

Sustainability Challenges of Rural Water Supply System: A Case Study

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Abstract

The rural water supply system operated by the CBOs as an alternative approach to provide safe drinking water to the rural people. These schemes experience several issues including sustainable challenges particularly in Ampara district of Sri Lanka. This study focuses on the selected CBO-managed RWS schemes and their sustainability challenges using case study method. Three CBO schemes were selected in Veeracholai, Malligaitheevu and Kannahipuram villages in the Ampara district of Sri Lanka in order to examine the sustainable condition using qualitative measure. This institutional case study aimed to investigate the nature of community participation and sustainability issues of RWS schemes in the selected areas in Ampara district. Each institutional case is unique and represents the problems in operating rural water schemes and sustainability issues. Three case studies were conducted in three different locations in Ampara district and presented key discussion in an interpretative method. Based on the case study analysis, this study observed that community participation has not been adopted in an expected level in operation and maintenance of RWS schemes. Further, this study noticed that CBO-managed RWS schemes struggled to ensure their long term success and sustainability due to numerous factors. Each case is unique, however, each scheme has similar and different challenges. The common issue of each case is the sustainability challenge due to the environmental, financial, technical, social and institutional factors. This case study helps future researchers to investigate further challenges and postulate sustainable mitigation measures to overcome the issues.

Keywords: CBO Schemes; Rural Water; Community Participation; Sustainability.