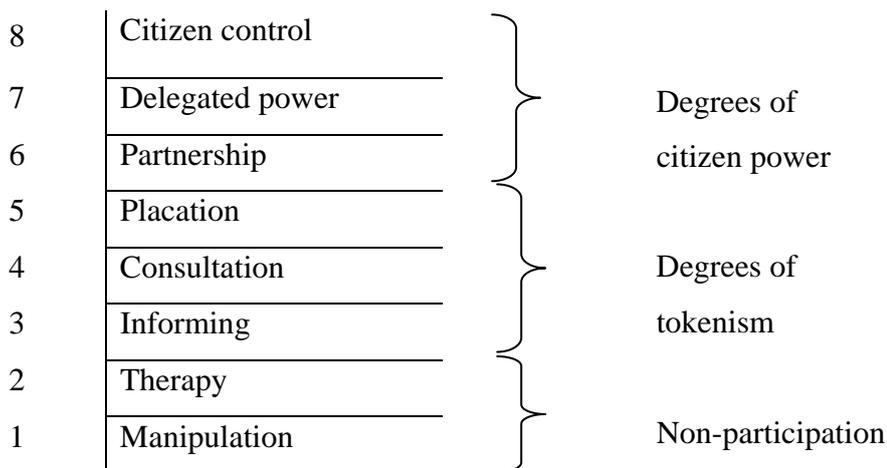


Figure 2.1. Eight rungs on a ladder of citizen participation

(Source: Arnstein, 1991, p.3)

At the 'non-participation' end (manipulation/therapy), the powerful authorities instruct and 'educate' the participants (Arnstein, 1971, p.4). In the 'degrees of tokenism' (informing, consultation, placation), the powerless are being consulted and informed but the power holders do not act based on the views expressed (Arnstein, 1971, pp.4-5). At the other end, 'degrees of citizen power' (partnership, delegated power, and citizen control) imply that the citizens are not only able to negotiate with

power holders but they are also able to obtain full decision-making power (Arnstein, 1971, pp.5-6).

Alternatively, Oakley (1991a; 1991b) distinguishes participation in three broad different interpretations such as: (a) participation as contribution; (b) participation as organisation; and (c) participation as empowerment. Pretty (1995, as cited in Mowforth & Munt, 1998) suggests there are seven levels of participation ranging from manipulative participation, information giving to consultative participation, functional, interactive, and self-mobilisation participation as the highest level of participation (See Table 2.2).

Table 2.2. Pretty's typology of participation

	Typology	Characteristic of each type
1	Manipulative participation	Participation is simply pretence: 'people' representatives on official boards, but they are unelected and have no power.
2	Passive participation	People participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened: involves unilateral announcements by project management without any listening to people's responses; information shared belongs only to external professionals.
3	Participation by consultation	People participate by being consulted or by answering questions: external agents define problems and information-gathering processes, and so control analysis; process does not concede any share in decision-making; professionals under no obligation to account for people's views.
4	Participation for material incentives	People participate by contributing resources (e.g. labour) in return for food, cash or other material incentive: farmers may provide fields and labour but are not involved in testing the process of learning; this is commonly called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging technologies or practices when the incentives end.
5	Functional participation	Participation seen by external agencies as a means to achieve project goals, especially reduced costs: people may participate by forming groups to meet project objectives; involvement may be interactive and involve shared decision-making, but tends to arise only after major decisions have already been made by external agents; at worst, local people may still only be co-opted to serve external goals.
6	Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and strengthening of local institutions: participation is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals; the process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and use systemic and structured learning processes. As groups take control of local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structures and practices.
7	Self-mobilisation	People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems: they develop contacts with external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over resource use; self-mobilization may or may not challenge existing distributions of wealth and power.

Source: Pretty, 1995 as cited in Mowforth & Munt, 1998

The World Bank through its research on 121 Rural Water Supply Projects has summarised the nature of participation into four levels: participation as information sharing, consultation, decision-making, and initiating action (Narayan, 1995). Meanwhile, White (1996) also differentiates the nature of participation into four major types with different names and its characteristics of each: nominal; instrumental; representative; and transformative which is simplified by Lyons et al. (2001, p.1235) into participation as involving or co-option of the communities (participation as contribution), and participation as empowerment. In the nominal category participation is regarded as information sharing, a legitimization of the external agents, and the inclusion of participants in the project. This shows participation as a functional display. In the instrumental category participation as consultation is used to achieve efficiency. Meanwhile, the participants see participation as a cost as their involvement in the project represents a lost opportunity for paid employment or leisure. In the representative participation or participation as decision-making, the participants participate actively in the decision-making and influence the project design which leads to a greater likelihood of sustainability of the project benefits. This active involvement of participants subsequently leads to transformative participation or participation as initiating action in which the participants gain self-dependent and self-confidence to solve their own problem.

Overall, the nature of participation can be simplified into two ends to one continuum (See Table 2.3): passive participation at the lower level and active participation at the highest level (Scheyvens, 2002, pp.55-56). Passive participation implies participation as a contribution to the implementation of a project without any control over the resources and decision-making. In passive participation, the external agents have assumed their role as teaching the participants the solutions to their problems (Gonzalez, 1998, p.22). The interest of the external agents is only to legitimize their existence in the project without any intention to really involve the participants (White, 1996, p.8). Meanwhile, the participants assume their role is to be receptive and attentive to the suggestions of the proponents (Gonzalez, 1998, p.22).

Oakley (1991a) and Bigdon & Korf (2002) have also categorised passive participation as participation as a means. This implies participation is used only as a tool to achieve better project outcomes (an efficiency argument) and equity, or to

improve project sustainability by developing the sense of ownership of the people concerned (Bigdon & Korf, 2002, p.12; Cleaver, 1999, p.598; Vos, 2005; White, 1996). However, Oakley (1991a, p.116) argues that participation as a means is only a short-term exercise that will not lead to the sustainability of participation after the project is completed. Additionally, participation as a means can be seen as a form of mobilisation to get things done which could still be a “state-directed, top-down mobilisation, sometimes enforced to achieve specific objectives” (Bigdon & Korf, 2002, p.12). This type of participation has also been called participation as involving (Lyons, et al., 2001), contribution (Oakley, 1991a, 1991b), manipulative, consultation up to functional or placation participation (Arnstein, 1971; Pretty, 1995), instrumental, nominal, cosmetic, or pseudo-participation (Vos, 2005, p.15; White, 1996, p.8).

Table 2.3. Categorising Passive and Active Participation in the Literature

Development Theorists	Passive Participation	Active Participation
Arnstein (1971)	Manipulation Therapy Informing Consultation Placation	Partnership Delegated power Citizen control
Oakley (1991a, 1991b)	Contribution Organisation	Empowerment
Pretty (1995)	Manipulative Passive Consultation Participation for material incentives Functional	Interactive Self Mobilisation
White (1996)	Nominal Instrumental	Representative Transformative
Cleaver (1999)	Participation as efficiency	Participation as empowerment
Narayan (1995)	Information Sharing Consultation	Decision-making Initiating action
Lyons, et al. (2001)	Participation as involving	Participation as empowerment
Bigdon & Korf (2002)	Participation as a means	Participation as an end
Vos (2005)	Instrumental Nominal Cosmetic Pseudo-participation	Transformative Developmental Educative Genuine

In contrast, active participation implies that the people concerned have access to information necessary for improving their livelihoods and are directly involved in the process of decision-making (Scheyvens, 2002). In this type of participation, the

participants and the external agents have consistent interaction, involvement, and collaboration in discussions and decision-making, and hence, the ideas and suggestions of both the participants and the external agents are given equal consideration after a process of compromise and consensus (Gonzalez, 1998, pp.22-23). Active participation can also be categorized as participation as an end (Oakley, 1991a, Bigdon & Korf, 2002).

Participation as an end is an active and dynamic form of participation that leads to an increasing role of local people in the decision-making at every development activity (Bigdon & Korf, 2002; Oakley, 1991a; 1991b). This includes participation in considering action, making decisions, and taking collective action to fight injustice in development (White, 1996, p.8). In other words, active participation or participation as an end can be seen as participation as empowerment (Clever, 1999, p.598; White, 1996; Lyons, et al., 2001). This type of participation is also called representative, and transformative (White, 1996, p.8), developmental, educative, and genuine (Vos, 2005, p.15). Meanwhile, the World Bank (Narayan, 1995) has seen active participation as decision-making, and participation as initiating action. In this case, participation is essentially seen as a revolutionary process in development learning and action. Chambers (1997, p.xvii) regards this as a reassertion of the lowers against those “uppers that have been dominant”. Therefore, participation as an end is not going to have a fixed objective, quantified development goal, predetermined measurable objective, or even direction; but is a process, the outcome of which is an increasingly meaningful participation in the development process (Moser, 1993, p.101 as cited in Bigdon & Korf, 2002, pp.12-13).

However, there are also some development theorists who see active participation as both participation as a means and an end (Vos, 2005; UNDP, n.d.; International Water and Sanitation Centre/IRC, 2001). Cleaver (1999, p.598) has also seen this type of participation as participation in empowering. Brett (2003, p.6) defines this type of participation as: “a way to expand people’s capabilities, increase their self esteem, and improve performance by obliging agencies to involve users in decision-making through participatory research, and by subjecting their activities to direct popular control.” This implies fundamental changes in the decision-making process and challenges top down approaches, which have a tendency to undermine the “richness

and value” of “indigenous technical knowledge” (Chambers, 1994, p.956 cited in Brett, 2003, p.6). This requires giving full opportunity to stakeholders to participate in all the activities related to development not only in the implementation and distribution of the benefits but also in the early stages of project formulation, as well as decision-making and the final project evaluation (Mirghani & Savenije, 1995, p.231; IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, 2001, p.22). Hence, this type of participation does not only express the will of the majority, but is also a way to ensure the important moral, humanitarian, social, and cultural objectives of an effective development initiative can be attained (Rahnema, 1992, p.121).

Furthermore, by giving full opportunity to stakeholders to participate, capabilities and creativity for the actualisation and fulfilment of groups and individual will be enhanced (UNDP, n.d.). This will also enable them to influence the social, economic, and political functioning of society which is the basis of human development. Additionally, the ability of the intended participants to participate in the development activities will also assure that the projects’ ideas are demand-driven and can lead to effective participation (FAO, 1997). These will increase their sense of ownership to development projects and in turn, will lead to the sustainability of development projects. As Gonzalez (1998, p.40) states that “the projects which treat participation as both a means and an end achieve a higher degree of sustainability”.

### **2.3 Sustainability**

The issue of sustainability relating to development activities started to become important to donors and development theorists from the 1980s (Scoones, 2007). The importance of the notion of sustainability can be seen from the way some donors use sustainability as one of five yardsticks in evaluating development interventions; the others being relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact (Brown, 1998, p.56). The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), for example, has stated that the sustainability of development interventions is the basic purpose of aid in achieving and/or promoting development (SIDA, 1995, p.54 as cited in Brown, 1998, p.56). Likewise, the European Commission (1987 as cited in Brown, 1998, p.57) has used sustainability as one of the eligibility criteria to provide assistance to and gain cooperation from the commission.

Furthermore, concern with the issue of project sustainability also comes from the mounting pressures from domestic constituencies to drastically reduce or possibly halt foreign aid programs together (Brown, 1998, p.55). These pressures have made donor organisations and development workers start to think about the effectiveness and the value of aid being delivered to Third World countries over the past decades. Donor organisations and development workers are concerned that aid being delivered seems to give few positive impacts to the recipient countries. Furthermore, in most cases, the benefits of development projects or programs also seem to end with the withdrawal of foreign assistance from the projects or programs. The USAID and World Bank's post evaluation show that the majority of development interventions have low levels of sustainability after the completion of the project (Goldsmith & Brinkerhoff, 1992, p.369).

This concern of sustainability has made donors begin to think that "it is better to teach people to fish than to give them donations of food" (Goulet, 1985 as cited in Bossert, 1990, p.1015). In other words, it would be better for the donors to give assistance that would help target participants be capable of becoming independent at some point in the future, rather than to give them charity which is unsustainable and leads to dependency on foreign assistance (Bossert, 1990, p.1015).

However, there are also some development thinkers who argue that donors need to establish dependent clients in the developing world, and foreign assistance is a means for redistribution of wealth from the developed countries to the developing countries (Stockmann, 1997, p.1767). Donors will still be concerned with project sustainability because they face limit on targets for delivering aid and assistance to recipient countries into the future.

The increasing capability of the target participants to be able to fulfil their own needs and maintain the benefit of the project or self-help, will also contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger in the long-term. Eliminating poverty and hunger in the long term will lead to the achievement of the targets of Millenium Development Goals to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar per day and people who suffer from hunger in 2015 (Picciotto, 2002, p.2).

### **2.3.1 The Nature and Concept of Sustainability**

Originally, “sustainability” was used as synonymous with words such as “long term”, “durable”, “sound”, or “systematic” (Filho, 2000, p.9). The word itself can be paired and hyphenated with many words such as: cities, economics, resource management, and/or development. However, the word “sustainability” was used first in 1712 by a German forester, Hans Carl von Carlowitz, through his text *Sylvicultura Oeconomica* (Scoones, 2007, p.590). Von Carlowitz coined the word sustainability to refer to the way forest resources should be managed in the long-term basis. However, it was not until the 1960s and 1970s that the word became widely recognized through the work of the members of the Club of Rome which introduced the two related concepts of sustainable development and inter-generational equity (Garcia & Staples, 2000, p.388).

By the end of the 1980s, the concept and analysis of sustainable development had been further developed by the WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development) that introduced the now classic modern definition of sustainable development:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987a, p.43 as cited in Scoones, 2007, p.590).

This definition stressed the strong interdependence between sustaining development and sustaining the environment (UNESCO, 2003). This also stressed that sustainable development was a dynamic process evolving with changes in the way the needs of present and future generations are met (Garcia & Staples, 2000; Lyons et al., 2001).

Nowadays, it seems that there is nothing that cannot be described as “sustainable” and this contributes to the complexity of the notion of sustainability that sometimes creates misunderstanding and ambiguous concepts (Scoones, 2007). Thus, sustainability as in sustainable development, has become a widely accepted concept but essentially contested (Connelly, 2007). There is no general consensus about the meaning of sustainability and this leads potentially to a wide range of diverging

criteria to define sustainable development, with many different interpretations (Filho, 2000; Garcia & Staples, 2000).

Filho (2000) explains that the interpretation of the notion of sustainability depends on the knowledge background, experience, perception, values, and context of individuals, organisations, or countries that use the term. Brown's (1998, p.56) review of the development literature has found at least six notions of the term sustainability such as: ecological/environmental sustainability, macroeconomic sustainability, political sustainability, technological and technical sustainability, and institutional sustainability. The most popular use of sustainability is related to the ecological/environmental context (Asheim, 1994; Farrell & Hart, 1998; Filho, 2000; Gatto, 1995; Smith, 2002; Harrison, 2000; Jepson, 2001; Levett, 1998; Pearce & Atkinson, 1993; Pezzey, 1992; Shiva, 1992; Victor, 1991).

In this research, as noted above, sustainability will be located within this extremely wide debate, and among these diverse interpretations of sustainability as it relates to development projects; and not the more popular conception of environmental sustainability of natural resources (Lyons et al., 2001, p.1233). Sustainability in this case refers to sustainability as part of the evaluation of the projects (Molund & Schill, 2004; Stockmann, 1997) and could be defined as "the ability of a system to bounce back from such shocks and stresses and adopt stable states" (Scoones, 2007, p.590).

There are various ways of defining sustainability in the context of development projects which depend on the perspectives and priorities of the stakeholders that employed the definition (Cannon, 1999, p.363). In this research, sustainability is defined as the sustainability of project benefits beyond the project period, and is measured by the percentage of goods and services maintained and delivered, and "the continuation of local action stimulated by the project, and the generation of successor services and initiatives as a result of Project-built local capacity" (Honadle & VanSant as cited in Kamarah, 2001, p.262-263).

The project is considered to be sustainable in the short term when "the project activities and benefits continued at least 3 years after the life of the project" (Bossert, 1990, p.1016). Meanwhile, when the project activities and benefits can be maintained

more than five years beyond the project period, the project is considered as sustainable in the long term (Honadle & VanSant, 1985, p.2 as cited in Kamarah, 2001, p.262). This research also acknowledges the importance of institutional and financial sustainability in the sustainability of benefits in the long term, and therefore, the sustainability of institutions and financial sustainability will be seen as a means to achieve the sustainability of benefits. As Fowler (2000 as cited in Richardson, 2003, p.280) states, “different dimensions of sustainability need to be recognized and woven into each other as a comprehensive mutually reinforcing strategy”.

Sustainability of a project or programme can only be evaluated after the donors have withdrawn from the projects (Costanza & Patten, 1995; Molund & Schill, 2004; Stockmann, 1997). Nevertheless, analyses of sustainability can be done during the implementation phase but are only able to identify the likely sustainability of development projects in the future (Costanza & Patten, 1995; Molund & Schill, 2004). The study of the likely sustainability of development projects is important in the evaluation process because it can identify and address problems related to the impact of projects in the long-term beyond the project period. Hence, it will help to improve the project outcomes and its sustainability in the future.

## **2.4 Participation and Project Sustainability**

### **2.4.1 The Relationships between Participation and Project Sustainability**

The new aid paradigm has seen participation as useful not only in enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency, and coverage of the project benefits, but also in encouraging self-reliance of the project participants (Kleemeier, 2000; Oakley, 1991a, 1991b). Participation is useful for the achievement of sustainability because sustainability depends on the role played by stakeholders, particularly those directly concerned with projects or programmes, such as Government and the implementing agency, and those who will gain the benefits, the intended participants (Australian Agency for International Development, 2000, p.4; Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith, 1992; Renfro, n.d.). The intended participants are important because these people are the ones who can decide to continue or to stop the use of services created by development projects. Thus, genuine stakeholders' participation has become a critical

factor in promoting project sustainability (Australian Agency for International Development, 2000; Bigdon & Korf, 2002; FAO, n.d.; Lyons et al., 2001; Oakley, 1991a).

Some research has found a positive relationship between participation and project sustainability. For example, a study of small farmer projects in ten African and Latin American countries found a link between the involvement of small farmers in project decision-making and the willingness of farmers to make a resource commitment to the project (Bhatnagar & Williams, 1992, p.3 as cited in Vos, 2005, p.17). Two World Bank studies on participatory projects (Narayan, 1995; Sara & Katz, 1997) and a study on 17 water supply schemes in the Malawi Rural Piped Scheme Program (Kleemeier, 2000) have shown that projects with participatory approaches are more sustainable than projects with little or no participation.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in their study of 52 project evaluations found a positive relationship between participation and the success of projects (Finsterbusch & Van Wicklin, 1989 as cited in Vos, 2005, p.17). Post-evaluation reports from ADB and the International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) on irrigated and rain-fed agriculture in Asia presents evidence that stakeholders' active participation has been critical to the success of the project and its sustainability (Renfro, n.d.).

Research on sustainability of the integrated coastal management projects in Indonesia and the Philippines presents evidence that a participation indicator is most strongly correlated to project sustainability (Pollnac & Pomeroy, 2005, p.249). This indicator includes the type of participation involved, which includes the contribution of money or time, and having influence on both project planning and changes after project implementation. The authors suggest that project sustainability requires a combination of both community involvement and locally appropriate benefits (Pollnac & Pomeroy, 2005, p.250).

Some literature regards participation as a tool to promote the chances of development initiatives being sustainable through community capacity building and empowerment (Australian Agency for International Development, 2000; Bigdon & Korf, 2002; Botchway, 2001; Brett, 2003; Korten, 1984; Lyons et al., 2001). This means

participation as empowering, or participation as an end, that will lead to the sustainability of development projects beyond the project period (Oakley, 1991a; IRC, 2001).

Meanwhile, other literature sees participation as a means (an efficiency argument) that will lead to improvement in the project sustainability by developing the sense of ownership of the people concerned (Cleaver, 1999, p.598). However, Oakley (1991a, p.116) argues that participation as a means is only a short-term exercise that is hardly likely lead to the sustainability of development projects after the project is completed.

Additionally, Lyons et al. (2001, p.1248) through their analysis of case-study of projects in three South African provinces, suggests a further link between the nature and extent of participation, empowerment, and the sustainability of development gains in general. The idea of participation as related to project sustainability through empowerment comes from the belief that once people are “empowered”, development will become both “attainable” and “sustainable” (Botchway, 2001, p.135). Empowerment can be achieved through an acquisition of knowledge and skills, which is part of capacity building (Lyons et al., 2001, p.1235).

Empowerment in these terms is related to building people’s capacity to help their own condition (Friedmann, 1996, p.162). This is closely related to Freire’s concept (1972; Blackburn, 2000) of education which describes methods of dialogical action and conscientisation as a crucial instrument of interaction to enhance people’s self-awareness of their own condition and create new forms of knowledge, power, and understanding of reality. Thus, empowering means the development of “skills and abilities to enable rural people to manage better, have a say in, or negotiate with existing development delivery systems” or enabling people (specifically marginal and vulnerable people) to decide upon and to initiate actions which they believe are essential to their development (Oakley, 1991b, p.117).

Empowering people and actively involving the intended participants in effective training is not only educating but also motivating. The capability of the intended participants can be developed to prepare them to continue to use and benefit from those services left behind by development projects (Australian Agency for

International Development, 2000, p.7; FAO, n.d.; Kamarah, 2001). Capacity building will increase self confidence of intended participants, and thus increase their influence in planning, decision-making, implementation, and evaluating programmes (Uphoff, et al., 1997 as cited in Kamarah, 2001, p.52). By increasing their influence at all stages of development projects and programmes, the intended participants will develop a sense of ownership, which will lead them to sustain the development process and maintain any assets which are created (Bigdon & Korf, 2002, p.12).

However, in reality, participation as empowerment, or true participation, is all nice in theory but different to achieve in practice. The realisation of true participation is hard to achieve because it is connected to power relations and power itself is related to politics (Dudley, 1993, p.160; Freidmann, 1992). Thus, whenever a project tries to promote true participation, it has to be ready to confront the political context and its consequences. On the other hand, the practice of empowerment also creates challenges for the external agents as the agent of change. The external agents are sometimes unaware to the possibility of biases they bring to the field as the products of the economic or developmental age (Rahnema, 1992, p.122; Chambers, 1983). They are sometimes unaware, and neglect the very basic principle of learning the traditional or local knowledge of the community which already exists in the community. As a result, the reality of development is elusive and this has made it difficult to prove that a participatory approach has empowered the people concerned to articulate their own socio-political position based on their values and capacities (Rahnema, 1992, p.122).

Furthermore, there is a danger that empowerment is used only to help participation perform a political function as a new source of legitimation (Rahnema, 1992, p.122). As a result, the use of participation to drive community empowerment can eventually give an opposite result. For example, when external agents feel that there is a need for participants to be empowered, they are sometimes not aware of the possibility that they have underestimated the power of the people concerned, and thus they sometimes think that they have the formula of power for those people to be initiated (Rahnema, 1992, p.123). Meanwhile, in reality, the population concerned is not all powerless because they have different forms of power which cannot be actualized in the same ways. This can be seen from the way ordinary people survive in fulfilling

their basic needs and struggle for their rights (Friedmann, 1992). Undermining the power of the people means that those change agents have exceeded their role as catalysts beyond all recognition (Rahnema, 1992, p.123). In other word, those agents are often acting as promoters of professional participation rather than a sensitive party to a process of mutual learning. Sometimes they become “a militant ideologue, self-appointed authority on people’s needs and strategies to meet them, and often a ‘barefoot developer’ lacking the professional competence of the expert” (Rahnema, 1992, pp.123-124). These difficulties in implementing true participation are not mean to discourage use of the concept, but rather the possibility they exist should be recognised, acknowledged, and cautioned against (Berger, 1974, p.148 as cited in Duddley, 1993, p.160).

#### **2.4.2 Some Examples of Studies on Participation and Project Sustainability**

In order to understand further the relationships between participation and project sustainability, some examples of participation and project sustainability from different countries will be provided in this section (See Table Appendix 2.4). Through this information, the influence of participation on project sustainability will be sought by taking into account characteristics of different countries such as culture and values.

##### ***The Local Development Programme (PRODEL) in Nicaragua***

PRODEL, a social project operated in Nicaragua between 1994 and 1998, had been reported to have provided sustainable and successful outcomes in achieving its objectives to improve the physical environment and the socio-economic conditions of the poor population in the cities where it operates, particularly for women and vulnerable groups (Stein, 2001, p.14). Lessons learned from the experience of the PRODEL showed participation influence project sustainability if it included the community throughout the project cycle; from the identification, execution and maintenance, to the evaluation of the project (Stein, 2001, p.19). The involvement of the community included: (a) the formation of institutions which consisted of community representatives and the main entities involved in the program, namely the municipal commission and the Community Project Administration Committee

(CPAC) which had tasks to identify project activities and handle management and administration of the project (Stein, 2001); (b) regular meetings conducted every month involving the representatives of the communities; (c) the identification and prioritisation of the main problems in micro-planning workshops and through interviews in small groups, particularly with women and children; (d) the agreement which was signed by the representatives of the municipal government and community organisation; (e) training on management and administration of the building materials warehouse, and the methods used to manage the human resources used in the project; (f) the contributions from the community in the form of cash, investments in materials, skilled and unskilled labour, machinery and tools; (g) the evaluation stage where the municipal commission carried out project evaluations together with the members of the CPAC and other community members (Stein, 2001).

### ***People's Participation Programme (PPP) in Sierra Leone***

The PPP, a rural development programme initiated by the FAO, started in Pujehun, Sierra Leone in 1982. The PPP had the objective to improve access to resources in order for the rural poor to be actively involved in development activities (Doku, 1991). Lessons learned from the experience of the PPP showed that in order for the programme to be sustained, the PPP had used participation not only as a means but also as an end. In this case the PPP had involved the community in the whole project from the design up to the implementation.

This active involvement was seen by: (a) the “formation of small, informal, self reliant groups of the rural poor as part of a longer-term strategy to build institutions serving their interests” (FAO, 1994, p.5) and community based-organisations (Doku, 1991); (b) the decentralisation of responsibility to improve project performance and encourage each action area to develop its own dynamic (Doku, 1991), to give the intended participants the opportunity to influence decision-making such as creating their own rules to manage the groups and choosing a leader; (c) the participation in the organisations developed regardless of people's ethnicity, religion, and other features, which created diversity among the organisations' members and gave the opportunity for all members to become a leader (FAO, 1997); (d) developing a link with development agencies and other group associations through committees formed

by each PPP group. The networks established were sustainable because the group members themselves had attempted to coordinate resources for community development projects, and had become aware of the benefits of association for future activities; (e) initiating income generating activities and opening savings accounts at the bank, or saving in group treasuries, in order to prepare them to maintain the benefits of the development project. The successful activities would usually give greater self-confidence and promote collective participation which is needed by the project to be sustainable (FAO, 1994, p.13); (f) training in leadership, group management and monitoring and evaluation (FAO, 1994); (g) the monitoring and evaluation which were done by the community groups to improve their performance in development activities and their ability to maintain the benefits of the development programme.

### ***The Malawi Rural Piped Water Scheme Programme***

The rural piped water scheme programme in Malawi was started in 1968 as part of government initiatives to build gravity schemes and provide the drinking water supply needed by the community (Kleemeier, 2000, pp.931-932). The programme had been found to be less sustainable because the scheme construction had stopped due to the lack of finances to fund more instruction in the new schemes and the rehabilitation of the schemes.

Lessons learned showed that the low sustainability of the programme was also caused by the low involvement of the target participants in the design and implementation, even though the scheme construction planned to involve the intended participants throughout the whole stages of programme activities. This low involvement of the community can be seen from: (a) the initial meeting before the programme start which was conducted only to gain approval on the externally driven planning of the programme activities, when ideally this initial meeting should have provided opportunities to the intended participants to communicate about their real needs and incorporate them in the design and planning of the programme; (b) unavailability of a signed contract agreement specifying the community's and the programme's responsibilities, although there was a verbal agreement publicly announced by leaders (Kleemeier, 2000, p.933). Hence, the community felt they had less responsibility for the implementation of the programme; (c) the contribution of

the community in the programme in form of labour and other materials such as: fees, skilled and unskilled labour (dig trenches, clear access roads, excavate tank sites, load and unload pipes, collect sand, lay pipes, back fill trenches, plant grass to mark pipeline, and provide land easement), but less involvement in supplying funds for capital cost, or establishing operational and maintenance funds, or both, because they did not pay for the service provided. Meanwhile, Kleemeier (2000) stated that this programme would be more sustainable if the target participants had taken on more responsibility for the project from the beginning by paying some money to maintain the infrastructure built in good condition, and as incentives for people to work in the schemes; (d) the short length of training in management and book-keeping for the committee members and technical training for the community representatives, which was insufficient to build the capacity of the members to maintain the programme activities in the future; (e) the process of handing over the programme directly to the community but not to the main committee which made the main committee less responsible on maintaining the schemes after the programme ended; (f) the inability of the programme to create good networks with external agents that are needed by large infrastructure programmes which have a lot of maintenance and repairs (Kleemeier, 2000, p.942).

However, there was some strength to this programme. Firstly, this programme had formed different institutions with specific tasks which were good if these institutions could work together and involve the majority of the people. Secondly, it had used simple and appropriate technology in the rural piped scheme programme which made it easy for the participants to use the technology. This can be seen from the evidence that most of the work of construction could be done by unskilled labour; tanks and tap aprons were able to be built by local masons, and the majority of operational and maintenance tasks only required minimal skills (Kleemeier, 2000, p.933).

### ***North West Integrated Agricultural Development Project (NW-IADP) of Sierra Leone***

The NW-IADP is a rural development project funded by the European Economic Commission (EEC). The project started at the end of 1982 and was implemented together with the Government of Sierra Leone. The objectives of the project were to: (a) improve the welfare and standard of living of the farming population in the

targeted area; (b) develop 1,700 ha of upland areas and 2,800 ha of mangrove swamps; and (c) strengthen the agricultural support services in the Project area in order for them to continue providing farmers beyond the project period with the necessary extension, credit, and farm input services (Kamarah, 2001, p.116).

This project had been reported as being unsustainable because the socio-cultural context of the society, the basic objectives of the project, and the motives behind the project, were ignored and altered because of the nature and interest of the external agents such as government and donors (Kamarah, 2001, p.266). This can be seen from the formation of the institutions and in the decision-making that were still dominated by the interests of elites and influential families. Furthermore, there was no capacity-building for the members of the institutions. This caused local institutional structures and initiatives to work improperly, which in turn also contributed to the failure to achieve the sustainability of benefits that resulted from the activities.

### **2.4.3 Participation and Sustainability: Reported Indicators**

The literature on participation and sustainability above has provided a general picture of the kind of participation that will likely influence the sustainability of development projects. This general picture illustrates the standard features of participation needed to achieve sustainability in the future.

According to the examples above, participation will be more likely lead to the sustainability of project benefits when the project involves the community in all stages of the development activities from design, planning, and implementation, to evaluation (the PRODEL and the PPP). The example of the Malawi Rural Piped Scheme Programme presented above shows that less participation will likely lead to lower likelihood of the sustainability of the programme. On the other hand, the example of the NWIADP project showed that when participation is used only as a means, then the project is likely to be unsuccessful in achieving its objective. Based on these examples, we can identify a set of standard features of participation that will lead to greater likelihood project sustainability is:

### *Initial meetings*

In order to obtain data and information at the identification and preparation stage, participation of stakeholders, specifically the intended participants, is needed. Hence, there is a need to hold meetings with stakeholders such as villagers, community leaders, local groups, local NGOs, local government, extension staff, and others. Stakeholders involved will depend on the activities of the project, such as for example agricultural rural development, conservation programme or others. The first meeting is needed in order to explain the project's objective before it begins, and to give an opportunity to the community to refuse or accept the project (Kleemeier, 2000, p.932). Furthermore, the first meeting will also give opportunities to the community to exchange information about what the intended participants actually need and a forum of learning and listening for the external agents. Thus, the community has the opportunity to refuse the project and express what they actually need for their development. Their opinion should be considered in the design of the project, even though the planning has already been designed centrally from the donors and government. This initial design and planning must be flexible enough for it to be changed in line with the need of the villagers.

When the project offers informed choices to both women and men, both poor and better off, this will also mean that they are empowered to influence the process of establishing the proposed service or project (IRC, 2001). Since the service established will then have been influenced by the community, they will have a greater willingness to participate actively in the project activities. The willingness of stakeholders to accept project activities will also enhance their sense of ownership and share their desire to maintain the project activities beyond the project period. This can be seen from the example of the Malawi Rural Piped Scheme Programme. The programme held a meeting before it started that sparked the willingness of the participants to contribute their skilled and unskilled labour and material costs. This meeting also encouraged the intended participants to participate actively in the implementation of the project and generated their enthusiasm to maintain the service beyond the project period.

### ***The existence of signed contract with clear explanations of assigned responsibilities***

The project that intends to be sustainable will have an agreement or contract specifying the community's and project's responsibilities (Kleemeier, 2000). This contract should be signed by all stakeholders and recognized by the intended participants. By signing a contract, stakeholders, and specifically the community as the intended participants, will understand their responsibilities towards the project from the beginning (Kleemeier, 2000, p.932). The understanding of stakeholders of their responsibilities helps to create a sense of ownership and commitment to maintain activities and services initiated by the project. The Malawi Rural Piped Scheme Programme had an agreement signed between target participants and the government, and the participants understood their responsibilities towards the activities. They were willingly involved in the programme activities, and this involvement enhanced the likely sustainability of the programme benefits.

### ***The existence of local organisations***

During the preparation phase, the project manager should also recognize the existence of local organisations in the target area. The availability of some form of local organisation is an important requirement in order to achieve effective participation (Mirghani & Savenije, 1995, p.231). Furthermore, community-based organisations are also necessary for socio-economic progress because these organisations will be able to coordinate the intended participants' behaviour and bring them together in ways that effectively facilitate concerted action (Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith, 1992, p.370; Gow & Vansant, 1983). Through such local organisations, a community will be able to express their opinion about their needs based on their preferences and knowledge in an organised way. Furthermore, through such an organisation, the community will also be able to more effectively control the implementation of the project and provide suggestions or corrections over the whole project cycle. The roles of a local organisation also include the management and administration of the project such as organising meetings, assessing, and collecting the fees or community's contribution to the project, and supervising routine activities. Additionally, the availability of a local organisation initiated by the project

or local people is important in order to ensure the continuation of the development project after the donors have withdrawn (Kleemeier, 2000).

However, the availability of local institutions will more likely ensure the sustainability of the project's benefits when it is supported by strengthened local institutions. Thus, there is a need for the project to strengthen local institutions through training in leadership and group management, technical support to the group members, and by encouraging full responsibility for the group members to participate and decide their own development activities. By strengthening local institutions, these organisations are more likely to be independent and effective when donors, government, or NGOs have left at the conclusion of the project. The World Bank through its review report found a strong, positive association between the strengthening of indigenous organisations (community-based organisations) and the continuation of benefits beyond the project period (Paul, 1990).

The example of the PRODEL project shows how important local organisations are for the sustainability of the project. In this example the local organisation has ensured the sustainability of the PRODEL after the end of the formal project. The likely sustainability of the PRODEL project was also enhanced by the training given to local institutions, especially in management and administration (book-keeping). Through this training, the local institution's committee has a strengthened ability to manage the administration and management of the activities (Kleemeier, 2000). As a consequence, the organisations are able to work more effectively and are able to maintain the activities and benefits for a long-term.

### ***The Diversity of Group members, Shared Leadership, and Member Participation in Group Decision-making***

The existence of local organisations is not enough to ensure the sustainability of the project benefits. Project managers should also consider how representative the organisation is of the whole community. When the organisation only belongs to the local elite or certain groups within the community, then the project will only be influenced by these groups, and is unlikely to meet the needs of marginal and vulnerable people (Kamarah, 2000). Thus, effective participation can also be seen from the gender, race, religion, and socio-economic diversity of representatives in the

local organisation's committee. IRC (2001, pp.21-22), in their research on water management project has found that the services will be better sustained when both women and men, poor, and better off participate in the management of the service and establish a strong organisation.

In order to ensure the project's likely sustainability, the groups should also share leadership responsibilities (FAO, 1997). By sharing responsibilities in leadership, the groups which are diverse will have a high level of participation in decision-making and will tend to learn more quickly and develop a broader leadership base than those in which leadership and decision-making responsibilities are monopolized by a minority. The latter groups tend to be much more vulnerable to leadership crises and less able to maintain long-term self-sustainability (FAO, 1997).

For example, the NWIADP had formed institutions to implement the project. However, the organisations were centrally developed, did not represent the whole society and were dominated by elite people and influential families (Kamarah, 2000). The project failed to identify the needs and concerns of the excluded people, namely the vulnerable and poor. Additionally, decision-making for the activities aligned with the interests of the elite and influential families, and the project's real participants were hesitant to get involved in the activities. Hence, the project activities were less sustainable after the project ended because there was less commitment from the community, specifically the poor.

On the other hand, the PPP formed decentralised institutions. This means that the participants themselves formed the institutions. As a result, the institutions developed were more representative, were not dominated by high socio-economic status people, and were based on the interest of the majority. This contributes to the sustainability of these institutions beyond the project period, and the project's benefits and activities in the long term.

### ***The Regularity of the Group Meeting and Level of Participants' Attendance***

The regularity of the group meeting and the intensity of participants' attendance are two indicators used to identify whether members of the organisations are benefiting from the learning process. The group will obviously be on the way to achieving self-

reliance when regular meetings and a high level of attendance continue without the project or external agents' existence (FAO, 1997).

The timing, frequency, and venue of meetings need to be considered if the project manager wants to be successful in attendance and sustainability (IFAD, 2000). The project manager needs also to consider local issues of culture and gender. For example, in a society in a developing country, villagers often still think that it is not good for women to go out at night. Meanwhile, in the day time, most villagers are busy with their activities in the farm or in the house. Thus, the meetings should be held at a time that will allow for maximum participation.

### ***The Intended Participants as the Decision Makers in the Project Implementation***

Active participation means involvement of intended participants in various activities within the project cycle, including decision-making process. The sustainability of a development project will be achieved when the community as the intended participants has been given the opportunity as decision-makers to influence all activities initiated by the project, from preparation, and implementation, to evaluation. By involving the community organisations and local authorities in the decision-making and auditing, the participants have been given control and a sense of ownership of the project (Stein, 2000, p.21). The sense of ownership to the project will enhance the likely sustainability of benefits from the project beyond the project period.

In the case of PPP, the member groups had the power to decide their own activities and regulations to maintain their groups, and they could even make the leaders resign from their position if they are working against the interest of communities (FAO, 1994). The ability of group members to participate in the whole development cycle will assure that the projects' ideas are demand-driven and can lead to effective participation (FAO, 1997). Meanwhile, effective participation is not only helping to achieve the project's objective, but it is also helping to achieve the sustainability of the project benefits.

### ***The Contribution of the Community to the Project***

The contribution of the community to the project is another way of involving the participants in the activities of the project and developing the sense of ownership over the project. When the participants have developed a sense of ownership of the project they will have a greater commitment to maintaining and preserving the services or activities initiated by the project. This will also include maintaining the benefits they gained from the activities for the long-term.

The examples above show that projects that have required the intended participants to contribute in the form of cash or in kind have been more sustainable than projects that did not require it. An example is PRODEL which required the participants and local government to contribute 40 per cent of the total cost of the project. This contribution was not only in the form of cash but also unskilled and skilled labour, machinery and tools, and administration (Stein, 2000, p.21). The contribution established from the national, municipal, and community resources and the involvement of participant families in the management and administration of the project cycle, created a solid basis for an increased commitment and division of responsibilities between participants (Stein, 2000, p.33). This increased commitment and responsibilities led to an increased sense of local ownership to the project activities. As a result, PRODEL is regarded as delivering more sustainable benefits in the long term.

### ***The Community actively participates in developing networks with external agents***

Developing a network with external agents is generally considered important in ensuring the sustainability of development projects. The external agents are needed by the community as facilitators in gaining further knowledge and skills, and also as a means of accessing financial assistance. Thus, the self-reliance of a group or community also depends on its ability to maintain links with government and NGO development services, in the absence of project staff (FAO, 1997).

Most of the sustainable projects in the examples above (PRODEL, PPP, for example) have supported the participants and its institutions to develop good relationships and networks with local governments, external aid agencies, and banking institutions

(Stein, 2000, p.34). The ability of the community and its organisations to develop and maintain this network has increased the trust of these external agencies and institutions and the financial sustainability for the project activities and benefits beyond the project period. Finally, this also contributes to the sustainability of these projects in the long term.

### ***The Use of Simple Technology***

The use of simple technology as an input to the project activities is one factor for ensuring the sustainability of development activities. The use of simple and appropriate technology means the project seeks to identify what the poor community have rather than what they do not have, and also strengthen their inventive solutions rather than substitute, block or undermine them (Allison & Ellis, 2001, p.377). However, acknowledging what they have does not mean to negate the value of information from outside (Dudley, 1993, p.3). The intended participants still need the knowledge to manage their resources, to enhance their awareness about their own situation, and self-confidence to solve their problems by using their indigenous innovative capacity. By using simple and appropriate technologies, the active involvement of the intended participants will be enhanced as it is regarded as easy to do and the resources are available. On the other hand, other stakeholders involved will also be attracted to the community because the use of simple and appropriate technology can provide optimal benefits to the intended participants with less material aid given. As a result, the use of simple and appropriate technology can be seen as an opportunity for liberating people from dependency and improve the likelihood of the sustainability of the activities (Duddley, 1993).

One example of the use of simple and appropriate technology in project activities is the rural piped scheme programme in Malawi. This programme used simple technology in the construction of the scheme. This simple technology made it easy for the local people to continue to maintain the scheme for some period of time. Moreover, by using a simple technology as the input, the total cost of the scheme was reduced which allowed donors to spread benefits more widely.

### ***Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation***

The project will be more sustainable when it involves the participants in the process of evaluation and monitoring of the project. The involvement of the intended participants in the evaluation and monitoring gives them the opportunity to learn about how to evaluate and monitor their own activities. By evaluating and monitoring the implementation of the project, they will be able to identify their problems during implementation, try to find the solution to their problems, and use the solution as a recommendation for their planning in future activities. Of the examples above, it can be seen that projects such as PPP and PRODEL which had involved the intended participants in the evaluation process, have become sustainable compared to NWIADP, which ignored the involvement of the participants in the project evaluation.

### ***Other Indicators of Participation leading to Project Sustainability***

There are many other indicators or standard features of participation that can be seen as leading to the sustainability of the project. Although these features cannot be shown in the examples above, they are still worth mentioning as additional information for measuring the likely sustainability of a project. Support from the government and other external agents are necessary in enhancing participation of the participants (Gow & Vansant, 1983). This support can be in form of opening up access to resources, or protecting the rights of the citizens who participate, and thus, enhancing participation of the participants in development activities. This includes the right to have a voice in decision-making and also their right to transparent and accountable information. Transparent and accountable information can help in mobilising the community by creating trust and a supportive situation for the intended participants to enhance their participation and skills, increase their human capital, and give them incentives to use their initiative and be innovative. This leads to the development of their sense of ownership and commitment to sustain the development process and maintain any assets which are created (Bigdon & Korf, 2002, p.12).

Additionally, Gow and Vansant (1983, pp.429-432) explain that an unsupportive government may prevent the project from attracting effective local participation.

Useful support can also be in form of national policies that will enhance participation of the poor. Kamarah (2001, p.266) found that:

“sustainable local institutional structures and initiatives could be stifled, or even be killed if the socio-cultural content in which they emerge, the driving motives which propel them, and the basic objectives they strive to achieve are fundamentally altered or are redefined in the nature and interest of the intervening external social force like the state or the International NGO”.

There are many examples of projects that are not sustainable because of unsupportive government and/or other external agents that affect the participation of the intended participants. An example is when the government uses participation of the intended participants in a development project only as a tool to attract foreign assistance to the country because they need the funds to pay debt or attract investment into their country (Rahnema, 1992). This can be seen as a government’s lack of real commitment to assist the project and will likely lead to the failure and unsustainable nature of the development project.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Participation and project sustainability have become popular nowadays in development. Both participation and project sustainability are contested concepts which have multidimensional interpretations. Participation has long been believed to be a critical factor influencing the sustainability of development interventions. There is much research that supports the relationship between participation and project sustainability. Many references show that projects with active participation are more sustainable than projects with less or no participation (Finsterbusch & Van Wicklin, 1989 as cited in Vos, 2005; Renfro, n.d.; Pollnac & Pomeroy, 2005).

Most of the literature has seen participation as able to promote the sustainability of development initiatives through community capacity building and empowerment (Australian Agency for International Development, 2000; Bigdon & Korf, 2002; Botchway, 2001; Brett, 2003; Korten, 1984; Lyons et al., 2001). This means participation as empowering or participation as an end that will lead to the sustainability of development projects beyond the project period (Oakley, 1991a;

IRC, 2001). Although there is also other literature which states that participation as a means (an efficiency argument) will lead to improvement in the project sustainability, this is seen as only a short-term exercise that will never lead to the sustainability of project benefits after the project is completed.

In order to explain further the relationships between participation and project sustainability, examples of projects from different countries which are sustainable and unsustainable were presented. According early presented examples (See Section 2.4.2), participation leads to project sustainability when participation is used not only as a means or process but also as an end, or as the end result of the project activities. In this type of participation, the intended participants involve actively in the whole process of the development project from planning, implementation, to evaluation.

The full opportunity for participation in the whole project cycle also means groups and their members have the ability to take control of local decisions, determine how available resources are used, to solve problems, and to take initiatives to achieve self-development in the absence of the external agents. When they do this, it indicates that the community has confidence in their own capabilities. This in turn is an indicator that they are ready to maintain the project activities and benefits without much help from the external agents who initiated the project.

These examples also provided some standard features of the kind of participation that leads to more likely project sustainability. These included: (a) the holding of the first meetings before the project begins; (b) the existence of a signed contract with clear explanations of the community's and the project's responsibilities; (c) the existence of local organisations initiated by the project or already existing before the project starts; (d) a diversity in the group members; (e) the regularity of the group meeting and level of participant's attendance; (f) the intended participants as the ultimate decision makers in the project implementation; (g) training to strengthen local institutions and improve knowledge and skills of the intended participants; (h) contribution of the community to the project; (i) the community actively participates in developing a network with external agents; (j) the use of simple technology in the project; (k) shared leadership and member participation in group decision-making; and (l) other indicators such as support and commitment from the government, donors, and other external agents to the implementation of a participatory approach

to achieve project sustainability. However, this research also acknowledges that in social research there is nothing certain, and therefore, these standard features will only be used as a flexible guide that is subject to any changes that happen during the field research. This research seeks to examine the influence and importance of thesis indicators of participation in the context of the PIDRA Project in East Java, Indonesia. The following chapter outlines the link between participation and sustainability and the PIDRA project in Indonesia and East Java.

## **III. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY AREA**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the background of the study areas where the PIDRA project is operating in Indonesia, starting with an explanation of the origins of the PIDRA project in Indonesia, and including the vision, mission, objectives, and activities of the project. In the following section, the background to the PIDRA project in East Java will be presented. This section will also outline the specific nature of the project in East Java. The chapter will be summarised in the conclusion section.

### **3.2 The PIDRA Project in Indonesia**

#### **3.2.1 Indonesia**

Indonesia is well known as an archipelago country because it consists of 17,000 islands with five major islands: Sumatera, Kalimantan (Borneo), Java, Sulawesi, and West Papua (Figure 3.1). Indonesia is located between two oceans, the Pacific and Indian, and two continents, Asia and Australia. It lies across the equator between 6°08' north and 11° south latitude, and from 94°45' to 141° easterly longitude. Indonesia is therefore a tropical country with the daily temperature range generally being between 20° to 32° C. It has two distinctive seasons, wet and dry. The land area of Indonesia is 1.9 million km<sup>2</sup> and Jakarta is the capital city. Indonesia is the fourth most populous country in the world with a total population of about 235 million, growing at a rate of 1.6% per year (IFAD, 2003).

The source of income of most of the Indonesian population is agriculture, and thus Indonesia is also well known as an agricultural country. In 2006, 43% of the total population still depend on agriculture for their living, followed by industry and services that absorb 57% of the population (IFAD, 2008c). Although agriculture is the main source of employment in the country, real wages in the agricultural sector still remain below 1996 levels and the contribution of the agricultural sector to the Indonesian GDP declined from 41% of GDP in 1970 to 13% of GDP in 2006 (IFAD, 2003; 2008c).



Figure 3.1. The Map of Indonesia

Source: FatAtlas Beta, 2008

Indonesia experienced rapid economic growth from 1970 to 1996 which changed Indonesia's status from a low income country to a middle income one (IFAD, 2004). This rapid growth also improved social indicators in Indonesia and decreased the level of poverty from 60% in 1970 to 11% in 1996 (IFAD, 2004, p.4). Life expectancy at birth and adult literacy improved which was also accompanied by high levels of enrolment for universal primary and secondary school in the 1980s and 1990s (IFAD, 2004). Economic and financial liberalisation shifted the main source of growth from agriculture to labour intensive manufacturing. However, the wealth generated by this growth was not distributed to the whole country which caused an increase in the gap between the rich and the poor. As the main source of employment shifted to labour intensive manufacturing, the growth in agricultural productivity was slower, contributing to the increasing level of poverty in the rural areas. This left most rural people in a vulnerable condition to the economic crisis in 1997.

The financial crisis sweeping through South-East Asian increased poverty in Indonesia increased from 11% in 1996 to 24.2% in the end of 1998 (IFAD, 2004, p.4; BKP, 2005, p.122). Although the poverty level decreased slightly to 23.5% in 1999,

the impact of the crisis still existed specifically in the rural areas (BKP, 2006, p.24). The vulnerable situation of the rural people meant they suffered a greater impact from the crisis compared to the urban areas, although the crisis was focused on urban areas. The recovery from the crisis was faster in the urban areas compared to rural areas, specifically because the small farmers, farm workers, and fisheries in rural areas, were unable materially and financially to tap the opportunities offered by years of economic growth (IFAD, 2003). Meanwhile, the Government of Indonesia had to face a heavy debt burden which caused cuts to social expenditure such as spending for health and education (IFAD, 2003). As a result, the government could not help to reduce economic hardships weighing on poor people because they did not have enough resources to help finance poverty reduction programmes.

However, in line with the Millenium Development Goals which were endorsed by 189 nations in September 2000, and in the context of policies of the Bretton Woods Institutions, the Government of Indonesia has committed to halving the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 per day, and people who suffer from hunger, by 2015 (Picciotto, 2002, pp.1-2). This commitment was shown in the Indonesian Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) which was created by the Government of Indonesia as one requirement to gain foreign aid from bilateral and multilateral donors, specifically the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The principal elements of the strategy are: (a) creation of income-generating opportunities; (b) community empowerment; (c) human capital and capacity development; and (d) social justice (IFAD, 2003, p.2). To achieve these aims, the government's efforts have focused on: (a) human resource development programmes; (b) more transparent and decentralised programme management; and (c) "bottom-up" planning, community participation, and empowerment of the poor (Sumodiningrat, 1997, p.2).

### **3.2.2 Indonesia and the PIDRA Project**

After the financial crisis in 1997-1998, the IFAD, as one of the international financial institutions (IFIs), reviewed its financial aid to Indonesia (IFAD, 2004, p.10). In 1998, the IFAD developed its new strategy for Indonesia in the Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP). The COSOP was developed based on the lessons learned from previous operations, particularly from evaluation studies of the

IFAD's programmes in Indonesia, and the conclusions of a two-day consultative workshop with the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) (IFAD, 2004; 2008a). According to the COSOP, the IFAD should pay more attention to the Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy and focus its target directly to the poorest of the poor, specifically the indigenous peoples, voiceless communities, rural young people, and the marginalised poor, in the most resource-poor areas, specifically "the dry-land/rain-fed, both highland and lowland, environmentally degraded and coastal areas where poverty is largely concentrated" (IFAD, 2004, p.10). Furthermore, the COSOP recommended the IFAD to pursue "a double level poverty alleviation strategy ensuring that sector-based, location specific programmes are linked up with the more transversal ones" with a common feature of the programme being the use of self-help groups to enable effective institution building among local communities (IFAD, 2004, p.10).

In 2000, the IFAD and the Government of Indonesia approved a group-focused participatory rural development project in rain-fed areas (Participatory Integrated Development in Rain-fed Areas/PIDRA) with Loan Agreement number 539-ID (IFAD, 2001, p.2; IFAD, 2004, p.11). This project is also one of the IFAD projects which are directly supervised by the IFAD (IFAD, 2001). Although its foundation and approach is based on the COSOP, the focus of the PIDRA Project extends beyond the COSOP. The PIDRA Project seeks to reduce poverty through empowerment processes rather than higher agricultural productivity and incomes as implied in the COSOP. In this project, agricultural development is used with a more balanced approach to economically empower the rural poor (IFAD, 2004, p.11).

The project effectively started in 2001 in the remote areas and marginal land of the eastern part of Indonesia: East Java, West Nusa Tenggara, and East Nusa Tenggara (Figure 3.2) and targeted 14 districts, 500 villages, 5,000 groups, 100,000 poor families, and 400,000 people (BKP, 2005). Meanwhile, target participants were identified as the poor and marginalised people who "have limited access to capital and other sources, including service providers", and "have attracted comparatively low investment from private and public sources" (IFAD-MoA, 2007, p.5).

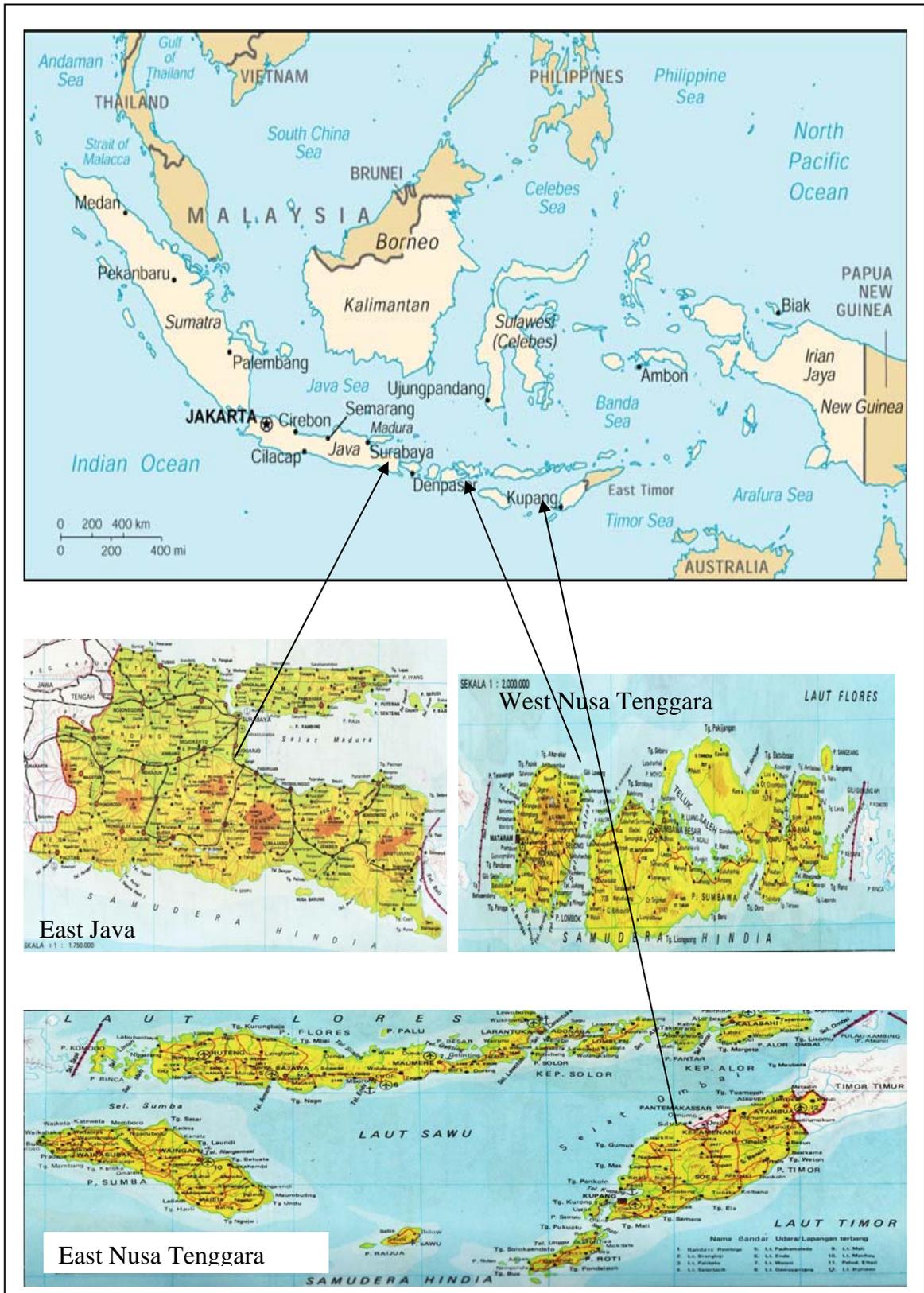


Figure 3.2. The Location of the PIDRA Project in Indonesia

Source: FatAtlas Beta, 2008

In line with the poverty reduction strategy of the Indonesian Government and the IFAD's mission to combat poverty, the PIDRA Project's objectives are to improve the income, food security and living conditions of low-income households and to promote the conservation and improvement of natural resources (IFAD, 2007). In order to achieve its objectives, this project has been designed in a way that will enable it to build the capacity of the poor rural people's institutions in the form of self-help groups that work closely with community-based organisations, or local NGOs, managing local resources (IFAD, 2003, p.3). The Indonesian Government has assigned the Food Security Agency-Ministry of Agriculture (FSA-MoA) as the executing agency for this project. In its implementation, the FSA-MoA is also helped by local NGOs and the FSA or Food Security office in every province and district. Through close cooperation between the government and local NGOs, it is hoped that the project would be able to successfully achieve its target of educating the community to be self-sufficient and self-sustainable even after the project is finished.

The PIDRA is based on the principles of: (a) using a participatory approach for community empowerment in development; (b) flexibility in accommodating the aspirations of the farmer and participation of the farmer groups in the planning and implementation of village development activities; (c) the empowerment of rural women; (d) the use of NGO facilitators in developing the ability of the groups in organisational capacity; (e) the sustainability of the project in terms of the ability of the groups to be self-reliant in developing a useful and profitable business for their livelihood; and (f) decentralisation of management (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2004). The PIDRA also offers a range of activities to the group member to develop their skills and knowledge, to undertake a range of initiatives through collective action, and then to become self-reliant (IFAD, 2003). For example, the project "introduces integrated nutrient management to help farmers make the best use of organic and inorganic fertilisers"; "investments in soil conservation promote development of the most appropriate systems for diverse environments"; and it builds the capacity of the self-help groups to plan their activities and to be responsible for monitoring performance (IFAD, 2003, p.5; 2007, n.p.).

The PIDRA works through four major types of activities: community and gender development, agriculture and livestock, village infrastructure and land management,

and institutional support and project management (IFAD, 2003; 2007). Community and gender development activity has an objective to establish 5,000 self-help groups that include the poorest of the poor such as: landless people, agricultural labourers, stonebreakers, abandoned women and widows, and others living below the poverty line (IFAD, 2003, p.5). These SHGs were formed based on relations of mutual trust and support of every member, with each group itself selecting its members and strengthening their institution through institutional capacity building (IFAD-MoA, 2007, p.8). In agriculture and livestock development, the programme has an objective to provide support to farmer's own strengths and initiatives through a wide range of training courses and services based on the self-help groups' priorities (IFAD, 2007).

In the area of village infrastructure and land management, there has been the establishment of Village Infrastructure Development Associations (VDAs) which have responsibility to procure, manage, monitor, supervise, and maintain village infrastructure works, and are composed of representatives of self-help groups and village institutions (IFAD, 2003, p.5). Aside from these associations, this activity also set up Watershed Management Associations which have the objective to increase productivity in an equitable way (IFAD, 2007). The Associations of Watershed Management are composed of landowners and landless people who are working or living within a micro-watershed.

The fourth area of this project is institutional support and project management, which requires the services of professional and administrative managers of the government at all levels (IFAD, 2003, p.5). In this area managers are equipped with the systems, tools, and training, to collect, compile, and analyse essential information on the performance of the project (IFAD, 2007, n.p.).

This project has been implemented through several phases every five years. It will move to higher phases based on the performance and sustainability of the self-help groups in the previous phase. The first phase of the PIDRA Project was conducted between 2001 and 2004. The focus of the project at the first phase was to develop self-help groups (SHGs) within the nominated communities. This activity was supported through developing village infrastructures and facilities, and training on land management (based on natural and environmental conservation). In this first phase, this programme targeted 14 districts, 500 villages, 100,000 poor households,

and 400,000 people in East Java, West Nusa Tenggara, and East Nusa Tenggara (BKP, 2005; 2006). This was equal to 22.12% of the poor people in the target area.

The evaluation of the programme in the first phase showed significant improvement in the poor communities. The poor households were able to develop their creativity and self-help abilities to create another source of income through micro and small scale business in the rural areas (BKP, 2006). The IFAD and the MoA in their Mid Term Review of 2004 reported that the programme was on the right path to achieve its target, but the SHGs still needed to be strengthened through institutional capacity building such as training and exposure from the Government and NGOs (IFAD-MoA, 2007, p.3).

The success of the programme was followed by the continuation of the project to the second phase in 2005, and it will finish in the end of 2008. The second phase (2005-2008) focused on strengthening the community institutions through increasing the capacity of economically productive business at the level of micro and small scale businesses, with the idea that these businesses are then able to enhance income generation and welfare in poor households.

In order to implement its programme and ensure the sustainability of the project, the PIDRA Project continually formed SHGs. The number of SHGs has progressed from 2001 to 2007 and can be seen in Table 3.3. At the end of 2007, the programme formed 992 SHGs in East Java which was significantly more than the number of SHGs in 2004 (239 SHGs). In West Nusa Tenggara, there were 316 new SHGs formed in 2007 from 130 SHGs in 2004. Meanwhile, the number of SHGs in East Nusa Tenggara had a threefold increase from 219 SHGs in 2004 to 897 SHGs in 2007.

Table 3.3. The Promotion of SHGs in the PIDRA Project between 2004 and 2007

Province	2004 (SHGs)	2007 (SHGs)	Additional SHGs
East Java	239	992	753
West Nusa Tenggara	130	446	316
East Nusa Tenggara	219	897	678
Total	588	2,335	1,747

Source: IFAD-MoA (2007,p.8) & BKP (2004)

In the first phase, the project also formed federations and Village Development Associations (VDAs) at the village level. The federations have played a supportive role in improving the livelihoods of the SHGs and increasing the possibility of sustainability of the SHGs and SHG's service in the future. The role of federations is generally marketing the product of the SHGs. However, their roles also includes the provision of inputs in bulk; information related to production, technology, prices and markets; arrangement for sale in bulk and bargaining with traders for the best prices; and also the provision of loans or credit to the SHGs and to individual members (IFAD-MoA, 2007, p.11). The federations are also encouraged to monitor and audit the accounting performance of the SHGs, and audit the accounts of the SHGs and VDAs in the village after PIDRA withdraws.

Currently, there are 99 federations in East Java, 33 federations in West Nusa Tenggara, and 61 federations in East Nusa Tenggara. These federations have over achieved the target of federations set by the IFAD team. The federations have attracted the traders to visit the village to purchase their processing products and input commodities in bulk. Additionally, the federations have also been able to bargain for the best price and have set up weighing machines to ensure that traders do not use their own, which are often set up in their favour (IFAD-MoA, 2007, p.9). Thus, through federations, the individual members or the SHGs are able to sell their products at a better price and this has automatically helped to increase their incomes.

Meanwhile, the VDAs, which were also formed in the first phase, have a different role from the federations. The role of the VDAs is to implement the infrastructure programme, financed by PIDRA, in a transparent and participatory manner with priority given to the poor and women (IFAD-MoA, 2007, p.13). The VDAs are also expected to ensure that the infrastructure investment needs of the poor, specifically women, are given priority. This investment is not only from the PIDRA but also from the government by lobbying and influencing local government bodies. Presently, 99 VDAs are formed in East Java, 44 VDAs in West Nusa Tenggara, and 94 VDAs in East Nusa Tenggara, with one in each of the villages. The members of each VDA consist of 13 people with 10 people representative of every SHG in the village and the 3 remaining members from the local government (1 person), Community Based Organisations in the village (1 person), and an elite people of the village (1 person).

The impact of the existence of the VDAs on the community as a whole, and local government specifically is in the increasing involvement of villagers in the planning of local government's activities; local governments have used and adopted the PRA methodology that the VDAs introduced in their planning (IFAD-MoA, 2007).

The evaluation of SHGs shows that there are significant numbers of SHGs which are performing poorly, specifically in West Nusa Tenggara and East Nusa Tenggara and in Blitar, East Java (IFAD-MoA, 2007). Some SHGs have not performed well because they did not start as planned due to several reasons, including the lack of an adequate flow of funds and a lack of support for capacity building. The management of the PIDRA is concerned that these SHGs will have difficulty in sustaining their groups when the project withdraws. This will also influence the sustainability and the performance of the federations and VDAs in the future. "Unless these SHGs are strong, the superstructure of the VDAs and federations, which are representative bodies whose members are from the SHGs, will be weak" (IFAD-MoA, 2007, p.6).

The involvement of the community in the project occurred in the form of their participation in the VDAs' activities such as Watershed Management and Village Infrastructure Development. The community's contribution to the project was given in labour, local materials, and sometimes in the form of money. In the development of water supply and road infrastructure, and other social facilities, out of the total funds available for the activities (IDR 6,253,533,687), the community has contributed IDR 2,239,407,556 or 36% of total funds available, and the rest (IDR 4,014,126,131) were given by the IFAD (BKP, 2005). Through this contribution, it was hoped that the community will have a sense of ownership of the facilities that they have developed together and thus will sustain the services even after the project withdraws.

Meanwhile, the involvement of the government from national to the village level in the project can be seen from their commitment and support in the implementation of the project and its sustainability. This commitment and support can be seen from the integration of the PIDRA project at the provincial and district levels in order to ensure the project's future sustainability, and the additional budget given to fund the activities of the PIDRA by the government (BKP, 2005). Through the increasing

involvement of the community and government, it is hoped that the project will be sustainable in the long term after the project finishes.

### **3.3 The PIDRA Project in East Java-Indonesia**

#### **3.3.1 East Java-Indonesia**

East Java is one of 33 provinces of Indonesia. East Java is one of the provinces on Java Island that also includes Jakarta (the Capital city of Indonesia), West Java, Banten, Central Java, and the Special Region Province of Yogyakarta (Figure 3.4). Bali Island is to the east and Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta to the west (Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS Jatim, 2007a). East Java is divided into two regions, East Java Inland and Madura Island. East Java Inland is 90 percent of the total area of East Java, 46.428 km<sup>2</sup> (BPS Jatim, 2007a). East Java is divided into 38 districts/cities which consist of 29 districts and 9 cities, 657 sub districts, and 8,484 village/sub-sub districts (BPS Jatim, 2007b). According to the National Survey of Statistics of Indonesia 2005 (BPS Jatim, 2007c), the number of households in East Java in 2005 was 10,111,802 households with a total population of 37,070,731 people; 15.78% of the total Indonesian population. The population density of East Java is 798 people per kilometres square or 3.67 people per households (BPS Jatim, 2007c).

East Java is located at the equator between 111° and 114°04' easterly longitude, and 7°12' to 8°48' southerly latitude (BPS Jatim, 2007a). It has a wet tropical climate with 1,900 mm of rain per year, and a rainy season of one hundred days. Daily temperatures is varied between 21° and 34° C except in the mountainous areas which can reach minus 4° C and sometimes snowy (Semeru Mountain). East Java also has geographical conditions different to West Java. For example, in East Java, there are still many places which are difficult to reach by public transportation, and often if there is public transportation, the difficulty of the geographical situation will make the cost of transportation expensive. Thus, the community in East Java has poor access to information and markets, contributing to its vulnerability and marginality.



Figure 3.4. The Map of East Java and Java Island

Source: Sandy, 1986

The geographical and climate situation in East Java have influenced the type of soil and agricultural production, including how to plant those products. According to the Agricultural Office of East Java in Surabaya (Dinas Pertanian Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2008), the agricultural sector in East Java is mostly in the rain-fed areas. In 2007, the total area in East Java used for agricultural was about 4,595,186 hectares. This was equal to 98.97% of the total areas of East Java (Dinas Pertanian Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2008). Around 1,156,575 hectares (25.17%) consists of rice field with technical irrigation and around 3,438,611 hectares (74.83%), is rain-fed plantation.

With low rain intensity and a short rainy season, the rain-fed areas have a low supply of water. This has made agricultural productivity in these areas lower than the productivity in the other areas which have good fertility and an irrigated water supply. Furthermore, plantations in the rain-fed areas will also be vulnerable to erosion, especially if there is no land conservation. Erosion removes the fertile soil needed for plants, makes the land infertile, and reduces the productivity of the agricultural products. This low productivity of the agricultural output reduces the income of the people in the rain-fed areas who depend on the agricultural sector for their main income. This situation can lead the people in rural areas of East Java to be more vulnerable and marginalised, specifically people in the remote rain-fed areas.

This vulnerable and marginalised situation has left people in these areas to look for alternative sources of income aside from agricultural activity. In order for them to have some other sources of income, they need to build their capacity and gain more knowledge and skills, and also have access to financial sources such as credit.

### **3.3.2 East Java and the PIDRA Project**

The PIDRA project is one of the government's efforts to improve the income level and life of the people in the rain-fed areas of East Java. The project in East Java initially started from the East Java Rainfed Agriculture Programme (EJRAP). The programme was financed by the IFAD between 1990 and 1998 and was implemented by the Community Extension and Food Security Agency-Ministry of Agriculture (Dinas Pertanian dan Kehutanan Sub Dinas Kewaspadaan Ketahanan Pangan Kabupaten Trenggalek/DPKKT, 2001; IFAD, 2008b). This programme targeted six districts in East Java: Pacitan, Ponorogo, Trenggalek, Tulungagung, Blitar, and Lumajang with the aim "to increase the production and incomes of these farmers, while protecting the threatened natural resource environment" (IFAD, 2008b, n.p.).

This programme aimed to benefit 270,000 households by expanding the production of their perennial and annual crops, and in stabilising and protecting land through soil and water conservation measures (IFAD, 2008b, n.p). Furthermore, it supported small village-based agro-processing enterprises and improved animal husbandry through the provision of access to formal financial services for even the smallest farmers. Overall, the programme has had a substantial impact on poverty, specifically in terms of income effects (IFAD, 2007, n.p.). However, the impact on the poor beyond income such as on women and institutional development was still limited. Furthermore, there was also a concern in terms of the sustainability of this programme.

As mentioned above, the economic crisis in 1998 left most people in the rural areas in poverty because of their inability to take the opportunities offered by economic growth (IFAD, 2003). This also happened in the rain-fed uplands of East Java which were already known as extremely poor before the crisis in 1998 (IFAD, 2008a). Therefore, the IFAD through its post-crisis programme of the PIDRA chose East Java as a target area as well as West Nusa Tenggara and East Nusa Tenggara. Target

districts of the project in East Java are also the same, the rain-fed areas of Pacitan, Ponorogo, Trenggalek, Tulungagung, Blitar, and Lumajang (See Figure 3.5). This project focuses particularly in 99 villages, 911 SHGs, and 71,560 people which represent 7.16% of the poor people in East Java (See Table 3.6).

Having learnt from past experience in the implementation of the EJRAP, the PIDRA project focuses more of its activities on gender and community development activities compared to the EJRAP which focused more on land conservation. Thus, the target participants of the PIDRA project specifically involve the poor and women who are marginalised and vulnerable. Furthermore, the PIDRA has incorporated NGOs in the project from design and planning to monitoring and evaluation of the project which had not been done before in any other IFAD projects in Indonesia. This meant a challenge for the government agency executing the PIDRA to prove that government and NGOs can work together to achieve the same objectives. Furthermore, this project has tried to design and implement this project through a decentralised approach with full participation from the community, again different from the EJRAP with its centralized less participatory approach (DPKKT, 2001).

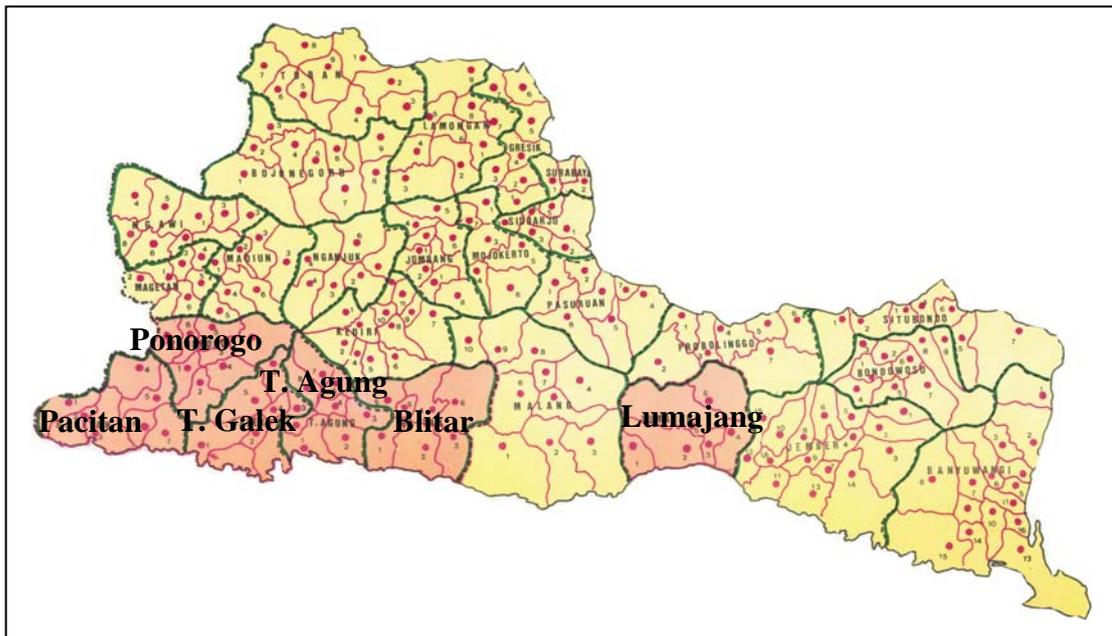


Figure 3.5. The Location of the PIDRA Project in East Java  
 Source: Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2004

Table 3.6. The Targeted Areas and Intended Participants of the PIDRA Project in East Java

District	Total Population (Tot. Pop.)	No. of Poor people	% of Poor People from Tot Pop.	The Intended Participants of the PIDRA Project				
				Sub-District	Village	SHGs	Member of Households (people)	%
Pacitan	538.030	134.400	24.98	8	34	319	25,640	19.08
Ponorogo	869.369	154.400	17.76	5	12	108	7,588	4.91
Trenggalek	669.154	161.400	24.12	6	15	138	10,932	6.77
Tulungagung	959.880	160.300	16.70	4	13	116	9,132	5.70
Blitar	1.110.529	190.900	17.19	4	9	84	6,740	3.53
Lumajang	999.494	197.600	19.77	4	16	146	11,528	5.83
Total	5.146.456	999.000	19.41	31	99	911	71,560	7.16

Source: Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2004

The PIDRA project in East Java aims to improve the wealth and food security of 19,800 poor families which are organised through the self-help groups (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2004). The improvement of the wealth and food security of the poor families in this province includes an increase in households' income and the improvement in health, nutrition, and other social status. The mission of the PIDRA Project in East Java is to achieve the vision through several major activities: (a) sustainable improvement of wealth which consists of community and gender development, development of micro-scale businesses, and management of natural resources based on indigenous knowledge or community; (b) village infrastructure development; and (c) institutional capacity building and project management (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2007).

The project's objectives are: (a) increase the potency of human resources of the farmer communities including women (human resources productivity) in order to be self-reliant; (b) improve the potency of natural resources (land productivity) through land conservation strategies; (c) increase the level of income and improve the livelihood of low level income families; and (d) increase the wealth of the poor and support the achievement of national food security (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2004). Furthermore, it specifically targeted poor families with low level social and economic conditions, including women. These social and economic conditions include education, health, nutrition, gender equity, savings, and consumption expenditure.

As mentioned before, the project organised target participants into groups. In East Java, it targeted to develop 10 SHGs in every village for three years time and consisting of five Male SHGs (MSHGs) and five Female SHGs (FSHGs). Target villages were chosen by considering: (a) topography and geography; (b) the wealth of the village; (c) the size of the rain-fed areas; (d) woman as the head of the household; (e) clean water supply and transportation; and (f) the number of people going oversea to work (Satuan Kerja PIDRA Jawa Timur, 2007).

Meanwhile, the identification of target participants was done together by the local government, elite people in the village, and the PIDRA team. Every village has a different standard of poverty, but in general, target participants in East Java have to fulfill criteria such as: (a) low level of education; (b) low level of health and house quality; (c) low level education of children; (d) insufficient clean water supply; (e) less availability of energy/electricity; (f) low level of calorie consumption per day; and (g) low level of families' income (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2005). Based on these criteria, there were 200 poor families identified as target participants in every village in the six districts of East Java. Participation of target participants was gained voluntarily without any force from the government and NGOs.

At present, the PIDRA project is in the second phase. In the first phase (2001-2004), the project focused on: (a) building the capacity of the community and gender equity; (b) improving the agricultural and veterinary sector; (c) developing infrastructure and land management; and (d) management and project support (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2005). Meanwhile, the second phase from 2005 to 2008 has focused on: (a) sustainable improvement of the livelihood of the community through community empowerment and gender equity, developing micro and small-scale businesses, and natural resource management based on indigenous knowledge; (b) village infrastructure development; and (c) management projects and institutional capacity development (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2005).

The project started with building the capacity of the poor community's organisation using a participatory, gender balanced, and integrated approach (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2005). In the first phase, this project has been proved to be successful in achieving its targets in developing 910 SHGs with 18,206 poor families

as its members, alleviating the poverty of 7.54% of the 965,500 poor people in East Java in 2004 (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2005). The successful achievement of the project in the first phase could not be achieved without intensive guidance by facilitators from the NGOs and government. The facilitators are not only facilitating their activities but also motivating them to strengthen and sustain their groups. Thus, in the second phase, the PIDRA project plans to increasingly strengthen the SHGs through community capacity building, specifically in terms of developing alternative sources of income aside from agricultural, such as micro and small-scale businesses.

In 2007, there has been guidance and training to strengthen the 989 SHGs, 99 federations, and 99 VDAs in six districts in East Java. This was done through cooperation between facilitators from NGOs and the government. Furthermore, the project has also formed a coordination institution (commission), which consists of different government institutions, as a place to coordinate and support the implementation of the project in East Java based on the Governor Decree No. 188/127/KPTS/013/2007 of March 23, 2007 (Sekretariat PIDRA Propinsi Jawa Timur, 2007).

These associations will help the members of the groups to have a voice in all activities held by the local village government. Furthermore, these organisations can also help to facilitate groups who want to have additional information or network with other institution such as other government offices and other institutions aside from the Agricultural Office and BRI. In the future, this project hopes that federations and the VDAs will be able to replace the role of the facilitators in guiding and training the groups, and developing their micro or small-scale businesses through access to credit. This would lead to the sustainability of the project activities and benefits in the future.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The PIDRA project has aimed to alleviate poverty in Indonesia. This project started in 2001 and has operated in East Java, West Nusa Tenggara, and East Nusa Tenggara. Target participants of the PIDRA are the poor and women who are vulnerable and marginalised and live in the rain-fed agricultural areas, and dry and up-land areas.

The PIDRA project has the objective of improving the income, food security and living conditions of low-income households and promoting the conservation and improvement of natural resources. In its implementation, the project has focused on organising the community into SHGs and developing community associations (federations and VDAs) to help facilitate the needs of SHGs and involve the community in the project. At this time the project is in its second phase and it will finish at the end of 2008. The evaluation of the PIDRA to date in the second phase shows that this project is not only involving target participants in the project but also involving other institutions such as Government institutions, NGOs, BRI, and the wider community in the PIDRA villages. This involvement is intended to lead to the sustainability of the project and its service improvements after the project finishes.

East Java is one of target provinces of the PIDRA. The PIDRA in East Java targeted six districts (Pacitan, Ponorogo, Trenggalek, Tulungagung, Blitar, and Lumajang) in 99 villages in the rain-fed areas. The vision of the PIDRA in East Java is to improve the wealth and food security of 19,800 poor families which are organised into self-help groups based on affinity or kinship and friendships. In the implementation, the project formed 10 SHGs in every village in three years which consist of five FSHGs and five MSHGs, the federations, and VDAs in every village. In the end of 2007, there were 989 SHGs, 99 federations, and 99 VDAs in 99 villages in six districts in East Java. These associations have helped individual members to increase their involvement in the programmes of the local village government.

The background of the study area in this chapter gives a general picture of the PIDRA in Indonesia and East Java and the location where the research will be conducted. Against this context, this research will look at the participation of participants within the project, particularly exploring whether the PIDRA project is or is not sustainable in the long term based on the performance of participants in target areas. Furthermore, this research also focuses on finding the relationships between participation and project sustainability and the kind of participation that will influence the sustainability of the project. In the following chapter, Research Methodology, the conduct of the research will be discussed further.

## **IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Research is a valuable experience. Whether the research is quantitative or qualitative, the researcher experience, background, and education will influence their interpretation of results and findings. This is not only the case for researchers who come from the developed world and conduct their research in the developing country, but also for researchers such as myself, originally from a 'Third World' country, doing research in my home country but in a place away from my hometown. I experienced a lot of challenges in doing this research in terms of the culture, language, customs, and socio-economic situation. These challenges included a conflict of interests when I had to choose between my role as an employee in the Food Security Agency (FSA) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) out of which the programme runs, and as a student doing an independent research.

These issues made me realise that the findings of my research are heavily influenced by the cooperation of target participants and other stakeholders of the project involved in the research. Thus, I have to depend on many people who participated and helped me in this research. As a result, I realised that the outcomes of the research would be as much about my attitude and personality, the researcher, as the context of the communities studied (Vos, 2005, p.60).

This chapter will discuss how the research was conducted and the methods used in doing the research. Section two of this chapter will explain the preparation process of entering the research field. This includes the approach of this research, the selection of the case study areas, and the ethical issues that I had to consider in my research. In the third section, this chapter will explain how the fieldwork was conducted and the methods used in order to answer the research question. The process of analysing data will be discussed in the fourth section which will be followed by a reflection on the methodology and conduct of the research. Finally, this chapter will be summarised in a conclusion.

## **4.2 Fieldwork Preparation**

Preparation before going to the field is necessary in order to reduce the impact of disturbances or unpredictable events that eventuate during the research fieldwork. This does not mean that all disturbances can be avoided in the field, but at least, I could minimize them by preparing well. The preparations for fieldwork meant my field research did go easily and smoothly.

Preparation included a literature review of participation in development. Aside from books and journals I also used other secondary sources. According to Yin (2003, pp. 83-108), there are six sources of data and information to be collected in the case study research, these are: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and although not relevant in my research, physical artefacts. Yin (2003) states that the first principle the researcher should give attention to are that data should be collected from different sources.

Documents and archival records (the secondary sources) were sought from different stakeholders such as: the IFAD website, the FSA-MoA, the PIDRA project managers, and local government in East Java. These documents and archival records were largely in the form of monitoring and evaluation reports, baseline data, or the progress reports of the PIDRA project specifically related to the participation of target participants in the target area.

The purpose for using these secondary sources was not only to write a literature review but also to get to know the project and target areas. Through this, I gained a general picture about the situation in the target areas, culture, language and custom of the people in those areas and how to access these places. In order to understand more about the project and target areas, I also contacted people in the National Project Management Office in Jakarta and asked for initial data and information. I had conversations with the National Project Coordinator and asked for permission and a formal recommendation to go to the field. In this way, I could have access to the Provincial and District Project Management. Aside from permission, I also asked for recommendations on suitable target areas for my research. The recommendation from the National Project Coordinator of the target areas helped me to plan my

fieldwork in Indonesia. This selection of case study areas will be discussed further below.

In the process of preparing the research, I also decided what kind of approach I could use in my research. The research approach needed to be decided before leaving for the field because this provided guidelines on what methods would help me to answer the research questions. Furthermore, the approach adopted influences how ethical issues would be approached considered during the preparation period; this will be discussed in more detail later.

#### **4.2.1 Research Approach**

In this research, a qualitative research method was used in examining the likely sustainability of the PIDRA project in Indonesia. This method was used because of its utility in examining the participant's daily life, knowledge, and practices (Flick, 2006; Brockington & Sullivan, 2003). This method allows the stories and interpretations of the participants towards the project to emerge as much as possible. Furthermore, qualitative methods can be used with people or places that are familiar to us as well as in situations somewhat removed, geographically and otherwise, from our own situations (Brockington & Sullivan, 2003, p.59).

In carrying out this research, a case study approach was adopted in order to answer the question of "what kind of participation promotes project sustainability?" As Ellet (2007) contends, a case study essay can be used to answer the research questions of what?, why?, and how?-in real life situations. Yin (2003, p.7) also adds that the case study approach is useful in examining contemporary events when "the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated". Given that the research question focuses on participation, I preferred to use the more participatory interactive methods of qualitative research where the participants are able to guide the research process, rather than the extractive methods such as used in structured questionnaires and surveys.

#### **4.2.2 The Selection of the Case Study Areas**

This research was conducted in Indonesia with the consideration that I originally come from this country, and thus, already know the language and the background to

the country. Limitations of time and cost narrowed down the research area to focus only in the East Java Province. East Java has been chosen as the case study area because the PIDRA Project in this province has been reported to have a range of sustainable and unsustainable self-help groups and services. This research was conducted over a period of approximately 5 weeks between April and May 2008.

Initial contact was made in the first week with the FSA-MoA in Jakarta where the PIDRA project is administered, to get permission and access to the PIDRA management in the national, provincial, and district levels. Subsequently, contact with the National Project Coordinator was made in order to ask for their recommendation of the most suitable areas in East Java for the research based on the performance of participation and the likely sustainability of the project (measured according to the PIDRA/IFAD indicators of sustainability).

The areas that were firstly recommended by the National Project Coordinator in Jakarta were Pacitan and Ponorogo. The reason for this was because he felt that these areas represented examples of both the sustainable and unsustainable aspects of the PIDRA project. According to him, Pacitan has more SHGs which were exhibiting less-sustainable performance. Meanwhile, Ponorogo has been known as district with good performing SHGs. In the end I added another district, Trenggalek, because I knew a person who had access to the PIDRA Project in Trenggalek. The Project Coordinator in Jakarta allowed me to go to this place and mentioned that this district has better performance of sustainability compared to Ponorogo district. In the end, these three districts were chosen due to consideration of my own safety, due to political conflicts and natural disasters, and also to guarantee the continuation of the research in the future.

### **4.2.3 Ethical Issues**

Ethical issue have been a central concern at all stages of my research before, during, and after the data collection process. Massey University as an institution requires independent research relating to human subjects to go through a formal human ethics procedure. The purpose of this requirement is to protect both the research participants and myself as the researcher from any harmful consequences caused by the research.

Aware of the importance of the ethical issues in my research, I followed a formal human ethics process. The initial screening questionnaire that I used showed that the likelihood of harm from my research was minimal and no more than was normally encountered in daily life. This meant that I followed a “low risk notification” process as it would cause no potential harm to the participants.

I was also subject to an internal ethics review process in the form of an in-house meeting with both of my supervisors. In the meeting, we reviewed the chosen research strategy and the ethical issues that I should be considered in doing my research, specifically during the data collection process. I found this discussion was useful for me because it prepared and reminded me how to conduct the research in an ethical manner. Subsequently, I submitted a Human Ethics Application for low risk notification and a comprehensive outline of research, accompanied by the Screening Questionnaire, to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

I was aware that the applied research methods could harm the safety, dignity, or privacy of participants of the study, as well as to me as the researcher. Hence, I sought proper permission from the Project Coordinator of the PIDRA in the capital city, provincial, and district levels before going to the field. The interviews with the government officials related to PIDRA were conducted during the period of waiting for this permission. The consent of the government was arranged before the interview by completing the consent form of Massey University. I sought oral consent from the villagers who are unable to provide written consent and recorded it on a tape, while for the villagers who are able to write and read their consent was sought by using the Massey University consent form.

The consent statements, whether in the written or oral style, notified participants of all the information relevant to their decision to participate. This included the information about the purpose of the interview and research, how the research would be conducted, the rights of participants to accept or refuse to participate in the research, to decline to answer any particular question, to withdraw any information that they have shared at any time after the interview or some point of time later in life, and to access the summary of the research findings after it is complete. Thus, by using the consent form at the beginning of the interviews the target participants could agree or decline their participation in the research.

In order for the participants to be comfortable in sharing their perception towards the project, the participants were allowed to use their own language. As I do not come from the research areas I used research assistants to interpret their language. Every time I came to the district I asked the Project Coordinator in the district to find me a person willing to accompany me and be my translator in the field. The purpose of the research assistant in the field was not only to help me to translate the language, but also to help me understand the culture and customs of the local people. Thus, I was able to avoid problems that could have affected the research and the safety of the participants in ethical manner.

During each interview, I tried to respect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants by ensuring anonymity and confidentiality of the information given. This also included the assurance that their participation would not influence their position in government, and neither will the information gathered identify them. I informed the participants that their involvement in the research was voluntary and that they had the right to freely decide their involvement in the exercise. As for the research assistants, they were obliged to sign an agreement of confidentiality in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants. This agreement of confidentiality is not only useful for protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, but also useful in protecting themselves from being asked by other villagers or stakeholders about information provided by participants.

In the research field, I am aware of the conflict of roles and interest that might happen between my role as an employee of the FSA-MoA and as a student doing independent research. In order to prevent this conflict, I explained to the PIDRA Project Coordinator at national, provincial, and district levels, about the purpose and significance of the study as well as my position in this study. By explaining my position in this study, I was able to easily get data and information that I needed from the government and project management. I also explained to the villagers who were participating in my research, that although I work with the government, this research will never influence their position in the project and their information will never be given to anybody. I also emphasised several times that the result findings is solely my view and this is not reflecting the view of the Agency or Massey University.

### **4.3 Fieldwork**

Fieldwork was a challenging experience for me. Although, it was not my first time doing field research, this was the first time that I was doing it by myself. Initially my intention was to live within the community in the targeted areas to observe and understand deeply the situation of the community and their participation. However, I found that I needed to move from one district to another and from one village to another so as to evaluate three out of six districts as being representative of this project. These three districts are Pacitan, Ponorogo, and Trenggalek, and because of time constraints, I had to move a number of times from one place to another. Since the research was based around participatory methods, I tried to accommodate and adjust my time with the participants and I tried to be flexible and use every opportunity offered for me to do interviews. For example, when there was a meeting of all SHGs in the meeting hall of Ponorogo District, I used this opportunity to have an interview with some representatives of SHGs from different village and observe the representatives' participation in this meeting.

In order to make the research efficient and effective, I had made a timetable activity before I left my hometown. I had also asked some friends in my division and the PIDRA management to give me advice on the order of my visits and they recommended that I go to Pacitan first, then Ponorogo and Trenggalek, and finally to Surabaya, the capital city of East Java. The reasoning for going to Pacitan first was that this district is the farthest and the most remote district in East Java and there are not many transport access points. The simplest way to get to Pacitan is from Solo, Central Java. Meanwhile, Ponorogo and then Trenggalek are the following places to visit because those places are in one way to travel to Surabaya, and finally Trenggalek is close to Surabaya. The fieldwork in these areas will be discussed later.

Prior to my arrival in those districts I had sent the letter of permission from the National Project Coordinator as the representative of the Secretary Agency, to the District Project Coordinator in each district and in Surabaya by fax. Thus, when I arrived in the district and came to the Office, they already knew my purpose. When first arriving I met with the District Project Coordinator in the Agricultural Office (except for Pacitan that has a Food Security Office) and asked for permission to do research in their areas. In this first meeting I also explained the objective of the

research and the research processes, and asked for their cooperation and help during my research.

I also asked them to help me to find a person willing to help me as a translator and to interpret the custom and culture of the villagers. Each offered me facilitators from the NGO or the government. To some extent, I had the advantage of using the facilitators of the project in the fieldwork; they were already known the villagers and their customs, culture, and language, and thus, target participants would not be afraid or surprised by my visit to their meeting or to their houses. On the other hand, I also worried that it might influence the answer of the participants because the facilitators are part of the project and they might be afraid of telling the truth or constrained in freely answering the questionnaire. Furthermore, my role as the staff of the FSA could also influence facilitators' and participants' behaviours and attitudes toward me.

I tried to reduce this bias by explaining to the facilitators the purpose of my research and my position in the research before we left to the field. This was also done with the participants. Before and during the interview, I explained to them several times that my position was not as the staff of the FSA, but as a student who is doing her own research. Specifically I did this when they asked me something related to the project or aid from the FSA. I also emphasised my position several times in every meeting with the target participants, although the facilitators introduced me as staff of the FSA.

Aside from adjusting my time to the facilitator's and participants' time, I also had to adjust the research methodology according to the situation and condition of the participants. For example, when I got invited to a meeting I did a participant observation, focus group discussion, and interview. However, when there was no meeting I just went to houses one by one, and also took a look around the location and had informal conversations asking many things outside of the questionnaire. I tried to learn and listen to their conversation (although sometimes I did not understand what they talked about), to be respectful in asking and answer questions, and to give constructive feedback when asked. I found that informal conversation allowed me to know better the participants and to get more information about the

project and its implementation in the field. The research methodology used will be explained later in this section.

### **4.3.1 The Implementation of Research in the Target Areas**

I spent effectively four weeks from April to May 2008 carrying out my fieldwork in the target areas. One week before commencing the research I went to the FSA in Jakarta, finished the administration processes to go to the field, and finalised the questionnaires. During my visit to the FSA I had an informal conversation with the National Project Coordinator and other staff of the PIDRA to get background information about the PIDRA project and its performance in the specific areas.

I spent my first week of fieldwork in Pacitan District, the most remote district compared to the other three field sites. This district is unlike the other districts that can be accessed through different ways; surrounded by hills and sea, this district can only be accessed from Solo, Central Java and Ponorogo, East Java by taxi, bus, or car travel<sup>1</sup>.

I arrived on a Sunday and I went to the Food Security Office the next morning. I met with the District Project Coordinator and explained the purpose of my research and the research process to him. He assigned one of the facilitators to accompany me, translate, and generally help me during my research in this district. The advantage of having a female translator was that I felt more comfortable asking questions about the PIDRA with her. Furthermore, as I had to ride a motorcycle to go to the research area, I had to hang on to her for a long time and I would not have been as comfortable if the driver was a man.

Pacitan District has 35 target villages for this project that are widespread over an extensive area. These villages are also far away from the district city and most villages are in hilly or mountainous terrain. The road conditions are not good and the access to public transportation is also rare, buses only twice a day. By the end of the week, because of the limitations of time and access and the fact that one day was a

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<sup>1</sup> Car travel is the car used to fetch and take us directly from and to our place.

district wide market day with few women available to interview, I had only visited three villages: Banjar Sari, Punung, and Purworejo.

Ponorogo District, two hours away from Pacitan, was second district I visited during my research. I arrived in Ponorogo on a Friday and went directly to the Agricultural Office where the PIDRA management office is located. I met with the District Project Coordinator and he introduced me to two of his staff who handles the administration and technical aspects of the project. They offered me reports on the PIDRA performance from 2001 to 2007 to read during the weekend.

At the first meeting the next Monday, the District Project Coordinator introduced me to the facilitators from the government. I explained to them the purpose of my visit in the district and asked for their help and cooperation during my research. I asked for facilitators who were willing to give their time to have an interview with me and was surprised when I found out that all of them volunteered to be interviewed by me. However, because of time limitations, I could only interview three facilitators.

I spent two weeks of my research time in Ponorogo. This was because the PIDRA management, the NGO, and all facilitators from the NGO and government, were very cooperative and helped a lot in giving me recommendations, advice, information, and transportation to go to the field. Furthermore, the facilitators in Ponorogo stayed in the villages and most of them are women that made me welcome to come and stay overnight in the villages. I thought this was my opportunity to observe more closely the participation of the participants in the meetings held by the SHGs, the federations, or the VDAs.

Additionally, I came to Ponorogo in the right time when there were many activities related to the SHGs. Thus, I could observe more and interview the project participants. Since it was a rare opportunity, I decided to make the most of my research here and gain as much data and information as possible, including meetings in the villages, District meetings with the SHGs for Cooperative legalisation, meetings in the federations, Supervision held by the Province and National Project Management, and other opportunities.

Trenggalek, the last district that I visited, is two hours away from Ponorogo. As in Pacitan, I spent a week here. As in other districts, I met firstly with the District

Project Coordinator in the Agricultural and Forestry Office in the Food Security Unit. I was fortunate because I arrived when they had a facilitators' meeting with both facilitators from the NGO and the government. In the first meeting, I introduced myself and the purpose of my research in the district, and my position as the researcher.

I met one facilitator who had been involved in the project from the start who offered to help me and to be my translator. He was particularly useful as he talked frankly about the project. Furthermore, he had a motorcycle that he used to take me to the target areas and he knew these areas and the communities in the research areas. For these reasons, I decided to choose him as my translator in this district.

Trenggalek, as in Pacitan, has their targeted project villages and sub-districts at some distance from each other. Thus, I spent every day in a different district, covering five sub-districts out of six and visiting six villages. However, I could not stay overnight in the villages. In Trenggalek, the facilitators rarely come to the office except if there is a meeting, and thus, I could not ask them to help me. This did make it easier to have contact with, and to ask for data and information, from the PIDRA Management Office.

#### **4.3.2 Methodology Used and the Applications in the Field**

I used participatory tools in my research in order to collect primary data. These research tools included focus group discussions, interviews, and participant-observation. The participatory approach in this research was not purposely to empower the community in terms of giving them skills and knowledge, but was used to generate data and information from the participants. Thus, I always emphasised in the beginning of the interview or discussion that my intention was to take data and information about the project performance and their participation in the project, but not to teach them or give them training about the project or other skills.

I had selected research participants by using the snowball technique because I was not certain about the characteristics of the sample that I wanted. As Wallonick (2004, n.p) states, a snowball technique is “a special non-probability method used when the desired sample characteristic is rare”. Furthermore, by using this technique, the research cost can be reduced and it makes easier for me, the researcher, to find

participants. In using this technique, I took every opportunity that I had to get data and information from the individual members, SHGs, federations, VDAs, facilitators, or management. For example, there was a meeting in Karang Patihan Village in Ponorogo on one Saturday night while I was in the village, so I attended it. I also went to the house of one of the PIDRA management when he invited me because he wanted to talk privately about the project and he could not say it freely in front of other staff. Furthermore, in the end of each interview I always asked the participants to give me the names of other people they could recommend as additional names so as to generate a sufficient number of participants to give the study greater numeric weight (The Centre for Cancer Education, 2000). In total, I interviewed 56 participants who were members of the SHGs, 14 government employees (including the local government in the villages), and three villagers who were non-members of the project. The reason for including the non-members as participants was because I wanted to know whether they knew about the PIDRA and to what extent this project was or was not exclusive, as well as their attitude towards the project.

Before each interview, I always asked the respondent whether they were willing to participate voluntarily in my research. This was important because it could influence their answer to my questions. Their voluntary consent could be seen from their willingness to sign the Consent Form of my research. I found that all people I met were willing to be interviewed, although some of them were afraid that their answers were wrong. By explaining to them that their answers will not influence anything in the project or anybody and that there were no 'wrong' answers, most understood and proceeded with the interview.

In a number of cases, however, some participants still did not want to be interviewed; I did not force them to participate. For example, often the uneducated and old people were afraid of making a mistake or talking wrongly about the project. In most cases, they preferred to have a focus group discussion than interview because they were able to answer it together with their friends. In these cases I followed them and held a focus group discussion so as to make them feel relaxed about the process. I was sometimes able to get information from those who did not wish to participate in a formal interview through informal conversations. Through these conversations, I

found that the participants were more open to talk and express their feelings about the project compared to the used of formal questionnaire.

In my research the use of research methodology tools were also adjusted to the situation and the condition of participants in the village. For example, in Pacitan every time I went to the house of one member of a SHG, the person would call all the SHG's member. Since all members of the group came, I decided to have a focus group discussion and follow this by interviews with some of the individual members who had been the most active as well as some of the most passive. At other times, people voluntarily offered themselves to be interviewed, and I then took this opportunity and carried out an interview with them. During the focus group discussions I also observed the participation of the individual members.

In Ponorogo, conversely, it was not easy to have focus group discussions and I had only two opportunities. Most of the time, I carried out interviews with individual members and used participant observation techniques. Although I went to the meetings of the SHGs, federations, and the VDAs, the situation was not conducive to me doing focus group discussions. For example, when they finished the meeting in the middle of the night, they were reluctant to have a focus group discussion because most of them were already tired from their day time activities. Thus, I observed their participation in the meetings and later carried out interviews.

Likewise, in Trenggalek I did not use the focus group discussion technique as there was no opportunity to do so. Again, I used interviews and participant observation. The location of the villages in Trenggalek District was dispersed and most meetings of the SHGs, the VDAs, and the federations were difficult to access due to their timing. I found that knocking on every member's door was more effective than focus group discussions. I got more data and information as they could express their opinions more freely when they did not have other members with them. Furthermore, I could talk informally and asked questions in addition to formal questionnaire.

I also used a different way of choosing the target villages in every district. I selected target villages based on recommendations from the management and facilitators in the field, and also through my considerations. In Pacitan, I selected target villages based on the recommendations of the facilitator and the District Project Coordinator

as to which were the nearest and the farthest ones from the district city. In Ponorogo, I selected the villages based on the timing availability of the meetings (the SHGs, the federations, or the VDAs) and the availability of facilitators who could take me to the village. In Trenggalek, I selected villages based on a selection of the sub-districts and the recommendations from the senior facilitator of the project.

Aside from primary data, I also collected a large amount of secondary data during my fieldwork. The secondary data were collected from the PIDRA Management in Jakarta, province, and every district that I visited. It included annual evaluation reports and the participatory evaluation matrixes from every district. In addition, I also went to the Statistical Office in every district and the province to gain additional background data about the target areas. These data were primarily related to socio-economic situation and the agricultural productivity of the target areas.

#### **4.4 Data Analysis**

Analysing data was the most difficult part of the case study research. The difficulty came because strategies and techniques to analyse data have not been well defined (Yin, 2003, p.109). However, by learning and being familiar with different tools to analyse data, I created a general analytic strategy for defining priorities around what to analyse and why.

After the data was collected, I coded it immediately based on the type of data gathering, the level of participation, the location, gender of interviewee, and date. For example, the data gathered from a semi-structure interview was differentiated from that gathered at a focus group discussion. Meanwhile, the written and audio consents were stored separately from the hard copies of the transcripts and cassettes of data collected.

In order to analyse the data and information collected I reviewed the findings in two steps. In the first step, I did after I left the research areas. I looked again at all the data I got from management and participants. This review helped me in formulating a summary, and gave me an overall impression of the research results and helped me to identify where information gaps still existed. The second review I did with the District Project Management, the staff of the PIDRA Management, staff of Evaluation Division of the FSA in the Province, and the Head of Evaluation Division

of FSA in Jakarta. The second review helped me to triangulate data and to gain more data and information about the project from different perspective. I found that this review helped me to be more objective in analysing the performance of the project in the district.

I wrote a journal in the field to analyse data and used it to analyse information throughout the fieldwork. This was useful for me because I could find common themes and patterns to answers of the research questions. The data and information gained from the interviews was tabulated by using Microsoft Excel, while the interpretation of data and tabulated information was done manually by using Microsoft Word. Subsequently, data and information was presented in the forms of tables and matrixes which made it easier for me to analyse.

Within this thesis I will interpret, discuss, and link the analysis to the indicators of participation that were regarded as influencing project sustainability from the theoretical knowledge of the Literature Review. By comparing and examining the actual performance of participation in the field to the literature review on participation and project sustainability, the likely sustainability of the PIDRA project benefits will be considered.

## **4.5 Reflections and Introspections**

Reflections and introspections are important in doing research. Through reflection, the advantage of undertaking a research in my home country, and the challenges and limitations that I had in my research process, became clear. Reflection and introspection also provide valuable insight into how field research in practice should be conducted, and how to avoid or minimise difficulties and limitations that exist in the research.

### **4.5.1 The Advantage of Undertaking a Research in My Home Country**

As a researcher doing research in my own country, I felt it was a great honour for me to get know other places in my country. This was the first time that I had been to East Java and was able to gain an insight to their language, culture, customs, and their socio-economic condition. Before I went to the research areas I felt a little worried about going to East Java and wondered about where I could live in the areas faraway

from my hometown; despite my office mates telling me that I should not be worried because the villagers in the East Java are usually nice to guests and really like us to stay at their place. In reality this was true and my concerns unnecessary.

In every targeted area the project participants accepted me warmly. They asked me so many questions about where I came, where I worked, what I studied, and everything about me. The funny thing was they always asked me in their local language and I did not understand what they said. Fortunately, I had the facilitators who helped me to translate and explained to them that I could not speak their language because I am not originally from their place. Then some of them tried to speak in Indonesia to ask me the same questions, and told me that my face looks like an East Javanese person. Sometimes I tried to learn and speak a little of their language and they would laugh at me because of my dialect. This delayed my interview, but was good because it made them feel comfortable with me before the interview.

Overall people in the targeted areas were very nice and kind to me. I am glad that I had the opportunity to meet them: some of them have remained in contact with me. I also had the opportunity to learn their language and their custom. For example, they always asked the guests to eat in their house. The facilitator who accompanied me told me that we must accept this otherwise they will feel that we do not respect them. Thus, I ate a lot because every house gave me food to eat! They were also very cooperative and often enthusiastic in answering my research questions. They told me it was a pleasure for them to be the participants of the PIDRA Project because through the project they could get to know many people from different places including me. For me personally, the research gave me many experiences and friends as well as data and information for my research.

#### **4.5.2 The Challenges in the Field Research**

The biggest and most immediate challenge I had when carrying out the fieldwork was to ensure people understood clearly my position as a student and to balance the conflict of roles within myself. This was because no matter how many times I explained to PIDRA Management staff, NGO staff, or the project participants, that my research will not influence the continuation of the project and that I did my research for my own study, most still thought that it would influence the project's

continuation. This could be seen by the responses some participants gave in answering the questionnaire. There were participants from the villagers who answered “please continue the PIDRA project in the future” when I asked about their suggestions for the improvement of this project or other similar projects in the future (Personal communication, May 2008). I responded by explaining again that I could not do anything directly about that because I was not part of the decision-making process and emphasised the purpose of my research and my student status.

There were also some participants who provided recommendations in the end of the interview on what they needed and asked me to pass these on to the Ministry. For example, one request was “could you please send goats to our place? Since the agricultural plantation was not really productive, goats will be another alternative source of income for the villagers in here”, and so on (Personal communication, May 2008). In order to answer these requests, I explained again the purpose of my research and I emphasised that I could not promise them anything because in my research I was not in the position of Staff of the Evaluation Division of the FSA. However, I suggested they ask their facilitators or the extension workers in their place to help them with this. Fortunately for me my translator was a facilitator and also an extension worker, so sometimes she helped me by answering these questions.

At times I was concerned that my positioning as both a student and staff of the FSA in Jakarta was generating bias in the responses of participants. Sometimes I was suspicious that their nice and polite behaviour would have another agenda in the future, although I knew that it is part of the culture of the East Javanese people to be welcoming to other people, specifically guests. However, I was aware of and conscious of this and did not just blindly believe what participants or other informants provided. At the same time, if I was too suspicious, it would also influence my findings. I was also aware that some, (perhaps most), people had a very sincere attitude towards me and tried to assist as openly as possible. In order for me to work through these issues I tried to mingle and talk informally with people about general topics, made jokes, and stayed overnight in places where people offered accommodation. This building of friendship worked to erase their image that I was a government employee. I really tried my best to make them understand that I am just

an ordinary person who was doing research for my own study. However, I was still aware of issues around my position.

Additionally, I had also some people who asked to have data and information collected in my field research. Sometimes this was because my research was related to work they were doing at that moment. I did my fieldwork at the same time the PIDRA Project was being evaluated by the National and Provincial Project Management. They requested my findings as additional data and information for their evaluation report. Also, there were some staff of the PIDRA Project in the district also writing theses for the completion of their study in a Masters programme and had the PIDRA Project as their case study. They also wanted my data and information as additional data and information for writing their theses. One person on the phone even asked me “Miss Lala, I would like to copy the results of your interview” (Personal communication, May 2008). I did not want to give them the raw data because I had already mentioned in the information sheet that I would not give any information given by participants to anybody and therefore if I gave it, it would be ethically inappropriate. I, therefore, refused politely by explaining that I could not give the raw data and information because I had promised not to give it as part of the ethical code of research. However, I promised them that I would give them the summary of my results when I had finished writing my thesis, to which they agreed.

My other challenge was how to deal with the internal conflict between the government and the NGO involved. In my experience in the field I found that it was difficult to have two organisations with different objectives work together to achieve one single goal. I heard some staff of the Project Management complain that the NGO always feels they are, not the government were good at implementing the project. On the other hand I also heard some staff of the NGO who said that the government team did not work properly and left a mess that they (the NGO) needed to handle. I could see myself that even in the marketing of the products that the participants made, that they did it without reference of the other party. Since I am a staff member of the FSA the facilitators from the NGO did not want to accompany me, and when I was too close to the NGO's, government staff was hesitant to talk with me. This led to some confusion for me. I wanted to avoid conflict as much as possible with both the Project Management and the NGO because it could influence

the process of data collection. I tried to be neutral, and learn, listen, open my heart, and my eyes, and respect, and understand other people's opinions about the project.

### **4.5.3 The Limitations of the Research**

As a researcher, I know that my research is not going to be as perfect as I hoped. The fieldwork that I completed did not work out as I planned. I had to adjust my timetable to suit those of the participants, and adjust my fieldwork to better fit with my own abilities. Furthermore, I had to adjust myself and my research to the person who accompanied me to the field. Realising the limitations that I have as a researcher will at least give me good understanding of what research is in practice. For me, field research is part of a learning process to understand other people, to know myself, and to learn how to deal with a range of different people.

The first limitation that I felt as a researcher during my field research was being a woman going into the field research by myself. I did not have the courage to go to some of the target areas by myself because I have never been there; it was my first time visiting East Java and those districts.

My second limitation is that I cannot drive a motorcycle or car, and most of the target areas are some distance away and were not easily accessible by public transportation. This situation made me dependent on other people, especially my facilitators, to accompany me to the field sites. As a result, I had to adjust my schedule of fieldwork to fit with other people's schedules, and hence I could not simply follow my own schedule.

A third limitation was time; I wanted to go to as many places in the three districts as I could in a short period of time. In order for me to analyse the sustainability of projects in these three districts, I had to know about the SHGs' performance in more than one village. With such a short period of time and many PIDRA villages to visit, I tried to optimize my time by going to different villages every day. By using a motorcycle and accompanied by the facilitator, I could then sometimes go to two or three villages in one day. The disadvantage of this was that I felt that I did not achieve much in the day because I was moving around from one place to another rather than better understanding one village.

Another limitation was my limited research experience. This style of field research was a new experience to me. I used focus group discussions which I had only studied in the class but had never used in practice and sometimes struggled with making the discussion work and keeping them on the subject. In relation to these difficulties and limitations, I realised that I am only human and know that I was doing my best while remaining as neutral as I could be. The experience has been a valuable lesson that has improved my skills and will be useful for future research that I carry out.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

The research used qualitative research methods with a case study approach with the aim to explore and explain how the practice of participation influenced project sustainability. A range of qualitative tools based on the participatory approach were used including focus group discussions, interviews, and participant observation. Different districts required different methodologies because I needed to adjust to the context and condition of the participants and I wanted to keep my research participatory. This included giving respect to locals and showing genuine interest, and learning and listening to participants' opinion about the project and their participation in the project. I found that informal conversations often gave me more information compared to more formal methods. Through these conversations, participants built their trust toward me and allowed their story to emerge in the research findings.

Finally, my research experience has provided me with valuable lessons in conducting research, how to face other people, and how to handle the challenges and limitations that I had to face. Field research also gave me an opportunity to know people in the rural areas and how they participate in the project initiated by the government. It was also a good opportunity for me to see directly the actual implementation of the project in the target areas and learn about the facilitators who have worked hard in the implementation of the project.

The following chapter will provide an overview about the nature of the participation of PIDRA participants in East Java. The discussion of results will also examine factors influencing the participation of project participants. The problems and

challenges related to the participants' participation will also be discussed in the end of this chapter.

**Photo Page 1: Images of the Project Areas in East Java, Indonesia**



Photo 1: One of the participant's house in Pandak Village, Ponorogo District



Photo 2: The situation of the rain-fed areas in Ponorogo District



Photo 3: The situation of Trenggalek District

**Photo Page 2: The Activities during the Field Research**



Photo 1: One of the federation store in Ponorogo District



Photo 2: One of the federation office in Trenggalek District



Photo 3: Focus group discussions in two villages of Ponorogo District



Photo 4: Interview with a participant in Trenggalek District



Photo 5: The activities of the participants at the cooperative institution and in the meeting in Trenggalek District

## **V. THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION AND THE PERCEPTION OF SUSTAINABILITY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

To briefly review, this research seeks to answer the central question of: “what is the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project based on the participation of participants in the target areas, and what kind of participation will enhance the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas?” This chapter will present an overview of the nature of participation in the target areas based on the field research and secondary sources. The first section identifies the key groups of the project and the process of their identification including their participation from the planning stages through to project evaluation.

In the following section, the range of problems and challenges that influenced participation of project participants will be discussed. This will lead in to identification of factors influencing participation in the target areas. In the third section, perception of the main actors on the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas will be presented and finally this chapter will be summarised in the conclusion.

### **5.2 The Key Target Participants and Their Involvement in the PIDRA Project in Target Areas**

This section will outline the key participants of the project and how the PIDRA team identified them before the project began in the target areas. This will be followed by discussion on their participation in every stage of the project from planning and design, to evaluation from information gained mainly from the secondary sources.

#### **5.2.1 The Key Participants of the PIDRA Project in the Target Areas**

As discussed in Chapter III, the participants of the project are the poor people who live in the rain-fed areas of the district, vulnerable and marginalised in terms of access to institutions such as economic opportunity and education. The main target participants are not only men but also women, specifically the widows who are the head of households. Furthermore, they should not have either a small or micro scale

business before the project began. From the interviews with the project participants, they acknowledged that this project was targeted at the very poor people and women. When I questioned them, some of them told me reluctantly about this, but there were also some participants who simply stated that:

We are poor, we do not have knowledge and the ability to read and write, and have difficulty for access to education and transportation, and that is why we join this project (Participant from Ponorogo District, Personal communication, May 2008).

There were also some project participants who shyly admitted that they were not actually poor. When the facilitator who accompanied me asked them whether they are poor or not, they just smiled without explanation.

Different *dusun* (sub-village) and different villages have different criteria for target participants, depending on the socio-economic situation of target areas. The very poor in one *dusun* or village might not be the same as the very poor in another *dusun* or village. For example, the facilitators from Ponorogo District said that the key target in this district should be people who do not have even one single farm animal in order for them to participate in the project. This is because goats or sheep are expensive, and thus, if they had them, then they were not qualified as very poor people. Meanwhile, another facilitator from Trenggalek District said that target participants who were qualified to be members of the project in this district were supposed to be people who did not have a radio or a television, and had dirt floors. Similar criteria of the very poor in these three target areas are that target participants are people who have a low income level, a low level of education, and live in the rain-fed areas where they could not really depend on agricultural products as their source of income.

In terms of education, priority is given to people with low levels of education who graduated from elementary or junior high school, dropped out, or did not have any education. However, in the implementation, the project management also recruited participants who graduated from high school or similar with the same level of socio-economic status with other participants which did not in line with the project design. Facilitators said that they recruited people who graduated from high school or similar

because they were afraid that the activities of the project would not run smoothly if all participants were elementary or junior high school graduates. They assumed that people with low level of education did not have as much initiative as people who had graduated from high school. Moreover, people with low levels of education were usually unable to read and write, and thus, it was difficult for them to do administration or book-keeping for their groups. Therefore, the facilitators involved the villagers with high school education as motivators and initiators in the preparation of the project.

### **5.2.2 The Process of Identifying the Group's Target Participants**

The identification of target participants started from the identification of target villages in the project areas. Local government was asked to collect information about the socio-economic situation in their village. Based on data and information collected, the PIDRA team in the district selected the villages based on villages' socio-economic condition and based on the criteria decided by the PIDRA team from the provincial level and the national level as mentioned in Chapter III (See Section 3.3.2). The number of villages selected was also limited to the amount of funds available for the project. For example, in the Ponorogo District, 300 villages had given their information about the socio-economic situation. After the selection, there were only 12 villages that qualified to be targeted as budget limitations meant that PIDRA Management choose only a few villages that fulfilled most criteria. According to the PIDRA Management staff, there were only 3 villages that the management thought as the most suitable villages for the PIDRA Project according to the criteria, and therefore, there were only 3 villages selected as target villages in the first year of the project in Ponorogo District. In the second and third years of the project, the number of target villages and target participants increased up to the end of the first phase in 2004 with a similar selection process as the first year.

Meanwhile, in Trenggalek District, target villages were selected mostly not only based on the socio-economic situation but also the location of the village in terms of elevation. As mentioned in Chapter III (See Section 3.2.2), one of the criteria of target villages was topography and geography. There was an assumption that the higher the location the poorer the people, and the more difficult the access to facilities. However, it appears that this criterion was used as an excuse for the PIDRA

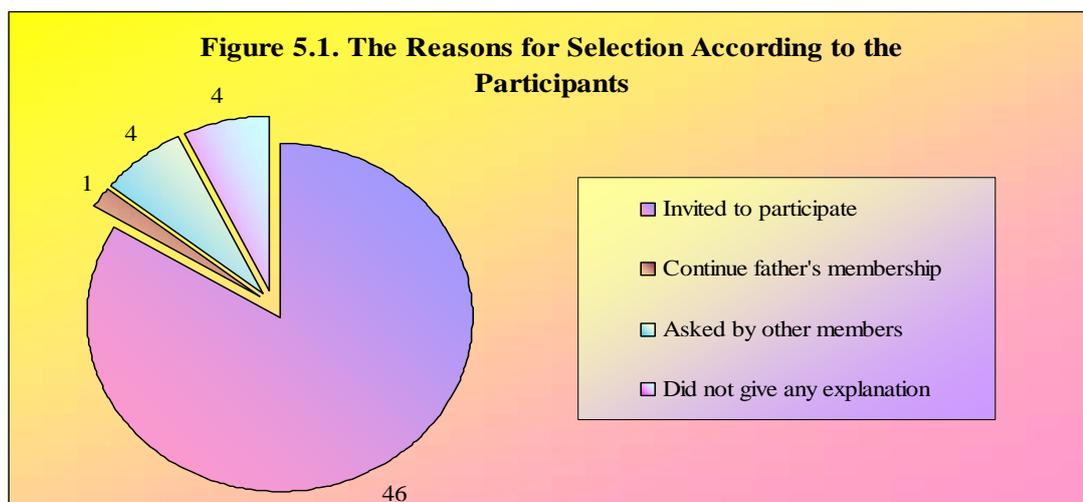
team in the district and the province to select certain villages which were not really suitable as target villages (Facilitator Trenggalek District and the Trenggalek Management Coordinator, Personal Communication, May 2008). The community in some villages were not very poor and some had clove plantations which are highly valued in the cigarette industry. On the other hand, there were other villages which were very poor in terms of their socio-economic situation but they were not included as target villages.

The identification of target villages was followed by the identification of target participants. Firstly, the PIDRA team from each district had project orientation visits (Sekretariat PIDRA Jawa Timur, 2002). In the orientation the PIDRA team held an initial meeting or socialisation meeting for the whole village and explained the purpose of the project. After this meeting the PIDRA team together with the local government and elite or influential village people identified the village profile and target *dusun*, and the very poor families in every *dusun*. The results of this orientation were then used in the meeting with the communities' representative from *dusun* level in the village.

The orientation was followed by a meeting at the village (Sekretariat PIDRA Jawa Timur, 2002). This meeting involved facilitators from the NGO and the Government, local government (village and *dusun*), elite or influential people, and poor families in the village and *dusun*. The output of this meeting were the criteria of target participants, the list of target participants' names, the rank of *dusun* as target areas, and the schedule for meetings in the *dusun*.

Before the meeting at the *dusun* level, the PIDRA team, through its facilitators and helped by the head of *dusun*, cross-checked the situation of target participants listed in the output of the meeting. This cross-check was necessary because the project wanted to ensure that the right target participants were invited to participate in the project. This cross-checking was based on the criteria of target participants decided previously in the village meeting. These included the socio-economic situation, the level of education, the location and situation of their houses, and others that were also indicated in Chapter III (See Section 3.3.2) such as access to clean water supply, availability of energy or electricity, and level of calorie consumption per day.

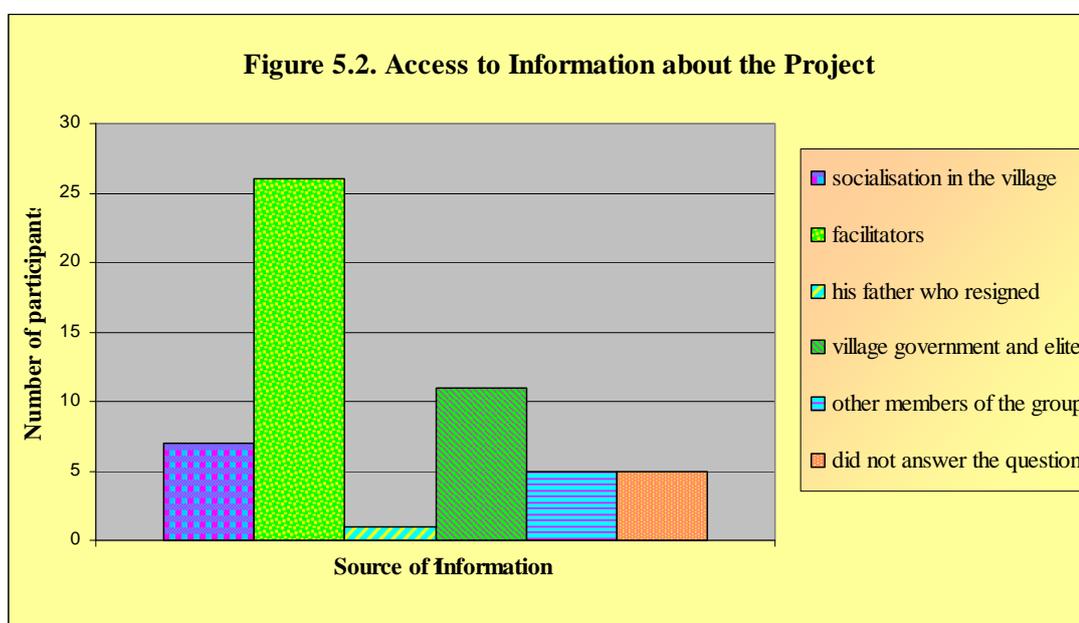
After the selected target participants had been directly cross-checked, they were invited to the *dusun* meeting. In the meeting, they were provided with more information about the PIDRA project. At the same time, they were asked whether they wanted or did not want to voluntarily participate in the project. This means their participation in the project was voluntary because this was part of the project principle to involve participants in participatory ways. Participants allowed to join the project anytime they wanted to, or to resign any time during the implementation of the project according to their own agreement with their groups.



Source: Participants from the three districts, Fieldwork, April & May 2008

According to the interviews with the participants (See Figure 5.1), most of them said that they had been asked by their volunteer to participate in the project. Only a few of them said that they participated because of their friends or father. A participant in Trenggalek District told me that previously they had been tightly selected as the criteria decided previously by stakeholders in the village meeting. Furthermore, the facilitator or the village government asked them directly about their participation by coming directly to their place. However, in line with the number of participants who resigned because they went to look for work in another country or city, the process of selection became gradually flexible. In groups that did not have sufficient members, they were allowed to ask their friends to become a member as long as they had a similar socio-economic status. This was also the case of the new groups developed recently.

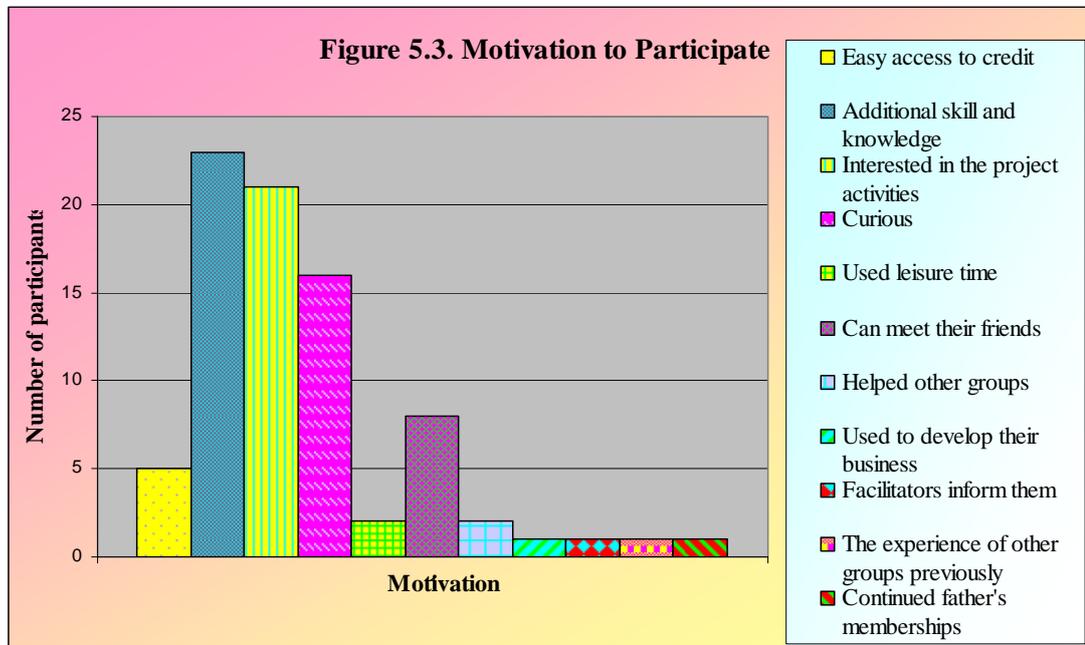
The process of the selection of target participants influenced how the participants got the information about the project. The results show (See Figure 5.2), that most participants got the information about the project from the facilitators, local government, and elite people who came to their houses directly. There were not many participants who got the information from the socialisation meeting in the village. This was possibly because they were not interested in the project in the beginning or they were hesitant to participate in the project because they were afraid of being used by political party. Additionally, it was also possible that they thought this project would be just the same as other projects and that after the facilitators and the local government explained it directly to them one by one, they understood and finally voluntarily participated in the project.



Source: Participants in the three districts, Fieldwork, April & May 2008

In the socialisation meeting the participants had been told that the project would not give money, but knowledge and skills. Thus, most participants of this project are poor people who have a high commitment to participate and awareness of the importance of having knowledge and skills for the improvement of their livelihood. According to the interview results, most participants who participated were aware of the importance of participating in this group, and only a few of them were less aware of the importance of this project. This awareness in participation can be seen from their motive to participate in the groups for the first time (See Figure 5.3). Most participants stated that they participated in the project because they wanted to gain

additional skills and knowledge, interested in the project activities and its benefits to the improvement of their livelihood, and their curiosity about this project. Meanwhile, only a few of them participated because of their friends, family, facilitators, or local government, and incentive to access the credit.



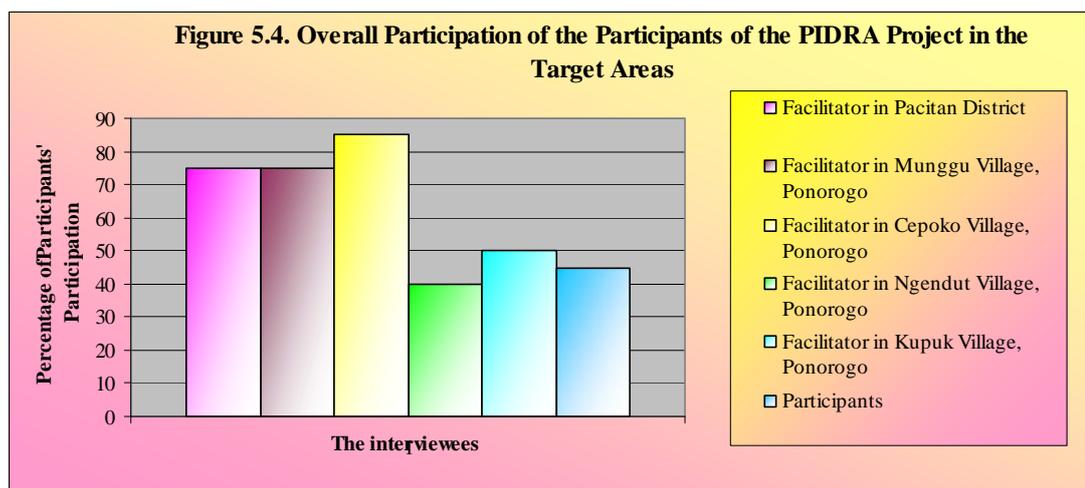
Source: Participants from the three districts, Fieldwork, April & May 2008

### 5.2.3 The Involvement of Target Participants in the Project

When I asked the facilitators about the intended participants' participation in the PIDRA Project in their villages, they had a variety of answers (See **Figure 5.4**). I observed that different levels of participation performance by participants were to some extent influenced by the involvement of facilitators in the project. For example, the facilitator in the Ngendut Village, Ponorogo District saw that only 40% of those who registered as participants were actually involved in the project activities, which was the lowest among other target villages. This was possibly because the facilitators were involved too much in most activities of the project. During my stay in the village, I saw that they helped the participants to formulate the Master Plan which was supposed to be the participants' responsibility. According to one of the facilitators in this village, she had already fallen in love with the villagers and the intended participants in particular, and thus, she wanted to help them to get as many benefits as possible and to finish their work as soon as possible (Personal communication, May 2008). To some extent, the intention of the facilitators was

good. On the other hand, this also left the participants to become dependent on them and not sufficiently active in the project activities. Therefore, one of the facilitators saw only a few of them really actively involved in the project's activities.

On the other hand, the level of participation of participants in Cepoko Village in Ponorogo district is the highest at 80%. My observation showed that the facilitators in this village were not too much involved in the project activities. The facilitators in this village had been changed several times due to personal reasons, and thus, the project participants were used to doing their activities by themselves, using their own initiative. Meanwhile, other facilitators from the Pelem Village and Temon Village in Ponorogo District stated that participants were actively involved in the project, specifically in the planning and design, and monitoring and evaluation, without giving any precise level of participation.



Source: Facilitators and Participants from the three districts, Fieldwork, April & May 2008

Interestingly, the research showed that participants' participation in the target areas was between 40 and 50%. This was based on my observations in the meetings in different villages; participants who were actively involved were the ones who got involved in the management and administration team of the group and the leadership of the group, while the rest of members were passive and just listened to the information about their group. The difference between participants who were actively involved and those who were not actively involved could also be seen from their knowledge about the project. In an interview, participants who seemed actively involved in the project knew more about the project and the purpose of the project,

compared to participants who seemed to be passively involved. Furthermore, participants who were actively involved in the project had the courage to give feedback or ask questions during and after the interview. A few of them asked my opinion about the performance of their groups, and one of them even called me on my mobile phone in order to seek suggestions on how to improve their performance in doing activities.

According to one facilitator from Pacitan District, 75% of the intended participants were involved in the planning and design (Personal communication, April 2008), and that would be seen from the involvement of the participants in the formulation of annual planning every year. The formulation of the annual plan was usually made in the middle of the year by groups in every district, and participants interviewed did say that every year they had the opportunity to plan their activities, to decide the kind of business that might create capital and additional benefits to members in order to ensure the sustainability of their groups (Personal communication, May 2008). This also included the choice of topics for training for capacity building. The annual plan made by the SHGs were firstly submitted to the *dusun* level and compiled with other groups in the same *dusun*. The annual plan in the *dusun* level was then collected by the federation. The federation then submitted the plan to the district level which consisted of the PIDRA Management team in the Agricultural Office and the NGO. The involvement of the participants in the planning and design was also the same as in federations and VDAs. The role of facilitators in the process design and planning was limited to facilitating the process, and giving advice and encouragement if the participants asked.

In the implementation phase, most participants were actively involved in every activity of the project. According to one of the facilitators the participation of the participants in the implementation of the project was between 75 and 100%. This means that almost all the beneficiaries were actively participating in the project's implementation. The first indication of active participation of beneficiaries was seen in the regularity of the meeting held by the groups and the average attendance of members attending every meeting. According to interviews, most groups in these three research areas have their meetings more than once a month. Most participants (54.2%) interviewed said that their groups have the regular meetings twice every

month and they also have more irregular meetings every month. These irregular meetings are usually used to discuss problems or things that had not been solved or settled in the regular meetings. Furthermore, they usually used these irregular meetings as another way of improving the relationships between members of the group. In every meeting either regular or irregular, most participants attended. According to the interview with the participants and facilitators, the level of attendance of members in every meeting was more than 80%. This means only two or three people did not come to the meeting.

In every meeting, members participated by giving suggestions or opinions and asking about problems related to the group or their own businesses. According to the interviews carried out most of the members had been involved in the entire policy decision-making, and said that their opinion had been taken into account. For example, in case of formulation of groups' regulation or rules, all members of the group had been involved, and their opinions had been taken into account. The members interviewed said because it was decided together, they felt satisfied with the regulations and knew the importance of the regulations for their groups' performance (Personal communication, May 2008). Furthermore, they said they could ask for revisions to these regulations any time if there were any regulations that was not appropriate anymore or gave problems to the members. Therefore, they were happy to implement and respecting the regulations.

Another example of the high level of participant was in the selection of the leader for various groups. Most participants interviewed as representatives of different groups told me that the leader was chosen together by all members of the group. Firstly, they nominated candidates who were competent to be a leader, then all members decided together who was the most competent and reliable leader by voting. The indicators of a good leader had also been decided together by members. If they were asked, facilitators could be a moderator or an advisor, in charge of monitoring the selection process. All groups had a rule that a leader must be changed at least every two years in order to give every member an opportunity to become a leader. This is important for the participants to learn about the management and organisation of the group and know how to solve the problems within the group so that in the future they can use their experience and knowledge to manage and sustain the performance of their

group. However, in practice, not all members of the group wanted to be a leader and many of them refused because they thought that they did not have the ability to become a leader because of their lack of education or their age. In most groups I interviewed they had had the same leader for a long period of time, and these leaders complained as they felt uneasy becoming a leader but they did not know how to make other members understand and be willing to take over.

In the VDAs' and Federations' activities all members are also actively involved. Although it was not all members who worked actively in the management and administration of the VDA and Federation, their voices have still been taken into account in decision-making process through their representatives in both organisations. The representatives would inform other members in their groups about items related to the Federation's or the VDA's activities and knowledge and skills learned in both organisations. If there was an activity held by the Federation or VDA, for example in the construction of the office for the Federation or VDA, the representative would inform the group members and ask their opinion about it, and their information and opinion would be listed and taken to the Federation meeting. In the meeting, the voice of the group representatives equals to the voice of all members of the group, so that all members indirectly have a role in decision-making. However, there were also concerns that the representative sometimes did not equally represent the members of the group or did not inform the group of the knowledge and skills they received in the Federation's or VDA's meetings. As one member of the group in Cepoko Village, Ponorogo District said, she decided not to inform her group about the knowledge and skills that she had received from the Federation activities because she did not know how to pass these on and felt they would be difficult to teach other members of the group (Personal communication, April 2008).

When the activities held by the VDAs and Federations all members are invited to participate. For example, in the watershed management of the VDAs and the development of the Federations' office, participants were all involved in the implementation. They also contributed voluntarily not only their labour but also material such as money, food, and sometimes input material. One facilitator from the NGO in the Kori Village, Sawoo Sub-district, Ponorogo told me that she felt amazed to see people's spirits when they built the office for the federation in that village

(Personal communication, May 2008). All members participated by working in shifts both day and night. Men worked in the construction and women helped in preparing food and goods for consumption, as well as input material. They worked hand in hand and the construction was finished in a short period of time.

Participants were also involved in monitoring and evaluation. Every month they had to fill in the forms PSME I and II designed by PIDRA Management at the national level. Most members were actively involved in giving opinions about their performance. Monitoring and evaluation forms were submitted to the Federation to be compiled and kept in the data bank. As the result of the monitoring and evaluation, problems that hindered the activities and participation of participants would be discussed further by the federation in order to improve the performance of the federation and groups in the following month. The monitoring and evaluation forms were also submitted to the facilitators to clarify the validity of their information through their observations of the groups during the monitoring and evaluation meeting and other meetings held by the groups. Facilitators would take the compiled data of monitoring and evaluation to PIDRA Management in the district and District PIDRA Management would submit the summary of all PSME in the district to the provincial level. In the province, the PIDRA Management compiled all PSME from different districts and submitted it to the National Programme Coordinator. The result of monitoring and evaluation was usually used as one of the indicators of the viability of the groups in terms of their eligibility to receive matching grants based on their participation performance.

### **5.3` Problems, Challenges, and Factors Influencing Participation of Participants in the Target Areas**

As mentioned in the Chapter II, participation of target participants is considered important to the success and sustainability of the project. However, in practice participation is influenced by many factors that are often beyond the influence of the project designers or coordinator. In this section, challenges to the practice of participation and potential sustainability of the project in the target areas will be discussed leading to a further explanation of the factors influencing participation of the target participants and the likely sustainability of the project in the research areas. The information gained here is based on the interviews with facilitators and

participants, participant observation in the research areas, and secondary data gained from the field and related institutions.

### **5.3.1 Problems and Challenges Influencing Participation of Participants and the Potential Sustainability of the Project**

Most participants interviewed in the research areas (56.5%) said that they had experienced problems and challenges during their participation in the project's activities and that these influenced the sustainability of the project in the future. These problems and challenges can be divided into two broad categories; firstly internal problems which came from among the participants themselves and their environment, some of which were beyond the influence of the external agents. These included age, lack of knowledge and education, illiteracy, geographical situation, and lack of awareness among the participants. Secondly, there are external problems that came from beyond the participants' control including support (or lack of it) from local government, and the role of facilitators. The description of the problems and challenges occurring in the target areas can be seen in Table 5.5.

Amongst participants who had to face problems and challenges around their participation (56.5%), the majority (30%) said that illiteracy or the inability of participants to read and write was the biggest problem and challenge for participating in the project's activities such as book-keeping, and administration. Participants who complained about this problem were both participants and facilitators, but most of them were leaders or members who handled the administration and management of the groups. They argued that due to the project's systems, illiteracy prevents shared leadership and the tasks of management and administration could not be shared widely, and was centralised among certain members who were able to read and write. This means members who could not read and write did not participate in or learn management and organisational skills, and the members with the skills felt burdened with the same tasks for long periods of time. These problems could raise conflict amongst members that could threaten the sustainability of the group in the future.

Table 5.5. Internal and External Problems and Challenges for Participants' Participation in the Target Areas

No.	Problems and Challenges	Participants (People)	Percentage (%)
A.	Participants answered that there were no problems and challenges	30	43.5
B.	Participants answered that there were problems and challenges	39	56.5
B1.	Internal Problems and Challenges		
	- Illiteracy	12	30.8
	- Lack of education and knowledge	7	17.9
	- Older age	5	12.8
	- Lack of awareness of participants	1	2.6
	- Geographical situation	2	5.1
	- Internal conflict among members	3	7.7
	- There are no incentives to motivate	2	5.1
B2.	External Problems and Challenges		
	Lack of support from the government	6	15.4
	The role of Facilitators	1	2.6
	Total Participants	69	100.00

Source: Fieldwork data, April & May 2008

The next most common problem identified that is also related to illiteracy is the lack of education and knowledge of the participants (18%). Some participants interviewed admitted that the lack of their knowledge and low level of their education made it difficult for them to participate in the project, specifically in decision-making process. According to the facilitators, participants with a low level of education, usually just elementary school, or those who do not have any education, often had difficulties in expressing or giving their opinions and suggestions because they were afraid to make a mistake and felt that they did not really know how to relate to the project (Personal Communication, May 2008). Subsequently, this also led the lack of motivation to actively participate in decision-making and such people tended to be a follower of the more knowledgeable people in their groups. Furthermore, their active participation in the project was concentrated in the implementation phase rather than in the planning and design, and evaluation of the activities.

The problems of illiteracy and education are followed by older age as the problem that could inhibit some participants' active involvement in the project (12.8%). The participants interviewed said that it was difficult to involve participants with older age in decision-making process because they tended to be silent and listen and avoid

speaking or expressing their opinions. They also preferred to give support and opportunity to the younger members to take play a more active role, for example as the leader or book-keeper, because they felt that they did not have much ability to do that role again. Additionally, a participant who was also a volunteer of the project complained that older participants were difficult to motivate to do something new in their lives (Participant from Ponorogo District, Personal Communication, May 2008), sometimes to the frustration of younger members who wanted to undertake different activities with their businesses but needed the agreement of all members. Thus, the younger members thought older members in their groups meant their group could not develop as well as others and inhibited their activities in preparing for the sustainability of the groups in the future.

Most participants and facilitators (15.4%) said that the lack of support from the government or other external agents, whether at the national, provincial, district, or village level, could effect participants' involvement in the project's activities. A lack of support from the government could reduce the motivation for participating or create an uncomfortable environment for participants to participate actively in the project. Lack of support from the government occurred for many reasons; in villages such as Tenom Village in Ponorogo District, Ngadirejan Village in Pacitan District, local government has given less support to the project because they feel threatened by the existence of the project activities. This was because they saw the organisations developed by the project seemed to take over the role of the local government in facilitating and providing services to the villagers.

Lack of government support also occurred because of the conflict between the local government and the facilitators from both the government and the NGO. In Ngadirejan Village, Pacitan District, a facilitator from the NGO could not work well with the local government and that raised a conflict between them and meant less support from the local government. As one participant interviewed from this village said, the head of the local government does not like the facilitator because she was arrogant and underestimated the existence and work of the local government. The participant even heard that the head of the village said that this village did not need the project and this village could be successful without this project. Therefore, the

local government never attended meetings held by the groups or organisations, and did not want to support it by giving facilities or a budget to the project.

Lack of coordination between different committees in the PIDRA Project could also be seen as one example of a lack of support from the government because they could indirectly inhibit participation of the participants in the project. Lack of coordination could have resulted from different instructions on how the groups should implement the project. As a result, project participants were confused and could not do their activities optimally. A lack of support from the government could also be in the form of not giving access to the fund needed to implement activities on time. When the funds for watershed management came late, the activities could not be properly completed due to their schedule. Hence, the result of the activities could not be said to be successful.

Other support for participants to participate actively could be observed when the government gave target participants the right to participate freely in the project. Hence, when the government through the local district officer took over the VDA in a village in Watulimo District, Trenggalek, as the leader of the VDA, the participation by participants started to decrease. This was because they were not given the opportunity to express their opinions and suggestions and thus they lacked the motivation to participate. As a result, the VDA's activities in that district were quite static and predicted to be unsustainable in the future.

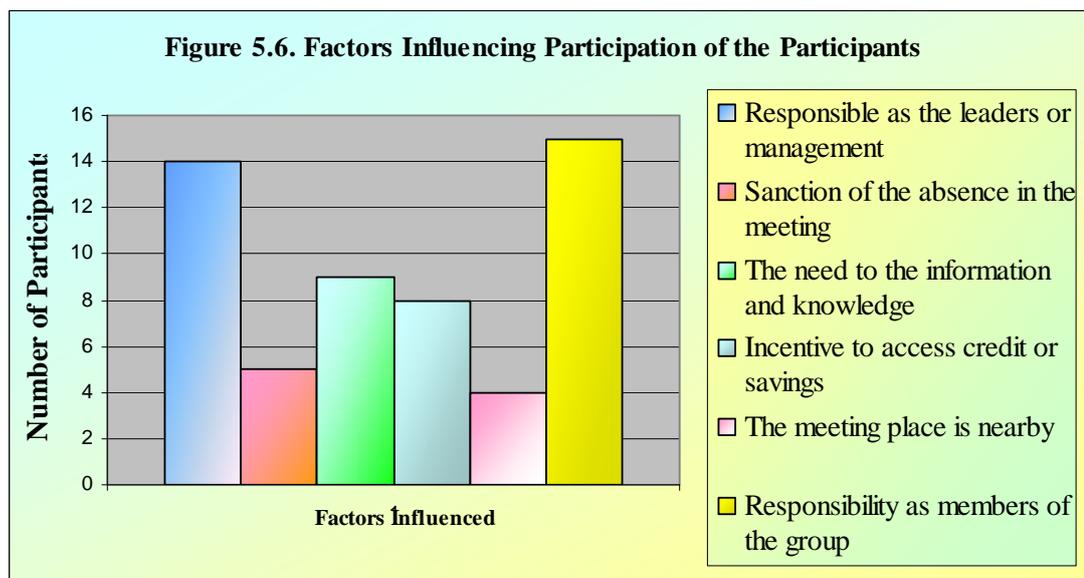
Aside from the problems mentioned above, there were still other problems inhibiting people's participation and the potential sustainability in the project activities. Some participants (7.7%) mentioned internal conflicts between members such as the domination of certain people in the group over other members, the high frequency of meetings that prevent members from doing more economic activities or having leisure time, and the lack of transparency about the groups' activities and finance. Geographical conditions, the awful condition of the road and the distance between houses for example, made it a problem and challenge for participants to meet all the time, and to coordinate and communicate between members.

Another problem occurs when participants participate because of incentives. There was a concern from one facilitator in Ponorogo district that participants tended to

have less motivation to participate when they knew that this project did not give money, but rather training and increasing knowledge and skills. They were also less motivated when they knew that another project with the same activities gave money or food as an exchange for their labours, while this project did not give anything but asked them to contribute not only labour, but also money and sometimes food. Finally, the role of facilitators and lack of awareness of participants to participate were also part of the problems and challenges that have to be handled if participants are going to more actively participate in sustaining the project in the long term. This will be discussed further below.

### 5.3.2 Factors Influencing Participation in Three Districts of East Java

Knowledge of the challenges to participation in the research areas helps to understand factors that influence participants' participation. The factors that influenced participation in this project are shown below (See Figure 5.6).



Source: Participants in the three districts, Fieldwork, April & May 2008

#### *The Responsibility to the Group*

The responsibility to the groups of members or as the leaders and management team provided a positive impact on meeting participation. This factor was the primary reason given by participants as to why they were actively coming to the regular and irregular meetings. They realised that if they did not come to the meetings, the

group's activities would not work properly and smoothly. One of the participants told me that as a leader he has to provide a good example to the group's members; if he comes late, he is afraid that the members will also do the same thing in the future (Personal communication, May 2008). The level of attendance of the participants at meetings was still above 80%. This means that out of 20 members of the group, there were only two or three people who could not come and it was usually because they had something urgent to do such as going to doctor, staying at home because of sickness, or harvesting their crops.

### ***The Level of Education, Knowledge, and Skills***

As shown in Figure 5.6, the desire for information and knowledge was the third largest factor influencing participants' participation in the target areas. In Section 5.2.1, the need for information and knowledge was mentioned as one of the motives for participants to be involved in the project. When I asked the reason why they always went to the meetings, the answer was: "I want to get more knowledge and skills from the facilitators" (Personal communication, April-May 2008). This conversation represents the perception of the participants with their involvement in the meetings and the project as a way of gaining more knowledge and skills. One participant from Ponorogo District hoped that the project will continue to the third phase so she could gain more knowledge and skills from the facilitators (Personal communication, May 2008).

### ***Financial and Social Incentives***

Incentives could encourage target participants to actively participate in the project activities (See Figure 5.6). In this case incentives are not only money or grants but also skills, knowledge, access to saving and credits, and also friendships or relationships between members. According to the observations and the experience of the facilitators, incentives such as money or loans for participation did not encourage sustainable participation. The facilitator in the Ngendut Village, Ponorogo, told me that there were a few groups who resigned from the project in the first phase because they thought that this project would not provide them with any money or grants (Personal communication, May 2008).

Incentives in term of grants could motivate intended participants to participate more actively in the project. As mentioned before in the Chapter III, this project has encouraged participation and sustainability as part of its principles. Therefore, in order to ensure active participation and the potential sustainability of the project activities, the project grades the groups based on their performance on participation and potential sustainability in the future. The grades are divided into: very good, good, medium, and bad performance. The very good, good, and medium could then be given grants of different amounts depending on their grade. The groups with “very good performance” would receive larger grants compared to the “good” and the “medium”. In order to get the largest grants, then, the groups sought to perform well in their participation by actively involving their members in all aspects of the project. However, this carries a strong likelihood of lower rates of participation once the project stops delivering grants.

A few of participants said that they wanted to participate because they were able to develop good relationships with other members. One participant told me that she liked to come to the meetings because she could meet her friends and thus she wanted her group to continue even after the project finishes. Hence, the incentive to be in a group because of ties or relationships as friends could help ensure the sustainability of the project in the future. Other incentives to come to the meeting that participants looked for were discussed in Section 5.2.1.

### ***The Availability of Sanctions***

Sanctions in this term could include fines and group pressure, and influenced the participation of five of the interviewed participants. Most participants interviewed told me that their groups have sanctions for people who never came to the meeting in the form of fines or removal of access to credit. Some others told me that they did not have any specific sanctions or written sanctions, but members who could not come would feel that they had been punished socially. One participant told me that she felt ashamed if she did not come to the meeting because other members would look at her strangely and she would be unwelcome at the next meeting (Personal communication, May 2008). According to her, this was a worse punishment than the fines, and she preferred to come to the meeting unless she had something urgent, in which case she would tell any member about her absence.

### ***Geographical Situation***

Geographical situation influenced participation of participants in the target areas, with some participants saying that they came to the group's meeting because it was nearby or it was held at their place (Personal communication, May 2008). As mentioned earlier, there were some participants who said that they went less frequently to meetings because of the location of the meetings at houses of the members some distance away. As a result, they could not easily participate in the project's activities. In order to solve this problem, the facilitators suggested holding meetings in the member's house that is closest to the homes of all other members. Furthermore, facilitators encouraged the group to have members who live in the same area or at least do not live far away from each other.

### ***Poverty***

Very poor participants were vulnerable and afraid to participate in part because some of them had been traumatised by incidents such as being easily tricked by people offering fortunes. Therefore, people in these three districts who were very poor were hesitant to accept this project in the beginning. Some participants in Trenggalek District told me that initially they were afraid to participate in the project because they had been tricked by some people who called themselves *Amalilah* (Personal communication, May 2008). These people said they would help them but they needed to invest some money with them. In the end, they took the villagers' money and ran away without giving back the money. They were encouraged to join the project only after the facilitators approached and explained to them carefully the purpose of the project several times.

### ***Age***

Age should also be considered as a factor influencing the involvement of participants in the target areas. As discussed above, it was difficult to involve the older participants in the project activities, specifically in decision-making process. This difficulty could raise conflict between members if passive participation of older age groups prevents the participation of younger age groups, and thus, the sustainability of the groups in the future.

One facilitator in Pacitan told me that it took time to encourage older age participants to participate actively in decision-making processes (Personal communication, April 2008). In order to encourage them to actively participate, she approached them carefully, asked them questions about their daily activities, or made a joke just to make them comfortable and trust her. She said that she could see some slight changes in their participation after she had done this (Facilitator from Pacitan District, Personal communication, April 2008), and they at least became involved in discussions and asked questions, although it was still difficult to ask them to be active in the leadership, and management and administration activities.

### ***The Domination of Certain People over Other Members (Power Imbalances)***

Domination of certain people means the ability of one, or more than one person, to control the group's activities based on their own interests. This could happen because these people are more educated, have a higher level of income, have an influential position in the community, and the like. The domination of some members over other members can prevent the latter from participating actively in the discussion. Sometimes, people who were dominant did not realise that they have inhibited other people's participation because it could happen automatically, specifically when no one wanted to talk in the meeting and it took a long time for all members to provide suggestions and make decisions.

Therefore, in order not to try and reduce this problem, the groups usually have a routine for changing the organisational structure or management of the group. The new person in charge of the management in the group typically works with the previous organiser before they retire from their task in the management. However, in practice, this was still difficult to do because the management tasks required a high level of literacy.

### ***Support from Government***

Support from the government in hierarchical communities such as in Indonesia is an important influence on people's participation. Some facilitators interviewed mentioned that support from the local government is important to increase participation and project sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas and this was supported by the participants interviewed. According to them, local people

still consider support from the local government important for the implementation of the project activities.

According to the facilitators, government support meant visits by people from the government, NGO, researchers, and others (Personal communication, April-May 2008) and they felt a sense of acknowledgement and pride from this recognition by external agents. In other words, they felt that their existence was admitted, and this made them more enthusiastic to do better in their performance.

A facilitator from Ponorogo District said that participation of the intended participants in his village increased when the local government supported their activities by providing them with the services and attending some of their activities and meetings (Personal communication, May 2008). A few participants also gave examples on how support from the government is important for the implementation of the PIDRA Project in their areas.

A participant from Ponorogo District said that through government support, they could perform their activities more smoothly, specifically by gaining access to services provided by the government. For example, the government gave additional funds for the federation to build their store at Karang Patihan Village, Ponorogo and they could then run their business smoothly. Another example was given by a participant from Krajan Pandean Village, Dongko Sub-district, Trenggalek District (Personal communication, May 2008). Through government support in providing access to the village meeting hall, the groups in the village were motivated to welcome the evaluator from the PIDRA team. Furthermore, support can be seen also from the local government willingness to give a matching grant meaning their activities could be implemented according to the schedule which was highly motivating.

On the other hand, unsupportive government may prevent the project from effective local participation (Gow & Vansant, 1983). This unsupportive government can be in form of restricting the participants to have full participation which can lead to the failure and unsustainable nature of development project. A member of a group at Ngadirejan Village, Punung, Pacitan District said that support from the local government is important in ensuring the sustainability of the project (Personal

communication, April 2008) and gave an example from her village. She said that because of the conflict between the local government and the facilitators of the project, the local government did not want to support their activities anymore, and as a result, the project activities and meetings did not work properly. Furthermore, the members of the federation and the VDA have become less motivated because the local government do not attend their meetings anymore.

A facilitator from the PIDRA Management in Trenggalek District also explained that he saw how the VDA in one village in Watulimo Sub-District had a decreased performance and less motivation because the village government had controlled their organisation and decided everything for the government's benefit when actually it was supposed to be for the benefit of the participants (Personal communication, May 2008). Therefore, it was unlikely that the organisations and the project in this area would be sustainable in the future.

### ***The Role of Facilitators***

Facilitators in this project were important because they became close to the target participants. Based on my observations, good or bad participation and its potential for benefit sustainability depend largely on the involvement of facilitators in the project activities. When the facilitators in one village got too involved in the groups' activities, it could have the participants to dependent on them. For example, both facilitators in Ngendut Village helped the Federation to type the Master Plan of their village. The Facilitators might have wanted to help the villagers because of their responsibilities as the facilitators, but it can cause the villagers to be dependent on them and not really participate in the project. When the project phased out and the facilitators are not staying in that village, the groups might not be able to continue the activities by themselves because they did not pick up the necessary skills. However, without the facilitators, some members may be less motivated to attend the meetings and became involved in the groups' activities.

One group in Pandak Village had been known as a group with very good participation. In the first phase when the facilitators came regularly to their meetings, all members attended and participated actively in the meetings by enthusiastically asking and answering the questions. In the second phase, the facilitators encouraged

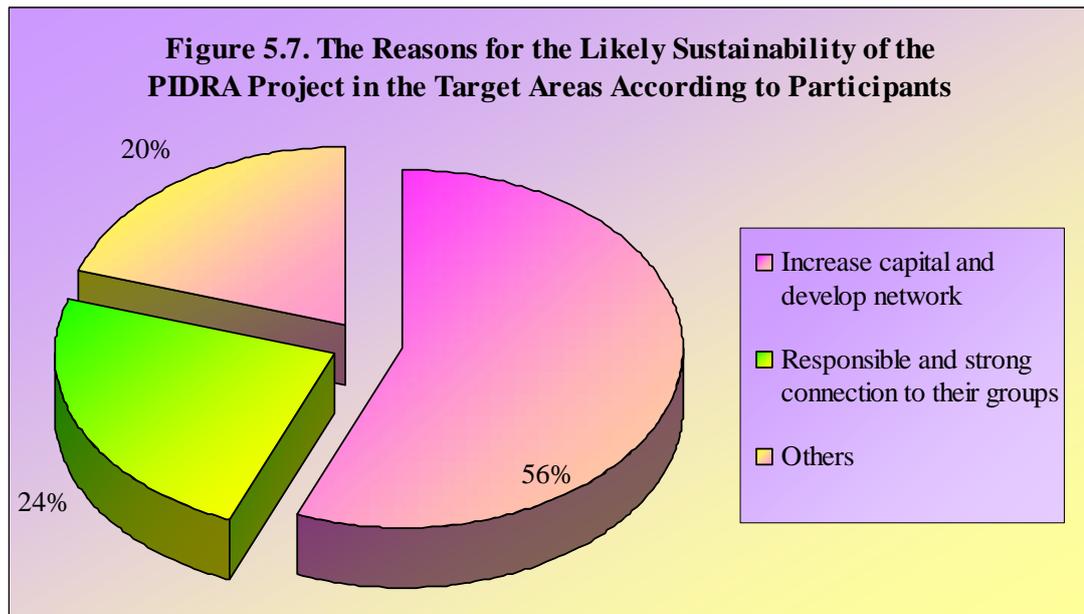
them to have their own meetings without the facilitators. Without them, the facilitators were surprised to find that the members did not actively participate anymore. A lot of members would not come to the meeting and they had even had problems with one member who refused to return the money that he borrowed from the group. These two examples indicate the importance of the relationships between the facilitators and participation of participants. With the strong involvement of facilitators in the project activities, the participants will be less independent, and the project will be less sustainable.

#### **5.4 The Perception of Sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the Target Areas According to the Project Stakeholders**

This section will provide a discussion of stakeholders' perception on sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas based on the information and data from the research. Firstly, it will discuss the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project according to the perception of the participants, and then follow this with a discussion on the project sustainability according to the perception of the government employees and the NGOs including facilitators from both institutions. Lastly, it will summarise the discussion from both the participants and the management of the project.

##### **5.4.1 The Perception of Sustainability According to the Participants**

All of the participants interviewed wanted their activities and benefits gained from the project to be sustained in the long term. Ninety three percent of 55 participants interviewed gave the optimistic view that they will have their activities, business, and benefits from the project sustainable in the future, although they were not certain for how long it would be sustained. When I asked why they felt that the project's activities are sustainable, they gave me the various reasons that could be seen in Figure 5.7.



Source: Participants from the three districts, Fieldwork, April & May 2008

Fifty six percent of 50 participants stated their belief in the sustainability of the project activities and benefits was due to their ability to increase their capital and income through businesses in the cooperative and federation, and networks with the private sectors. By having sustainability of income from their businesses, they will be able to have sustainable capital and savings to fund their activities. As one of the participants in Karang Patihan Village, Ponorogo District said:

I believe that the PIDRA's activities will be sustainable because it has been generating for a long time. It will be a waste if we do not continue the activities. Furthermore, we now have the ability to collect money for capital. When there was a harvest, we gave a small portion of our income for the group; we gave service by providing our labour for land conservation and plantation, and the money received from this service was given to the groups and used as capital for doing the group's businesses. (Personal communication, May 2008)

Some participants gave examples, such as in Pacitan District, of groups from different villages with different kinds of businesses. The group in Punung Village have a small store, savings and credit business, and they supply labour for plantations, aside from their individual jobs as farmers, traders, and others. In Banjar Sari Village, the group interviewed have businesses such as selling "dodol" snacks,

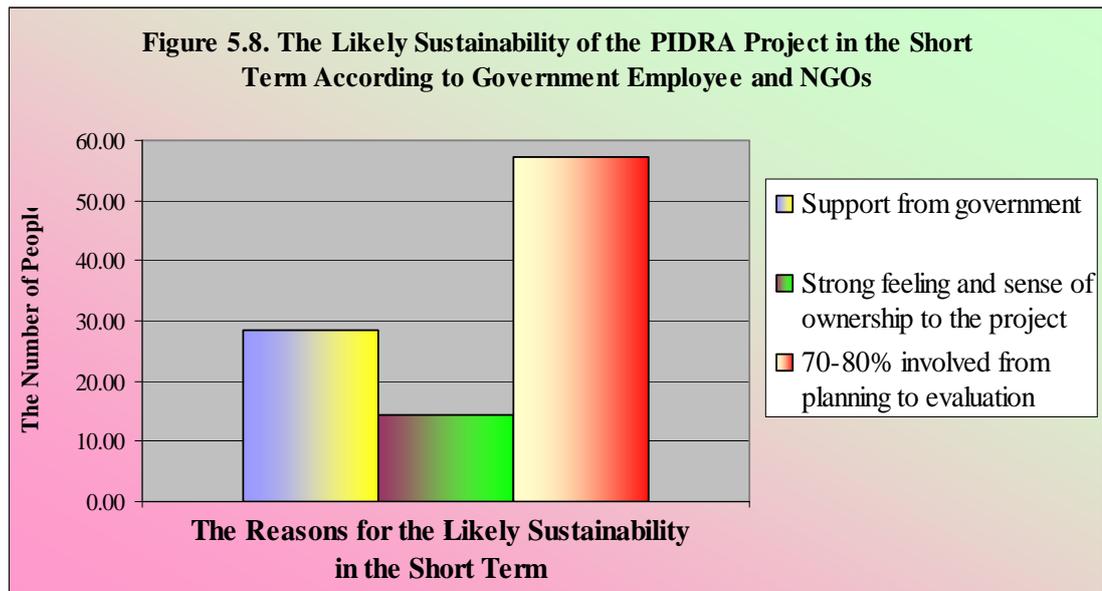
and production of “gadong” cassava snacks. In Ponorogo District, one group in Pandak Village produces and markets “tape” candy. In Trenggalek District, a different group in Gading Village has various small-scale businesses; Langgeng MSHG produced a variety of “tempe” snacks; Anggrek FSHG with banana fried and a service for party decoration; Sekar Gading FSHG with instant ginger drink and fertilizer.

Twenty four percent of 50 participants interviewed said sustainability was the responsibility of their groups. Responsibility in this sense means every member has to make an effort to sustain their relationships or their strong connection as a group, and to obey every regulation approved by all members of the group. A few participants in the interview said that they will sustain the project benefits and activities because they felt a strong connection with the groups and the members. Through this strong connection, they felt that they have a sense of ownership to the groups and it is hard to leave their groups, although they said it is still difficult for them to find a market for their products and hence, maintain their businesses (Personal communication, May 2008).

Meanwhile, others said that they believe that the project activities and benefits will likely be sustainable because they have enough knowledge and skills given by the facilitators and awareness of the importance of sustainability to improve their livelihoods. In addition, they believe that the project will be sustainable because they have the ability to set visions, missions, and carry out annual planning.

#### **5.4.2 The Perception of Sustainability According to Government Employee and the NGOs**

This section will discuss the perception of sustainability of the PIDRA Project based on discussion with the facilitators from both the government and the NGO, and the PIDRA teams at all levels (See Figure 5.8). The respondents were asked whether the project in these three target areas will or will not be sustainable. All participants interviewed said that they believed this project will be maintained after the donor withdraws their support. However, they were not sure whether it is going to be sustainable in the long term.



Source: Facilitators and the PIDRA Management staff, Fieldwork, April & May 2008

Seven of 12 participants (58.3%) said they believed that this project will only be sustainable in the short-term because they saw the participants' involvement was only between 70% and 80% in the whole project from planning, to monitoring, and evaluation. To me this meant they assumed that the sustainability of the project in the long term will only be achieved when participation of the participants is from 90% to 100%. A facilitator from Munggu Village, Ponorogo District said the remaining 20-30% of participants could not participate actively in the project because half of their members were older people and they had problems with financial management (Personal communication, May 2008). Another facilitator from Kupuk Village in Ponorogo District explained:

There is 70% possibility this project will be able to sustain in this village. The rest, maybe two groups out of ten groups, still have problems such as less awareness and limitations in many aspects.  
(Personal communication, May 2008)

Two of 12 participants said that they believed in the sustainability of the project in the short term, but they needed support from the government in terms of facilities and a comfortable environment to participate if they want to sustain it in the long term (See Figure 5.8). As the facilitator from the Pacitan District explained:

I can guarantee that the PIDRA project will sustain in the short term, but I am not so sure that this project will sustain in the long term. If the activities can be sustained in the short term, I am sure that the activities and benefits will be sustained in the long term. However, it has to be accompanied by support from the district government. (Personal communication, April 2008)

There was only one person who believed the project will be maintained in the short term because the members have a strong bond in the group and have a sense of belonging to the group, its activities and benefits (Facilitator from Ponorogo District, Personal communication, May 2008). Interestingly, his opinion suggested that the strong feeling as a group and the sense of belonging to the group are not enough by themselves if they want to maintain the project in the long term.

Meanwhile, the remaining participants (five of 12 participants) believed that this project will be sustained in the long term. The PIDRA's Assistant for Administration argued that the long term sustainability of the project will be possible because the cooperative institution initiated by the project in every village will be able to sustain participants' and groups' businesses and give additional benefits to the participants in the long term (Personal communication, May 2008). Another staff member of the PIDRA Management in Ponorogo District believed that this project will be able to be sustained in the long term because there is support from the district government through the master plan. According to him, without a master plan, the probability this project to be sustainable is only 20% (Personal communication, May 2008). The master plan is a report on the potential of the village in terms of their natural resources and business opportunities. This master plan then can be used to design or plan what kind business the villagers want to develop in order to sustain the project in the long term. This is also part of the 5-25 years regional development planning in the district, province, and at national level. Most participants also emphasised the need for active participation from the participants in developing a network with the government and the private sector. Furthermore, they should also actively expand their business not only to the raw products but also food processing.

### **5.4.3 The Perception of Sustainability According to the Stakeholders**

The participants and stakeholders had the same optimism that the PIDRA Project in the target areas will be sustainable after the project finishes, but the participants did not really mention for how long. Meanwhile, most of the other stakeholders such as the facilitators and the PIDRA Management staff, said that it will likely sustainable in the short term, and few of them mentioned the long term sustainability.

If we compare the reasons for sustainability between facilitators and the participants in the Figures 5.6 and 5.7, both of them agreed that strong feelings about the groups and the development of networks and their businesses were the reasons for the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas. The intended participants and the stakeholders mentioned a network including the government and private sector such as banks. The stakeholders emphasised the importance of networks to the government in the form of support from the government for the implementation of the project from planning and monitoring to evaluation.

Most target participants tended to relate the sustainability of the project and the benefits to financial sustainability through developing businesses and networks with the private sector, and creating cooperative institutions for the sustainability of their businesses in the future. On the other hand, more external stakeholders viewed the likely sustainability to be based on target participants' participation in the whole level of the project, a factor which was not mentioned at all by the participants. The participants had a tendency to relate the sustainability of the project to their condition as a group which was not mentioned by the stakeholders. As mentioned in the previous section, they believed in their ability to sustain the project activities and benefits because they had built up enough knowledge and skills, vision, mission, an ability to be self-reliant, and an awareness to sustain these for improvements in their livelihood.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The research findings showed that the key target of the groups was the very poor as indicated in Section 3.3.2 (Chapter III), and this included women who were marginalised from the access to development. The level of participation of the participants of the project in the target areas was different from one SHG to other

SHGs, and one village to another village. It was influenced by the role of facilitators and support from the government. The resulting findings also showed that the responsibility of the participants to the groups as members and as leaders of the management team were the major factors influencing participation of participants of the PIDRA Project in the target areas. This was followed by the level of education, knowledge, and skills; incentive to access credits; availability of sanction; and the geographical situation. Additional factors influencing participation based on observations included poverty, age, support from the government, and the role of facilitators.

According to the participants, facilitators, and the PIDRA Management staff interviewed, these project activities and benefits were likely to be sustainable after the project finished. However, the participants did not mention how long it will be sustained, while the government and NGOs mentioned the sustainability in the short and long term. The participants believe in the likely sustainability of the project because of the ability of their group to increase their capital through developing their businesses and network, and their responsibility and strong connection to their groups. Meanwhile, the majority of the government and NGOs believe sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas in the short term is likely because of the high level of participation of the project participants, support from the government, and strong connections within the groups. The remaining government and NGOs interviewed believed in the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas in the long term, because the project had created Cooperative institutions to develop their businesses, gained support from the government, and developed networks with the government and private sector.

In the following chapter, the nature of participation will be analysed further in order to answer the research question on the kind of participation that enhances the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas. The likely sustainability of the PIDRA project in the target areas will also be explored and discussed based on the lessons learned from participation of target participants in the target areas and the indicators provided in Chapter II.

# **VI. THE LIKELY SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PIDRA PROJECT**

## **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter II provided an overview of the nature and typologies of participation, the concept of sustainability, and the relationship between participation and project sustainability. The chapter also reviewed lessons learned from previous projects in relation to the practice of participation and generated indicators based on factors that will mean projects are more likely to lead to the sustainability of development projects. The previous chapter presented the results associated with the field research in three districts in East Java, Indonesia based on interviews, observations, and secondary data collected. The results gave an overview of the extent and nature of participation by target participants in the PIDRA Project.

As a means to answer the research question, this chapter will discuss the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas by comparing and contrasting the results presented in the previous chapter with the literature on sustainability and participation. The chapter will utilise insights into the theory and practice of participation and sustainability in development generally to inform the results of the current study. In the first section, the level and nature of participation for target participants in the target areas will be explored and analysed. This will be followed by a discussion of the likely sustainability of the benefits to the participants according to participation indicators generated in Chapter II. The likely sustainability will be discussed in the third section which is based on the analysis of the nature of participation and the participation indicators leading to the likely sustainability. In the following section, the nature of participation in the project and its effect on these benefits in terms leading to the likely sustainability of development projects will be examined. Finally, the conclusion section will summarise the overall discussion in this chapter.

## **6.2 An Analysis of the Participation Level of the Target Participants**

Participation is a multidimensional and complex concept that has different forms which can take place in different stages of a project cycle at different levels of

society, along a continuum from coercion to empowerment (Karl, 2000). This was clear in the PIDRA Project in the research areas, with the performance of participation of target participants in the project areas varying from one SHG to another; and one village to another, and so on. Therefore, in analysing the participation level of the participants in the target areas the average participation performance based on interviews, observations, and secondary sources will be used. The actual performance, then, is analysed based on the typologies of participation as discussed in Section 2.2.2.

Based on my observations, the participation of participants in the target areas could be categorised as functional participation in Pretty's typology of participation. This is because firstly participation was used by external agents such as the PIDRA team at the national, provincial, and district level and IFAD as the means to achieve the project's objective. This refers to the fact that the PIDRA Project is externally introduced by government and IFAD and participation is used to achieve a specific objective which is to promote the sustainability of the SHGs to improve their livelihoods in the long term.

As externally introduced by the government and IFAD, the design of the project was made by them and a major part of decision-making seemed to be dominated by them. For example, the PIDRA Project targeted the rain-fed areas in the highland and lowland which were assumed to be "environmentally degraded and coastal areas where poverty is largely concentrated" (IFAD, 2004, p.10). The PIDRA team in the province also specified in more detail the characteristics of the target villages (Satuan Kerja Program PIDRA Jawa Timur, 2006). These characteristics, as mentioned in Section 5.2.1, were used to justify the selection of the PIDRA villages. Thus, some of the PIDRA area villages, in Trenggalek District for instance, could not have qualified as target villages because they did not meet the category as poor villages. The District Project Coordinator in Trenggalek District admitted that there were some project villages that did not formally qualify as target areas such as in Watulimo Sub-district (Personal communication, May 2008). According to him, those villages in this sub-district were neither rich nor poor, but they were selected because their topography fits with the requirements of the PIDRA team in the province. Thus,

selection of the target areas was still dominated by the PIDRA team that made it less participatory and did not always necessarily target the true participants.

In the implementation of the project, the PIDRA team required participants to divide themselves into groups. Self-help groups are a common feature used to enable effective institution building in local communities (IFAD, 2004, p.10). In order to be participatory, the intended participants had been asked to volunteer in the project. However, the PIDRA team also recruited participants who were graduates from high school or with a similar educational level with an assumption that the project activities would never work without one or two members who had already graduated from high school. They assumed that the less educated people would not be capable to initiate the project activities. This assumption seemed to underestimate the ability of the less educated or uneducated participants. Thus, in Pretty's typology of functional participation, target participants' participation in forming groups seemed only to meet project objectives rather than seeking to develop the ability of the communities to be self-reliant.

In the PIDRA Project the involvement of participants was interactive and involved some decision-making, but this involvement tended to arise after the major decisions had already been made by external agents who did not really know the real situation of the target areas. For example, the group participants in Ponorogo District had been asked to decide how much money they could contribute in order to develop a cooperative institution and to sustain the project's activities and benefits in the future. However, the decision to create a cooperative institution did not come from the participants, but from the district government and the District Project Management. The formulation of the federation and the VDA as institutions to help the SHGs was also based on the design of the project from PIDRA's Management. Participants were involved in the decision-making to: (a) choose the leader; (b) choose participants who could manage the organisations; and (c) design the regulations and the like. However, (a), (b), and (c) occurred after decisions to create these institutions were formulated.

Another example was the participation of target participants in monitoring and evaluation. According to the project design, participants should monitor and evaluate their performance based on the indicators or form PSME as defined by the National

PIDRA Management and the NGOs. Certainly, the uniformity of a set of participation indicators would make it easier for the PIDRA management to compare and measure the participation performance of the participants in the target areas. However, this did not represent the participants' opinions about themselves. Thus, monitoring and evaluation was not based necessarily on participants' arguments. Thus, as mentioned by Lyons et al. (2001) and Pretty (1995 as cited in Mowforth & Munt, 1998) in their typology of participation, the target participants in this project seemed to only be co-opted into or involved in the project in order to allow the external agents to achieve the project's objectives. In other words, participation was used as a tool to achieve the efficiency or project outcomes. This type of participation was categorised as 'instrumental' by White (1996) or 'participation as a means' in the typology of participation of Oakley (1991a), and Bigdon and Korf (2002).

Meanwhile, functional participation, participation as involving or co-option, instrumental participation, and participation as a means were all categorised as passive participation in Scheyvens' (2002) continuum of participation. As an externally introduced project, the external agents such as the PIDRA management, the IFAD, NGOs, and facilitators had a tendency to give the solutions to the participants who received these without knowing whether they were or were not viable solutions. Hence, the external agents seemed to assume their role as teaching the participants the solutions to their problems. While the participants assumed their role was to be receptive and attentive to the suggestions of the external agents. This was similar to Gonzalez's (1998) definition of passive participation. For example, in the decisions concerning sustainable business activities from their groups, it was facilitators, the government, and the NGOs who took initiative to look for other alternative businesses and markets. Meanwhile, participants only agreed to what they were told because they assumed that the external agents were people with high education who knew more than they did about development. Furthermore, it was also part of the target areas culture to respect the government. The target participants also thought that they could not do anything without support from the government.

Bigdon and Korf (2002), Cleaver (1999), Vos (2005), and White (1996) all mention that participation 'as a means' can be used to improve project sustainability by

developing a sense of ownership. In contrast, Oakley (1991a) argued that this type of participation will not lead to sustainability.

The performance of participation in the PIDRA Project in the target areas was then still far from the ‘popular participation’ defined in this thesis. Participation has not increased all participants’ control over resources and regulative institutions. Although there were some participants who felt that they had been given an opportunity to participate in the local government, it was generally only those who selected as leaders or handled the management and administration of the group. There was an indication that the project activities gave some participants the opportunity to become new elites in their groups, rather than allowing all participants equal control over decision-making process.

### **6.3 An Analysis of Participation Indicators Leading to Project Sustainability**

In order to answer the research question about the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas, the nature of participation of the participants in the PIDRA Project will also be further analysed based on the indicators of participation generated in Chapter II. Additional indicators of participation were also derived based on the research observations and findings in order to provide a complete analysis of participation and project sustainability. These indicators were used as a relatively simple tool for the analysis of the participatory approach adopted throughout the whole of the PIDRA Project in the target areas, and in particular to understand the role of external agents such as government and facilitators in the implementation of this participatory approach. To recap, the indicators were:

- a. initial meetings;
- b. the existence of a signed contract with clear explanations of the community’s and the project’s responsibilities;
- c. the diversity of group members, shared leadership, and member participation in group decision-making;
- d. the regularity of the group meetings and level of participants’ attendance;
- e. the intended participants as the decision makers in the project implementation;
- f. the contribution of the community to the project;

- g. the community actively participating in developing a network with external agents;
- h. the use of simple technology as input to the project activities;
- i. participatory monitoring and evaluation; and
- j. other indicators of participation leading to project sustainability.

### ***Initial meetings***

Similar to the Malawi Rural Piped Scheme Programme (1968), the PIDRA Project also held their first meetings at different levels such as the district, village, and *dusun*. According to the facilitators and the PIDRA management staff, the first meeting to introduce of the PIDRA Project was typically held by inviting the local government officials and some intended participants. The participants interviewed said that in the first meeting they had been informed about the project and asked to volunteer, but they were not asked about their real needs. Therefore, there was no forum for exchanging information, learning, and listening to the real needs of the target participants, but a forum for informing potential participants about the project and its objectives. There was no indication that the intended participants could change or influence the design of the project.

According to Kleemeier (2000, p.932), the first meeting should be a forum to introduce and gain approval from the community; and to give opportunities to the community to exchange information, and the external agents to learn and listen about the intended participants' real needs. Since there was no such forum in these first meetings held by the PIDRA Project, it seemed that from the start this project adopted a form of passive participation rather than an active participation that leads to a reduced likelihood of sustainability of the project benefits in the future.

### ***The existence of a signed contract with clear explanations of the community's and the project's responsibilities***

Unlike the PRODEL (1994-1998) in Nicaragua, PPP (1982) and NW-IADP (1982) in Sierra Leone, the PIDRA Project did not have an agreement or contract specifying the community's and project's responsibilities signed by all stakeholders and recognised by the intended participants. The only contract available about the PIDRA

Project was the contract between the donor (IFAD) and the Indonesian Government through the Ministry of Agriculture which was Loan Agreement Number 539-ID.

As a result, the facilitators sometimes confused their role of facilitating with assisting the participants. On the other hand, the participants were not aware of their responsibility to the project, and thus, there was a reluctance to participate and initiate activities because they were afraid of making mistakes or offending the facilitators or government. The lack of commitment to participate is a sign that the PIDRA Project would be less sustainable after the project finishes. This is supported by Kleemeier's (2000) opinion that the existence of a contract explaining the community's and project's responsibilities is important for the project's sustainability. Additionally one of the lessons learned from the Malawi Rural Piped Water Programme supports the idea that unavailability of an agreement or a contract explained how the community's and project's responsibilities led to the project not being sustainable.

### ***The existence of local organisations initiated by the project or by the community***

The PIDRA Project implemented the project by creating organisations such as SHGs, the federation, and the VDA in every village. Another institution which was created by the project during the project was a cooperative institution. This cooperative institution was meant to be the focal point to ensure the sustainability of the project activities, and the continuing existence of the groups, the federation, and the VDA, as well as their businesses. The idea was to merge the federation and the VDA into cooperative institution(s), and the members of the groups will automatically become the members of the cooperative institution. Furthermore, the cooperative institution will also be a place for developing their knowledge and skills so as to replace the role of facilitators. In Ponorogo District, the cooperative institution has been formally established. However, for another two districts, there were only a few villages that had a legal certificate for the cooperative institution. Thus, after the project finishes, every village in Ponorogo District will have one cooperative institution, and in the other two districts, there were some villages that will have a cooperative.

PIDRA Management and the donor created the organisations with the notion that the poor will be able to help themselves once they are organised in the form of self-help groups. Through these groups, the PIDRA Management trained the participants to have a solid saving habit and prepared a group's business plan to help them gain credit and perform economic initiatives after the formal project period (IFAD, 2008). Furthermore, as in the PRODEL in Nicaragua, the groups were also trained in management and administration (book-keeping). As mentioned by Kleemeier (2000), this training is useful to strengthen their ability to manage and run the activities. By strengthening the organisations, this provides the potential for the continuation of benefits beyond the project period (Paul, 1990). Thus, to some extent, the organisations created by the PIDRA Management can help to ensure the likely sustainability of benefits in the future. However, since the organisations created were not based on the participants' initiative, this could cause most participants to have less a sense of ownership to the organisations and might not maintain the sustainability of the project in the long term.

### ***The Diversity of Group members, Shared Leadership, and Member Participation in Group Decision-making***

During the interviews with both facilitators and project's participants, the diversity of group members was not specifically discussed. However, based on my observations, the participants facilitated by the PIDRA team had formed their groups despite many differences in education, age, religion, culture, gender, and socio-economic standard. Although members of the groups had similar socio-economic background in term of low levels of income, they have a wide variety of income sources or occupations which could also be seen as diversity in their socio-economic activities.

Most participants had completed elementary or junior high school, some of them had dropped out from elementary school, and a few of them had graduated from high school, indicating diversity in terms of education. In terms of age, the participants ranged from between 20 to 60 years old, with the majority in their 30s. In terms of diversity of culture, the participants interviewed mostly originated from the target areas. A few of them said that they had come from other places in East Java or other provinces because of marriage, or other reasons. This may indicate that there was not a wide diversity within the groups in the PIDRA Project in terms of culture. The

majority of the groups are comprised of people with similar cultures, and thus, they did not have significant differences in their customs and values. This is regarded as good in terms of avoiding conflict from cultural misunderstandings. Meanwhile, as Indonesia accepts and legalises five religions, there was no distinction between one religion and other religion in order to become a member of the SHGs.

The PIDRA Project also involved both male and female in the activities of the project, with no distinction or segregation between genders. The project even put a focus on the widow as the head of the household. The only differences between male and female groups were in the frequency of the meetings which were decided by the groups themselves. Female groups met more frequently than male groups because they considered themselves to have more free time compared to the male groups, thus, they decided to spend more time together. They were given similar trainings in book keeping, management and administration, agricultural training, and genders. The PIDRA Project therefore had a diversity in terms of gender participation.

Based on this, it is clear that the organisations and groups initiated by the project had a diversity of participants based on their gender, age, education, culture, religion, and socio-economic background. The diversity in the representatives of the members in the groups should lead to effective participation if nobody dominates or influences decision-making in the groups.

However, the inclusion of high school graduates or similarly better educated participants to the groups as motivators and initiators caused problems such as when the lesser educated participants refused to participate as a group leader, or did not want to act involved in management and administration tasks, because of a lack of self confidence due to inability to write and read, or because of their older age. Therefore, although the groups in the PIDRA Project are required to reassign share leadership, management, and administration tasks at least once in a year, this did not work smoothly. The tasks of leadership, management, and administration, were still concentrated among young and literate members. This unequal share of responsibilities created an opportunity for a minority to monopolise decision-making process and the group. The FAO (1997) noted that in this situation, these groups will tend to be much more vulnerable to leadership crises and less able to maintain long-term self-sustainability. Therefore, in the case of the PIDRA Project, the lack of

shared leadership in the groups in the target areas reduces the likelihood that this project will be sustainable once the donor withdraws.

### ***The Regularity of the Group Meeting and Level of Participants' Attendance***

The regularity of the group meetings and the intensity of participants' attendance could be used as indicators to identify whether members of the organisations are benefiting from the learning process. According to my field observations and interviews, the frequency, timing, and the venue of meeting was not actually a problem for the participants because all members of the group planned and decided them together.

In terms of the frequency of regular meetings, all groups had meetings at least once in a month, and most of them had them twice every month. Additionally, they still also had irregular meetings to discuss problems or things that had not been solved in the regular meetings or just to talk informally about matters in order to improve the relationships between members; the schedule of these was flexible. If there were important matters or occasions that involved all members and could not be avoided, the groups would usually change their meeting schedule, if agreed by all members.

In regard to timing, the groups chose the appropriate time for the optimum participation of members. For example, the men's SHGs would generally prefer to have the meetings at night because in the day they tend to go to the field to do their farming activities. On the other hand, the women's SHGs preferred to have the meetings in the day time after they finished their household chores because they have to be at home to look after their families at night. The venue of the meetings was also decided by all members of the groups. Due to geographical reasons, some groups had a lower frequency of meetings because their houses were some distance from each other. It had been suggested by the facilitators that members live in the same area, or not far away from each other.

As the participants decided the frequency, timing, and venue of the meetings, the meetings had a high level of attendance with at least 80% of the participants attending regularly. This means there were generally only two or three people who could not come to each meeting and it was typically because they had something urgent to do. However, according to my observations, the high level of attendance of

the participants in the meetings was partially because facilitators regularly came to every meeting held. This represents that participants were still dependent to the facilitators. A case that arose during research in Pandak Village, Ponorogo District, showed that participation decreased when the facilitators started to not come regularly to the meetings.

According to the FAO (1997), groups who continue to have regular meetings and a high level of attendance even without external agents, are well on the way to achieving self-reliance. Since most participants interviewed still depend on the attendance of facilitators, the PIDRA Project in the target areas seemed to be leading to a less sustainable outcome. The role of facilitators is discussed further below in this section.

### ***The Intended Participants as the Decision Makers in the Project Implementation***

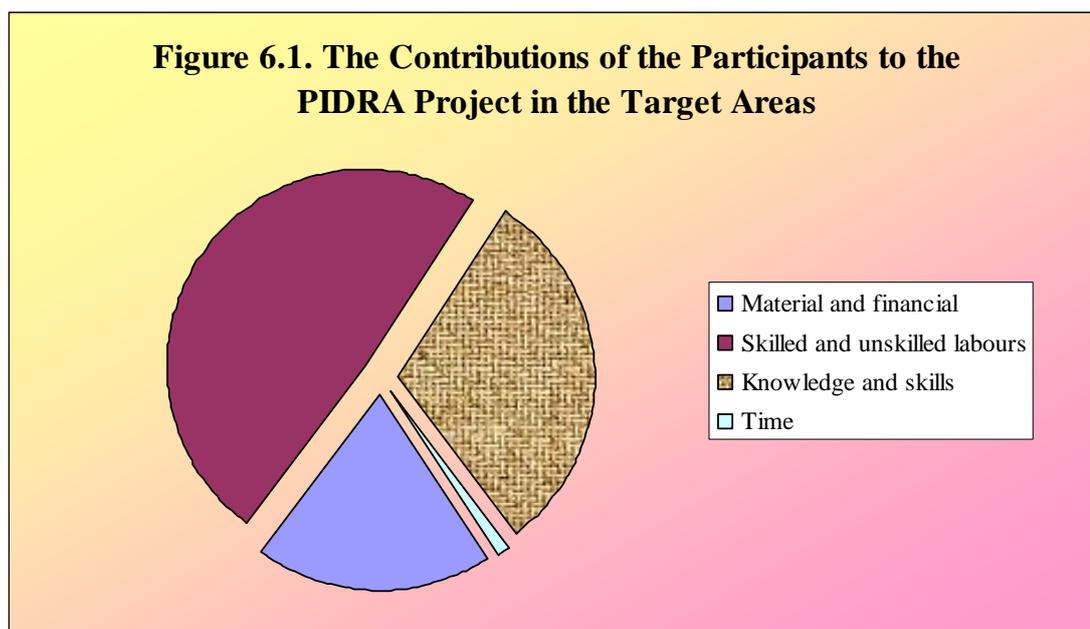
Stein (2000, p.21) argues that by giving opportunities to the project participants to be decision-makers in all matters regarding their groups, they would more likely have control and a sense of ownership of the project. In the implementation of the PIDRA Project in the target areas, the intended participants have been involved in every decision-making process. However, the involvement in this process was mostly at the level of attendance, and not all participants were actively participating in providing ideas and suggestions. The participants interviewed said that some people could not participate actively because of their lack of knowledge and skills, as well as their older age.

Additionally, facilitators' input, the domination of certain people over other members, and support from the government still influenced participants' participation in the decision-making processes to some extent. According to my observations, participants who actively gave their opinions and ideas, and showed initiative had been involved as a leader, or in management and administration roles, while, most participants simply agreed with whatever decisions made. Therefore, not all participants were decision makers, although the final decisions were generally agreed by all members of the group, meaning that this project was unsuccessful in giving control and a sense of ownership to many participants in the target areas. Based on

this, it can be predicted that the PIDRA Project in the target areas is less likely to be sustainable after the completion of the project.

### ***The Contribution of the Community to the Project***

The contribution of a target participant to a project can be used as a way to involve participants in the project activities and develop a sense of ownership over the project. As was also seen in PRODEL (1994-1998), the participants of the PIDRA Project in the target areas also gave contributions not only in the form of cash, but also their unskilled and skilled labour, food and drinks, time, knowledge and ideas. From the interviews with the participants, most participants contributed their labours either skilled or unskilled (See Figure 6.1). Most participants responded with the same answer every time I asked about their contribution to the project: “I did not have anything to contribute except my labour” (Personal communications, May 2008).



Source: Fieldwork, April-May 2008

A significant proportion of project participants in the target areas had also contributed their knowledge in the form of ideas, suggestions, and information, to the implementation of the PIDRA Project (see Figure 6.1). This was interesting because it indicated that the project in the target areas had incorporated local knowledge which is regarded as important in the practice of participatory approach. Materials

and money according to the interviews consisted mostly cash, food, drinks, material inputs for activities such as construction, and a place of meeting. Most said they would prepare food and drinks every time there was a meeting or an activity. When I asked whether they paid for these by themselves or whether it was the groups who paid for food and drinks, most answered that they paid their own money because the food and drinks were not expensive, and it was a simple thing they could do for their groups (Personal communication, April-May 2008). There was only one target participant who said that she gave a contribution in the form of time. She said this as she was part of the management and administration team, and according to her, the tasks of management and administration were time consuming because there was a lot of book work to do, and there were not many other group members who could do it, specifically because most of them were illiterate (Participant from Pacitan District, Personal communication, April 2008).

Referring to the example of the PRODEL (1994-1998) and Stein (2000, p.33), the contribution of the participants to the PIDRA Project in the target areas in the form of money or kind, could establish a solid basis for an increased commitment and division of responsibilities between participants. This can be seen from the opinions expressed in the interviews when they were asked about the likely sustainability of this project in the future. Most participants believed they will be able to sustain the project activities because they have invested money to grow capital in order to finance their activities in the future. Therefore, since the participants believed in the sustainability of the finances to fund their activities, the PIDRA Project in the target areas seemed also to point towards sustainability beyond the project period.

### ***The Community actively participate in developing a network with external agents***

Another factor in the sustainability of a project is the establishment of a linkages with external agents, as the external agents provide an on-going knowledge, skills, financial assistance and expertise, after the end of the project. The FAO (1997) stated that the self-reliance of a group or community depends on its ability to maintain links with government and NGO development services, in the absence of project staff.

In the interviews with the target participants, when they were asked “do you have any cooperation with other external agents aside from the facilitators and the Food Security Agency or Office?”, the most frequent answer was they had networks with other external agents through the Advisor Committee. The Advisor Committee was part of the PIDRA Management and consisted of representatives of the Agricultural Office, Forestry Office, Fishery Office, Veterinary Office, different ministries, and the “Bank Rakyat Indonesia”. This committee was tasked to provide advice, help, support, to the activities of the groups if needed, and to evaluate the performance of the groups. The idea was specifically that through this committee, the participants would have a link to different ministries and bank institutions to support their activities after the project finishes.

During the interviews with the participants, most participants said they still found it difficult to develop a relationship with this committee. The facilitators interviewed agreed believing that the groups and organisations such as the federations and VDAs have already had opportunities to build networks with government and private sectors. However, they were often still unclear how to construct these networks, whom they should meet, what they have to do to meet influential people, and specifically how to access government resources (Personal communication, April-May 2008). Participants added that they wanted to develop links with both the government and private sector, but they did not know how to do it (Personal communication, April-May 2008). Hence, the groups still looked for help from the facilitators to develop their contacts with the committee.

Despite these difficulties, some groups did manage to have contacts or networks with the private sector, and did businesses with them. A facilitator from Cempoko Village, Ponorogo District, said that the groups in his village have established relationship with the Atsiri oil company by supplying nilam (Personal communication, May 2008). However, a representative of a group in Cempoko Village told me that they still did not have a strong bargaining position and their productivity was limited due to a lack of finance (Personal communication, May 2008). One project member from Duren Village, Trenggalek District, told me that he had initiated a relationship with a horticulture company for supplying cucumber seeds and had invited other members of his group to participate in the business (Personal communication, May 2008). He

added that his group had additional income from the business without the difficulties of marketing the product because the company's truck came directly to their place every time the seeds were ready (Personal communication, May 2008).

Networks not only involve relationships with external agents, but also between groups in one village or between groups in other villages or districts. Some facilitators interviewed said that rather than focusing on established relationships with external agents which they found was difficult for the project participants to do, they preferred to work on strengthening the relationship between the various project groups (Personal communication, May 2008). In order to strengthen the relationships between members in one group with other groups, the facilitators often held study visits to other villages. Through the study visits, participants were not only strengthening their networks, but they were also able to see and learn from these other groups how to improve their own performance.

Most participants interviewed mentioned that through the federation and the VDA, they were able to develop relationships with other groups in their village. Through these networks, they could cooperate in exchanging information about how to make products (i.e. "tiwul, gerit jagung" and noodles), business opportunities, book-keeping, and supplying input for other groups who produce ready-made products (Personal communication, April-May 2008). The remaining participants interviewed did not want to answer because they did not know, or felt unsure about this. This could indicate that they were not actively involved in the activities, did not pay attention to the project, lack motivation or commitment.

In conclusion, the groups and participants have not been able to develop wide networks with external agents, and therefore, the groups and participants will struggle to find support and help, specifically in term of funds, technology, knowledge and skills after the project finishes. Furthermore, the inability of the groups to make links with the private sector could inhibit them in finding markets for their products and developing their businesses. The inability of the PIDRA Project to foster these linkages must reduce the likelihood of the sustainability of benefits.

### *The Use of Simple Technology as Inputs to the Project Activities*

One factor that it is argued will help ensure the sustainability of the benefits of development activities is the use of simple technologies as inputs to the project activities. The use of simple and appropriate technology is necessary to strengthen the recipient's ability to initiate activities (Allison & Ellies, 2001); but it has to be accompanied by outsiders' acknowledging the value of information (Dudley, 1993). By using simple and appropriate technology, there is not only the intention that the participants will be able to actively participate, but also that the stakeholders will be attracted to be involved in the projects' activities because of the low investment required to participate. As a result, the participants will have an opportunity to move towards independence and hence improve the likelihood of the sustainability of the activities (Duddley, 1993).

Based to my observations during the field research, the facilitators have tried to incorporate local simple technologies and have looked for project inputs from village surroundings. Hence, the main inputs into the project activities came from the commodities that the target villages usually produce. For example, in the production of snacks, the facilitators would use local materials such as cassava to produce cassava snacks, and "tiwul". However, since they wanted to develop their businesses, facilitators and participants also looked for other business opportunities. In some cases, they planted a new commodity which could be sold for higher prices but is suitable to plant in the rain-fed areas, for example nilam. In other cases, they tried to mix input materials from the village with other inputs from outside to produce a new product that might have a market outside their villages, for example the production of plastic bags. A problem with this was that they usually produced these products without knowing where the market was and sold their products from their store in the federation which was not ideal because they could not sell all their production to the villagers. Other problems with using materials from outside were the location of the market from their village and the higher price of the inputs.

Three participants from Pacitan and Ponorogo Districts provided an example of how to incorporate local knowledge and new knowledge from outside in the production of organic fertilizer (Personal communication, April-May 2008). In their villages, dung from their cattle has widely used as fertilizer. However, in order for the dung to be

ready as organic fertilizer, it takes a long time to compost, sometimes up to three months. In order to transform it in a shorter period of time, the facilitators introduced EM2<sup>2</sup>. Although it was useful, the availability and the higher price of the EM2 have made it difficult for them to produce more fertilizer.

Another participant from Pacitan District tried to explain the incorporation of local knowledge and information from outside in the rice farming system based on “jejer legowo” (Personal communication, April 2008). According to her, this farming system was actually used by their ancestor before the current farming system was introduced to their village. The agricultural training given by the facilitators informed them that according to the research, the previous farming system actually gave more benefits than the new farming system. Since this farming system has been used previously by the villagers, the participants did not have any difficulty in practicing it again. However, the examples above suggest that information from outside is needed not to replace local knowledge, but to support or to complement it to improve practice.

The examples given illustrate that the facilitators and target participants to some extent have tried to use simple technology and local inputs (including knowledge). However, due to limitations of the resources and their knowledge, they were still dependent on external technical knowledge and inputs. During the project, the participants were helped by facilitators to find information about potential new commodities, and in supplying the inputs from outside. When the project finishes, the participants might struggle to continue these activities because they do not have the skills or networks to access the information or input materials for their products. Therefore, this reduces the likelihood of project sustainability.

### ***Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation***

The literature suggests that a project will be more sustainable when it involves the participants in the process of monitoring and evaluation. In terms of the PIDRA Project in the target areas, the project design required that every year the members of

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<sup>2</sup> EM2 is a chemical catalyst that is used to enhance the maturity of organic fertilizer. This chemical is expensive and available only in the city market which is a considerable distance away from the project areas

the groups carry out a monitoring and evaluation exercise to give them the opportunity to acquire the skills to monitor and evaluate their own activities. According to the participants interviewed, they understood their need to monitor and evaluate their performance so as to improve their performance and participation in the direction of the future (Personal communication, April-May 2008). They also understood the role of facilitators was supposed to only giving advice or help when needed. This understanding of the need for their participation in monitoring and evaluation of the activities appears to point towards likely project sustainability, as experienced elsewhere by the PPP (1982) and the PRODEL (1994-1998).

However, this process of monitoring and evaluation can be seen as less participatory when the indicators used to monitor and evaluate performance are determined by the project. These indicators had already been decided by the National PIDRA Management. In order to simplify the process for PIDRA Management to monitor and evaluate the project, they designed a Participatory Self-Help Monitoring and Evaluation (PSME) form. Different PSME forms were designed for the SHGs, the Federation, and the VDA. The PSME 1, 2, and 3 forms were used to monitor and evaluate the SHGs. The PSME 1 was used to monitor the qualitative performance; PSME-2 to monitor the financial performance; and PSME-3 to evaluate the overall performance of the SHGs.

The formulation of indicators of monitoring and evaluation clearly indicated that this project was still centrally planned and the participants still did the activities primarily for the advantage of the government and donor. This means the participants had fewer opportunities to monitor and evaluate their performance based on their world view, leading to a passive form of local participation in monitoring and evaluation and hence this reduced the likelihood of the sustainability of the benefits of the PIDRA Project in the target areas.

### ***Support from Government in the Village, District, and at the Provincial Level***

Support from the government is included in other indicators leading to the sustainability of the project because it potentially enhances participation of the participants. This support was in the form of granting the participants access to

resources such as facilities, land, and funds. Furthermore, the attendance of the local government in the meetings of SHGs, federation, or the VDA, and the granting of rights to participants for active participation were also part of the government's support.

For example, the government at East Java Province supported the existence of the PIDRA Project at the policy level. At the district level, this policy was implemented differently according to necessity and the context. Based on my observations, the district government at Pacitan District was more supportive of the project compared to the district government at Pacitan and Trenggalek. At Pacitan and Trenggalek District, the PIDRA Project worked without support from the district government. The district government seemed to ignore the existence of the project because it was administered by the Agricultural Office or the Food Security Office. This different level of support from different district governments appeared to be related to the ability of the PIDRA Management in every district to approach and involve the local government and the related institutions in the project activities. Since the government in Ponorogo District was more accommodating in comparison to the other two districts, the PIDRA Project in Ponorogo District appears to have a greater likelihood of being sustainable compared to Pacitan and Trenggalek Districts.

### ***The Role of Facilitators***

The role of facilitators influenced the target participants' participation to some extent, and thus it is included here as another additional indicator of likely sustainability of benefits. Facilitators either from the government or the NGO have a role to enable the activities of the project, without involving themselves too deeply in the project.

However, my observations were that the facilitators still have a strong influence over the involvement of the participants, as explained in other indicators previously. The participants still depend on the facilitators to develop networks, obtain training, organise meetings, and carry out monitoring and evaluation. This can be seen in terms of the participants' expectations of the PIDRA Project. There was a broad consensus that the PIDRA Project should be extended for a longer time as the participants interviewed said they still need the facilitators to be involved. Several participants thought they have not gained enough knowledge and skills from the

facilitators to date to continue without assistance. Furthermore, their attendance in the meetings still needs to be monitored by the facilitators because participants interviewed said that they would feel motivated to attend the meetings when the facilitators came. This indicates that the groups in the PIDRA Project have not been able to become self-reliant and independent. Hence, their activities and the benefits of the project appear less likely to be sustainable.

### ***Participatory Approach in the Identification of Target Participants***

This indicator was included based on the observation that the process of identification of participants was part of the planning and design of the project. The type of participation employed in the identification phase is critical to determining how participation is viewed throughout the project. Furthermore, this process also determines whether the identified participants are or are not the participants of the project.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the PIDRA Project made an effort to identify target participants in a participatory manner. They firstly invited the local government, the elite or influential people in the village, and the villagers to a meeting. The intentions of the invitation to this meeting were not only to explain the purpose of the project, but also to determine local poverty indicators that could be used to identify target participants. These meetings also sought to involve all interested stakeholders in the project.

The project also ensured that participants' participation was voluntarily by asking the identified participants directly if they wished to be involved in the first meeting in the *dusun* or their houses. If they did not want to participate, neither the PIDRA team nor anybody else forced them to participate. Most participants interviewed said that they had been informed and asked to volunteer to participate, and thus, they did not feel coerced to participate.

However, the inclusion of the participants with a high school degree or similar education level was different from the initial target of participants. This indicates that the project did not fully use a participatory approach in the identification of participants. The inclusion of these other participants was purposely made, because facilitators did not believe the participants with lower levels of education had the

ability to effectively develop the project. In the model participatory approach to a project, facilitators should not be overly involved in any of the project activities because their role is primarily to facilitate. Therefore, the identification process was less than fully participatory and this would likely reduce the sustainability of the project.

### ***Motivation of Target Participants to Participate in the Project***

According to my observations, the motivation of the participants can determine the sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the future. Hence, this factor was included as an additional indicator of participation that could influence the sustainability of project benefits. The motivation or initiative of participants to participate helps to explain the commitment of participants to maintain the project activities and benefits after the project finishes.

According to the facilitators interviewed, participants who participated in the project because of the expectation of grants or money did not last long in the group. As a facilitator from Ponorogo District explained, there were some participants who resigned from the project because they waited for grants from the project for a long period of time, but they did not receive them (Personal communication, May 2008). Thus, they thought that this project did not give any advantage to them, and they decided to resign as a member of the group.

Becoming involved in the project because of their families or friends also appeared to lead to less motivated participants in terms of their active participation in the project activities. A participant in Pacitan District who participated in the group because he was continuing the membership of his father, said that he did not know much about the project, except that the project was good (Personal communication, April 2008). He said that he just wanted to continue the membership of his father, but he could not get actively involved in the project because he spent most of his time on his farm.

However, the bulk of the participants did not participate in the project because of money or family connections. Most of them participated because they were motivated to access the knowledge and skills of the facilitators. This may have been because the PIDRA team had already told them at the beginning that the project

could not promise to give money, rather that the project developed knowledge and skills. This motivation to participate seems in itself to make the sustainability of the project in the target areas more likely.

#### **6.4 The Likely Sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the Target Areas**

This section will provide a summary of the likely sustainability of the PIDRA Project in the target areas by referring to the nature of participation as described in the Section 6.2 and the analysis on participation indicators leading to project sustainability in Section 6.3 of this chapter, alongside the definition of project sustainability described in Chapter II. Sustainability in this thesis refers to the sustainability of benefits which can be achieved through institutional and financial sustainability.

The results of the analysis of the indicators of participation relating to project sustainability (See Table Appendix 6.2) show that the project seemed to be less participatory in practice than in theory. This supported the earlier analysis that the nature of participation in the target areas was largely likely to be passive and it was primarily used as a tool to achieve the project's immediate objectives and outcomes. The project had a less participatory approach from the beginning since the project was externally introduced by the IFAD and the FSA-MoA through the PIDRA management. As externally introduced, most major decisions were made by the PIDRA management without really knowing the real situation of the community in the rain-fed agricultural areas. Throughout the first meetings, the project was introduced to the participants who were informed that they needed to be organised in a group if they wanted to have a small or micro-scale business to improve their livelihood and develop networks with private sectors. This grouping of the participants into SHGs, federations, and the VDA appeared to be put forward as a solution rather than a suggestion. There was neither a forum for exchanging information of the participants' real needs nor the provision of choices of what they wanted to do to improve their livelihood.

Hence, it was reasonable for some participants to feel hesitant or afraid to participate in the project in the first place. They saw the PIDRA Project as similar to other development projects delivered by the government which had just given them a lot of

work during the project period, with no impact after the project finished. They were also afraid of being used by a certain political party and the potential that this may cause conflict with other villagers. Therefore, most villagers chose to wait to participate until after the facilitators and local government came and convinced them of the purpose of the project.

As the concepts of SHG, federation, and the VDA were introduced by the PIDRA management, the participants seemed to have less sense of ownership. This can be seen from their high level of attendance but passive involvement in the discussion and decision-making process. Additionally, despite the participants being given the freedom to decide everything related to their groups, the facilitators were still involved in the formulation of the groups. An example was in the inclusion of some high school graduates or people with similar levels of education as participants. To some extent, their inclusion made the groups more diverse with different educational backgrounds, and the participants with high school graduation could motivate participants with a lower level of education in the project activities. On the other hand, it also inhibited active participation of project participants in the decision-making process, and sharing tasks. As a result, the sense of ownership to the groups was that it belonged to the educated minority of participants rather than to the majority of intended participants.

Furthermore, there was no formal explanation of the responsibilities of the different parties (participants and the project management) because project contracts signed by stakeholders and communities were not used. The facilitators in the PIDRA Project, as warned by Chambers (1983) and Rahnema (1992), were sometimes unaware of the possibility of biases they brought to the field because of their knowledge from their own background or education. They sometimes confused their role as facilitator with that of the PIDRA management. Therefore, they sometimes became too involved in the decision-making process and project activities within the groups that left the participants reliant on them.

Meanwhile, many of the participants still thought that, as with other development projects introduced by the government, everything including funds, infrastructure, and expertise, would be provided by the government and donor. Therefore, they had a tendency to remain dependent on the facilitators as the representative of the

government to provide them with the knowledge, skills, and networks to the private sectors, government, and markets. Furthermore, they also understood that in order to receive grants from the donor, they needed to participate actively in the project as measured by their level of attendance and the completion of the PSME form. Since they were motivated to gain knowledge and skills provided by facilitators, they would usually come to the meetings and most groups had a high level of attendance. On the other hand, when the facilitators started to come less frequently to the meetings, and there was a rumour that the project would finish soon and deliver no more grants, the attendance level of participants started to fall away.

The reasons that many participants remained involved were the contributions to the project they were making in the form of money and kind, as well as their relationships within the groups. As most participants interviewed said, they believed that they could maintain the project activities and benefits because they have capital and investments in their groups. Other participants said they could maintain the project activities after the project finished because they have grown a sense of belonging to the groups and other members. Therefore, they believed that as long as the capital and their investment were managed well, and there was no conflict between members and other groups, their activities and benefits would likely be sustainable. In this sense, the likely sustainability of the project's benefits and activities in the long term would depend on the leadership, management, and administration of the groups and their assets.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the likelihood of long-term, sustainable benefits from this project is questionable. The project's benefits and organisations created are likely to be sustainable only in the short term while the participants still have capital and investment to fund their activities, and a sense of group belonging as members. However, it was unlikely to be maintained in the long term because of the low level of active participation of the majority of members, the domination of certain participants that could lead to the conflict between members, the inability of the organisations to develop networks not only with the government, but also with private sector, and the dependency of the groups on the facilitators and government. In other words, the financial and institutional aspects of the PIDRA Project in the

target areas seemed unlikely to lead to the sustainability of project benefits in the longer term.

## **6.5 The Kind of Participation Enhances the Likely Sustainability of the Project**

From the discussion above it is clear that participation as a means, or passive participation, will not be enough to ensure the likely sustainability of the project in the long term. This is counter to Cleaver's (1999) argument that participation as a means will lead to the improvement in project sustainability through developing a sense of ownership for the people concerned. According to the analysis and observations above, participation as a means is not enough to develop the sense of ownership of the participants in the target areas.

The sense of ownership did not develop because participation as a means favours the interest of the external agents and minority participants who had higher levels of education and were literate. This can be seen from the process of decision-making where the majority did not get actively involved in putting forward their ideas to the discussion. As a result, the majority of participants would have less sense of ownership of the decisions, and thus, felt hesitant to implement the decisions.

Furthermore, as with other externally introduced projects, the external agents were involved not only in the planning and design, but also in the implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. This involvement happened because the project operated within a limited time frame, but also had big expectations in terms of objectives and outcomes. During the interviews, some facilitators complained that it was difficult to motivate participants and to achieve the expected targets in such a short period of time. They said "the PIDRA management and the NGO at the national level had too many expectations of the groups" (Facilitators from three districts, Personal communication, April-May 2008).

On the other hand, the project management were also responsible and accountable to the donor and the government, and their performance was measured by the achievements of the project. Therefore, the facilitators and the PIDRA management at the district level could not resist being actively involved in the groups' activities. Sometimes, they did not even realise that they had been overly involved in the

groups' activities. The participants became dependent on facilitators and the project management, particularly in providing them with knowledge and skills, attending their meetings, and developing networks with government and private sectors. This dependency means that participants' capabilities did not expand, their self esteem did not improve, and they remained unable to influence decision-making process. As a result, the project's ideas were not demand-driven, and the participants had little sense of ownership.

It is clear that in order to be sustainable in the long term, the participants should develop a sense of ownership of the project, its activities, and the organisations formed. This sense of ownership can only be developed through active participation in all stages of the project. This means not only in the project activities, but also in the decision-making process. A lesson learned from the PIDRA Project is that it would be better to form a group which consists of participants with the same level of educational background. None of the participants would therefore feel inferior, and they would be more comfortable in providing suggestions and ideas in the decision-making process. Furthermore, they could not refuse to become a leader, or part of the administration and management team because they would not have any choice except to force themselves to learn how to manage the group.

In addition, the external agents such as facilitators, government, and the NGO should be aware of their role in the project as "catalysts beyond all recognition" (Rahnema, 1992, p.123). They should be sensitive to a process of mutual learning and should not be a self-appointed authority on people's needs, or a 'barefoot developer' lacking the professional competence of the expert (Rahnema, 1992, pp.123-124). The facilitators, the district government, and other external agents should not be involved in and control the project activities, but give participants full opportunity to design and plan their own project, activities, and organisations, as well as the strategies to maintain the benefits in the long term. Additionally, the facilitators should build the participants' capacity to develop: (a) networks with external agents and other groups: and (b) the initiative to look for the knowledge and skills by their own. Hence, the participants would be able to be self-reliant and help themselves, and develop a sense of ownership to the project. This sense of ownership would increase their

commitment to maintain the activities and benefits in the future even after the project finishes.

Thus, it is clear that the type of participation which will enhance project sustainability is participation that involves all members of the groups in the whole project. Participation is needed before the project activities start, during, and after it finishes, if the project activities and benefits are to be sustainable. This means participation should not be used only as a tool to achieve the project objective, but also as the objective of the project. Through participation in all activities and decision-making processes, the participants could develop their sense of ownership of the project and they will have the commitment to maintain the activities and benefits beyond the project period. In other words, the type of participation that is likely to lead to project sustainability after the project period is participation as a means and as an end. This supports the argument of Gonzalez (1998, p.40) that “the projects which treat participation both as a means and as an end achieve a higher degree of sustainability”.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

The analysis of the nature of participation and participation indicators shows that the participation of target participants led to participation as a means. Participation was used primarily as a tool to achieve the project outcomes not the sustainability of improvements in the participants' livelihood in the future. Participation as a means favours the minority and the interest of the external agents, and thus, most participants had less commitment to participate in decision-making processes, their involvement was largely through co-option, and they still depended on the facilitators and support from the government to provide them with knowledge and skills, as well as networks. As the target participants were largely passive participants, they had less sense of ownership of the project. As a result, the project appeared to be less sustainable in the long term beyond the project period. However, in the short term, they would be able to maintain the activities and benefits of the project because they still had their savings as their capital and investment for the continuation of their businesses.

In order to enhance the likely sustainability of the project, there is a need to develop the active participation of all participants in every activity and decision-making process from the beginning of the project. Then, the participants could develop their sense of ownership and commitment to maintain the activities and benefits after the project finishes. This means, when participation is used not only as a means, but also as an end, it is likely to enhance the sustainability of the project's benefits.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the relationship between participation and project sustainability. By using the PIDRA Project in Pacitan, Ponorogo, and Trenggalek Districts as a case study, the thesis has addressed the question of what kind of participation will likely lead the intended participants to sustain activities and benefits from the services beyond the project period. The case study involved facilitators, the management staff, and the participants of the PIDRA Project in Pacitan, Ponorogo, and Trenggalek Districts. The objectives of the research included the identification of the key groups and their involvement in the project, the factors influencing participation of target participants, the likely sustainability of the project in the target areas based on the performance of participation of participants in the target areas, and the nature of participation that will likely lead to sustainability of benefits beyond the project period.

This chapter will summarise the result findings in the first section, followed by a section with recommendations based on lessons learned from the PIDRA Project which can be useful for improving the performance of the current project or other projects in the future.

### 7.1 Summary of Research Findings

Based on interviews, observations, and secondary data sources, the PIDRA Project's target participants were mostly the very poor and marginalised people who had lower levels of educational background and income, and widows as the head of households. Most of them were also illiterate and did not have knowledge and skills to be able to promote their own development. The research findings found some other specifically selected participants were wealthier, and had graduated from high school or similar. The inclusion of these participants was purposely made because the project management thought that the project could not work properly without these participants, and they included them as motivators and initiators.

Based on my observations, the involvement of the participants in the project varied and was to some extent, influenced by the involvement of facilitators in the project activities. For example, most participants in Ngendut Village, Ponorogo District,

seemed to have lower levels of participation because the facilitators were seen as being too involved in the groups' activities. On the other hand, the participants in the Cepoko Village, Ponorogo District, had better participation because they were used to carrying out activities by themselves, using their own initiative. In addition, the findings show that participants who participated actively in the decision-making process were the ones who were also most actively involved as leaders, managers and administrators. The research findings also identify that most participants actively participated in the implementation of project activities rather than in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

The research illustrates that the responsibility of the participants to their tasks in the group and as members of the group and tasks of management, administration, leadership, as well as responsibility as members of the groups, had influenced them to actively participate in every activity of the group. This was followed by the level of education, knowledge, and skills such as literacy as the third most influential factors influencing participants' participation in the project. Meanwhile, other factors such as incentives and motivation to participate, the availability of sanctions, geographical situation, poverty, age, the domination of certain people over other members (power imbalances), support from government, as well as the role of facilitators had less influence on participants' participation in the project compared to the three factors described before.

In terms of the likely sustainability of the project, the participants participating in the research believed that the project activities and benefits will likely be sustainable because of their ability to increase their capital by developing their businesses and networks, as well as their responsibility and strong connection to the group. Meanwhile, most government and NGOs interviewed believed the project will likely be sustainable because participants have strong connections to the groups. However, this will only ensure short-term sustainability because participation of the project participants was only 70%-80%, and the activities still needed support from local government. This suggested that the strong feeling of the groups is probably not enough for maintaining the project's benefits and activities in the long term. Meanwhile, other government and NGOs interviewed had an optimistic view on the likely sustainability of the project in the long term because the project had created

cooperative institutions to maintain participants' businesses, and gained support from the government. However, they also emphasised the need for active participation from the participants in developing networks with the government and private sector, and expanding their businesses to food processing to ensure long term sustainability in their activities and benefits.

The analysis of the nature of participation, and indicators of participation leading to project sustainability, shows that the majority of participants in this project had a low level of participation in all the stages of the project. Furthermore, the participatory approaches in this project seemed to only be used as a tool to achieve project objectives or outcomes, and thus, the majority of decisions had been made centrally from the project management and government. As major decisions had been centralised, the participants had less sense of ownership of the project, their involvement was limited to the implementation of the project activities, and they still depended on the facilitators and support from the government. However, despite their passive involvement in the project and the low sense of ownership to the project, they still had some capital and investment to continue their businesses in the future. Therefore, my analysis concludes that the PIDRA Project would likely only be sustainable in the short term beyond the project period.

Lessons learned from the PIDRA Project's examples highlight that the likely sustainability of the project could be enhanced when the project employs participation not only as a means but also as an end. This supports the argument of Gonzales (1998) who states that the project will achieve a higher degree of sustainability when participation is treated as a means and as an end. In this type of participation, participants should participate actively in every activity and decision-making process as well as in design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Through their active involvement in the whole of the project, the participants could develop a sense of ownerships over the project as well as the commitment to maintain the activities and benefits after the project finishes.

## **7.2 Suggestions and Recommendations**

This section will offer suggestions and recommendations to enhance the likely sustainability of development projects or programmes in the long term based on the

results of this research. These recommendations will mainly focus on improving the performance of the PIDRA Project during and after the implementation, and other similar projects in the future.

Firstly, I recommend that the government and the NGOs involved in the project should increase their coordination and collaboration. This can be done by increasing the frequency of joint meetings. Both organisations should try to forget their competition in development practice and focus on doing their tasks and achieving the project objectives.

Another way of decreasing the gap between government and the NGOs involved in the project is to use the same office during the project period. If the various project staff stays in the same office, they would be encouraged to act as a team rather than as competitors. Furthermore, this would also make it easier for both organisations to collaborate.

By increasing their cooperation and coordination, they could deliver the services provided by the project and benefits in a more effective manner to the participants. Additionally, better cooperation and coordination could also motivate the groups to cooperate and coordinate with other groups in their village or other villages. Therefore, the cooperation and coordination between these organisations would better help to achieve the objectives of the project, ultimately supporting long term sustainability.

Secondly, the research revealed that the concept including a few participants with high school graduates or similar did not successfully achieve the project manager's expectation. Rather than motivating other participants to participate actively, the less well educated participants had a tendency to depend on the few better educated participants as those with less education seemed to lack self-confidence to give suggestions or opinions, and to participate as a leader, manager or administrator. As a result, decision-making processes and the tasks of leadership, management, and administration were concentrated in the hands of a few members.

Therefore, it is recommended that for similar projects in the future, to define group members according to their educational level aside from their socio-economic background. This is particularly in villages or areas that have many people who

cannot read and write or those that have a higher educational background. Although it may take longer to motivate people and for them to have initiative and participate actively in the project activities, the domination of a few people over others would be stopped, and the sharing of leadership, management, and administration tasks, as well as decision-making process could also work properly. As a result, all participants would equally have the same opportunity to gain knowledge and skills and increasingly participate in the decision-making process without feeling shy or lacking in self-confidence, and thus, their decisions will represent their demand and opinions. Additionally, this would likely increase their sense of ownership to the project and they will be able to maintain their activities and the benefits of the project in the future.

Thirdly, the research findings revealed that most participants could not participate actively in group leadership because they were illiterate. The tasks of management and administration as well as leadership require participants to be able to read and write to perform their tasks properly. Therefore, it would be better for the project management to train the participants who were illiterate to be able to read and write, and include this training as part of the project activities, for all target participants. This would increase opportunities for illiterate participants in the shared group tasks, decisions, and benefits. As a result, the project would likely have a greater possibility of long term sustainability.

Lastly, although my research is only a small dissection of a larger, richer, tapestry, through this thesis, I would like to remind the practitioners, researchers, government, and development professionals of the practice of participation in development projects. My view is that participation of the project participants is important to achieve project objectives because without their participation, projects cannot work well and the objectives cannot be achieved. Furthermore, the participants are the ones who can decide whether or not to maintain the project's activities and benefits. However, if development practitioners are not aware of the type of participation that they actually adopted in practice, participation can be manipulative, and even harmful to the people concerned: in effect the 'new tyranny' of development interventions (Cooke & Kothari, 2001).

In the PIDRA Project in the three research areas, the inclusion of people with higher educational background or wealthier participants had a tendency to create new elites or entrench the existing ones in the community rather than to change the structure of power in the community. Therefore, participation in this way has a tendency to maintain the existing power structures, justify certain people's or organisations' power, or provide additional opportunities for the more powerful (Cooke & Kothari, 2001).

Furthermore, development practitioners should also realise that target participants have always been agents of their own development (McGee, 2001, p.92). They sometimes work alone, and sometimes through collective endeavour, and thus, they may not actually always involve external interventions. As mentions by Bhatnagar and Williams (1992, p.81 as cited in McGee, 2001, p.92), people are always already leading lives, and external interventions interfere in their lives. It is then external agencies, not people, who devise methods for participation, and hence, development practitioners should respect the attitudes, knowledge, culture, and norms of target participants.

To summarise, this thesis has used the PIDRA Project in Pacitan, Ponorogo, and Trenggalek, East Java, Indonesia as a case study to explore the relationships between participation and project sustainability. The research findings have shown that the PIDRA Project in these districts of East Java has lead to the likely sustainability of the project in the short term. The study has also shown that the kind of participation that will likely enhance project sustainability is adopting participation as a means and as an end. Should PIDRA Management wish to refer to the result findings, they need to find ways to increase cooperation and collaboration of government and the NGOs, and to define a group by considering participants' educational background aside from their socio-economic situation. This will be likely to enhance the participation of target participants, and therefore the project's long term sustainability. Finally, the research would like to remind development practitioners to the dangerous of participation in their practice because despite its popular appeal, it can be manipulative, harm people who are supposed to be advantaged, and at its worst create a new tyranny in development interventions.

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## APPENDICES

**Table Appendix 2.4. Summary of the Different Kinds of Participation and Lessons Learnt for Sustainability**

The Name of the Project	Form of Participation	Lessons Learnt
PRODEL in Nicaragua	Active community participation throughout the project cycle	<p>Project is sustainable because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The intended beneficiaries as decision makers throughout the project cycle.</li> <li>b) The project formed institutions which consist of the community representatives and the main entities involved in the program: the municipal commissions, the Community Project Administration Committee (CPAC).</li> <li>c) Training for the committee in management and administration of the activities and organisations.</li> <li>d) The contribution of the community through cost sharing in the form of investments in materials, skilled and unskilled labours, machinery and tools, administration and cash.</li> <li>e) Participatory evaluation involving the members of the CPAC and other community members.</li> </ul>
People's Participation Program (PPP)	Active participation of the community	<p>The program is sustainable because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The project initiated a small, informal, self reliant groups of the rural poor.</li> <li>b) The intended beneficiaries are the decision makers in the whole project cycle: the formations of CBOs by the villagers, CBOs develop their own</li> </ul>

The Name of the Project	Form of Participation	Lessons Learnt
		<p>rules, leaders.</p> <p>c) The group members are diverse, all members have opportunity to be a leader.</p> <p>d) The community actively developing a network with external agents through the CBOs such as: developing income generating activities by opening access to other source of fund (banks for credit).</p> <p>e) The existence of the organisation is supported by leadership and management training to develop the organisation's capabilities to become vocal advocates for small farmers' issues.</p> <p>f) Participatory in monitoring and evaluation.</p>
<p>The Malawi Rural Piped Scheme Program</p>	<p>Less participation of the community in the activities</p>	<p>The program is less sustainable because:</p> <p>a) First meeting is done to obtain permission from the community on the project activities.</p> <p>b) The project formed organisations to manage the project activities.</p> <p>c) The organisations formed are supported by training to improve skills and knowledge in management and book keeping, and technical training, and in the end of the project, the project was handed over to the community.</p> <p>d) The community contributes to the project activities in form of fees, skilled and unskilled labour, and other materials.</p> <p>e) The government still had control over operational and maintenance cost which resulted in difficulties with the limitations of</p>

The Name of the Project	Form of Participation	Lessons Learnt
		<p>government's budget.</p> <p>f) The project used simple technology for construction.</p>
<p>North West Integrated Agricultural Development Project (NW-IADP) of Sierra Leone</p>	<p>Passive participation of the intended beneficiaries in the project</p>	<p>This project is not sustainable because:</p> <p>a) The project formed the institution for implementing the activities but it was dominated by the interests of the elites.</p> <p>b) The decision making on the activities was centralised and dominated by the elite people and influential families.</p> <p>c) The target beneficiaries did not get skills and knowledge to build capacity.</p> <p>d) The target beneficiaries did not develop networks with other external agents such as NGOs.</p>

#### Appendix 4.1. The Questionnaire for Project Participants

**No.** : .....

**Date** : .....

**Time** : .....

**Location** : .....

Questionnaire for Participants  
Participation and Project Sustainability of the PIDRA project  
in East Java

##### A. Identity of the Interviewee

1. Name	
2. Gender	Male/Female
3. Age	
4. Employment	
5. Education	
6. Position in the PIDRA project	

##### B. General Questions on the PIDRA Project

1. What is your experience with this project?	
2. How do you know about this project?	
3. When did you become a member of this project/participate in this project?	
4. What was interesting about this project when you heard about this project for	

the first time? Why do you want to participate or to be a member of this project?	
5. How did you benefit from this project?	
6. Is there any other project which has the same activities as this project in this area? Have you been involved with this? If there is, what is the different between this project and that project?	

### **C. Questions on Participation and the PIDRA Project**

What activities are you involved in within this project? Why?	
Are there some activities you have not been involved in within this project? Why?	
How often are the meetings? Did you regularly come to the meeting?	
How do you participate in the project? What kind of contribution do you have to give to the project?	
Who makes decisions on project activities in your group? Do you feel that your opinion or suggestion has been considered every time you give opinion or suggestion? Why/why not?	

<p>Do you think that every member has the opportunity to become involved in the decisions and activities of the group? Why/why not?</p>	
<p>Do you know and understand the regulation (sanction, how to choose the leaders, etc) that your group has made? Until what extent do you know it?</p>	
<p>Who did make the regulations in your group? Do you like it? If yes, why and if not, why?</p>	
<p>Is there any training to help you increase your skill and knowledge? If there is, what is it? Do you think it is important for you?</p>	
<p>Do you think this project has incorporated your knowledge of the environment/agriculture and the customs of the local people? Can you give an example?</p>	
<p>How is the relationship between your group and other groups in the same areas?</p>	
<p>What do you think about the relationship between your group and other institutions (government and NGOs)?</p>	
<p>What kind of benefit do you find from the relationship with other institutions?</p>	
<p>What do you think about the</p>	

sustainability of the project's benefits in the long term?	
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**D. Additional Question**

In your opinion, what are the problems that the PIDRA project has in general?	
What is your recommendation for the present and future implementation of the PIDRA project?	

Thank you for your participation in this research

## Appendix 4.2. The Questionnaire for Stakeholders of the Project

**No.** : .....  
**Date** : .....  
**Time** : .....  
**Location** : .....

### Questionnaire for PIDRA Stakeholders Participation and Project Sustainability of the PIDRA project in East Java

#### A. Identity of the Interviewee

1. Name	
2. Gender	Male/Female
3. Age	
4. Position in Government	

#### B. Questions on Participation and the PIDRA Project

1. What do you know about the PIDRA project?	
2. Have you been involved in this project from the beginning?	
3. Do you know who is involved in the project, specifically the intended beneficiaries (men, women, vulnerable groups, the poorest people, old people, etc)? To what extent do you think they are involved in the project?	
4. How far do you see the intended beneficiaries' involvement in every stages of	

<p>the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Design and planning</li> <li>b. Implementation in the whole project activities</li> <li>c. Monitoring process</li> <li>d. Evaluation</li> </ul>	
<p>5. What is your opinion about the intended beneficiaries' participation in the project?</p>	
<p>6. Can you tell me how the project has made the intended beneficiaries participate in the project (incentives, awareness, poverty)?</p>	
<p>6. What kind of problems preventing participation of the beneficiaries in the project (lack access to transport, can not afford, time away from work)?</p>	
<p>7. Do you think the problems can be solved? How?</p>	
<p>8. Do you have any suggestions for improving the intended beneficiaries' participation in the project?</p>	
<p>9. In your opinion, how is the relationship between the project beneficiaries and the external agents/other groups?</p>	

10. How are they developing networks with external agents or other groups?	
11. What do you think about sustainability of the PIDRA project? Is it sustainable or not sustainable? If it is sustainable, why? And if it is not, why?	
12. Is the project sustainable or not sustainable related to participation of the intended beneficiaries? Why?	
13. Do you have any suggestions to improve the likely sustainability of the PIDRA project? Please mention it.	
14. In your opinion, what are the problems that the PIDRA project has in general?	
15. What are the advantages and the advantages of the PIDRA project?	
16. What is your recommendation for the future implementation of the PIDRA project?	

### **C. General Questions on Participation**

1. What do you know about participation?	
2. Whom do you think should participate in development project/program?	

3. What is the motive for doing participation?	
4. What do you think is the obstacles for conducting participatory approach in development project/program?	
5. What are the obstacles of the beneficiaries to be involved in the project in your opinion?	
6. What do you think influence participation of the beneficiaries in the project?	

Thank you for your participation in this research

**Table Appendix 6.2. An Analysis on the Likely Sustainability of the PIDRA**

**Project based on Participation Indicators**

The stage of the project	Indicators	Results	Participation performance and sustainability
Design and Planning	a. first meetings available before the project begins	There was first meeting in every district, village, and dusun, but there was no forum to exchange information and express the real needs of the beneficiaries	Less participatory in the first meeting and thus, it could lead to the less sustainability
	b. the existence of contract signed with clear explanation of community's and project's responsibilities	There was no contract signed except between the government and donor (the IFAD). There was no written responsibility between stakeholders, specifically beneficiaries and facilitators. Thus, they confused on their responsibility, and the beneficiaries had a lack of commitment to participate	Less commitment to participate that could lead to less sustainability
	c. participatory approach in the identification of target beneficiaries	There was an effort to identify target beneficiaries in participatory way by involving all stakeholders in the identification. However, the inclusion of the beneficiaries with high school degree or similar purposely had made the identification become less participatory	Less participatory that could lead to less sustainability
	d. motivation or initiative of target beneficiaries to participate in the project	Most beneficiaries participated because of knowledge and skills they will gain from the project, and their responsibility to their groups; and only a few of them who said because of their friends and families, and money	Their motivation can ensure the likely sustainability, but their dependency to the facilitators to provide them with the knowledge and skills, etc lead the project to the likely sustainability only in the long term. In the long term, it depends on their initiative to help themselves
Implementation	e. the existence of local organisations initiated by the project or by the community	There are SHGs, the Federation, and the VDA. After the project finishes, the federation and the VDA	The existence of organisations could ensure the likely sustainability.

<b>The stage of the project</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Participation performance and sustainability</b>
		will be merged into Cooperative institution (Ponorogo District), and other districts gave flexibility to the members to decide what best for their sustainability. There was also training in management and book-keeping for members	However, since the initiative to create the organisations was from the government, most beneficiaries had less a sense of ownership, and it would likely be unsustainable in the long term
	f. the diversity of group members, and shared leaderships	The group members had diversity. To some extent it was good, but the inclusion of high school graduates or similar level of education has prevented the lower level educated beneficiaries to participate, and thus, it could create new elites in the groups	The decision making has become less participatory, and this could lead to the less likely of sustainability
	g. the regularity of the group meeting and level of participants' attendance	The groups came to the meeting regularly and there was a high level of attendance, but there was an indication that they came to the meetings because of the facilitators' attendance	Beneficiaries' participation was only involving, and they did not have good commitment to participate, and thus, the benefits would likely unsustainable
	h. the intended beneficiaries as the decision makers in the project implementation	The ideas and opinions were still dominated by leaders or the management and administration team. The rest of the groups had less participation in decision making because they felt that they did not have enough skill and knowledge, and lack of self-confidence	Beneficiaries had passive participation in decision making and thus, the benefits of the project would likely unsustainable in the long term.
	i. the contribution of the community to the project	Beneficiaries contributed in form of money, foods, input materials, etc	The members had a sense of ownerships, and thus, the project would be sustainable. However, it would be in short period of time because the sustainability in the long term will depend on the ability of the group members to manage their capital, businesses, and groups.

The stage of the project	Indicators	Results	Participation performance and sustainability
	j. the community is actively participate in developing network with external agents	Most group have not been able to develop networks with many external agents, and thus, they could not find market for their products	Thus, the project could not ensure their financial and institutional sustainability, and thus, the project would likely unsustainable
	k. the use of simple technology as input of the project activities	Facilitators tried to use simple technology and inputs from target areas. However, limitation in the resources and knowledge, they had to use some inputs from other areas which are some distance away from their place. They also got used to have facilitators to provide it	Dependency to the facilitators in providing knowledge and skills have made it less participatory and it would lead to the likely unsustainable of the benefits in the long term
Monitoring and Evaluation	l. participatory monitoring and evaluation	Less participatory because indicators of monitoring and evaluation have been designed by the National PIDRA Management	Passive participation in monitoring and evaluation, and this could lead to the likely unsustainable of the project.
Additional factors influenced participation and project sustainability	m. Support from the government	The government in the provincial and Ponorogo district supported the project by ensuring that the project will have an exit point after the project finishes by creating cooperative institution. Meanwhile, two other districts seemed to ignore the existence of the project and saw it as another project ran by the Ministry	The project became less participatory, and without enough support from the government in the form of giving their rights to participate, the project would likely lead to project sustainability
	n. The role of facilitators	Facilitators still have strong influenced to the beneficiaries. They sometimes had a biased in doing their job and thus, involved too much in the project implementation that made the beneficiaries unable to be self-reliant	The involvement of facilitators in the project had made it become less participatory and this would likely lead to unsustainable benefits in the long term