Re-Centralization and Local Level Response: Insights from Water Sector Reforms in Two Indonesian River Basins

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Decentralization Reforms

- Fall of Suharto
- Drastic decentralization undertaken across all sectors in 1999
- Decentralization laws revised in 2004, with hierarchy re-instatement
  - Reintroduction of deconcentration of central government functions as well as co-management through the transfer of funds to local government.
  - Direct elections of district level heads
Water reforms

- **WATSAL**
  - 1999 MPW replaced with Kimbangwil, DGWR moved into MeNegPU

- **2004 Water Law**
  - River basin management as a focus
Implementing Regulations

- **BBWS, BWS**
  - Response to 2003 Finance Ministry regulation requiring project be folded into permanent body within institutions for budget management purposes

- **Strategic Basins: Re-drawing of basin boundaries**
  - In 1969, Indonesia’s 5,590 rivers grouped into 90 river territories by Ministry Regulation for purposes of river basin planning, management, and development.
    - 17 national: 15 cross provincial, 2 strategic
    - 73 local
  - Since 2006, 133 territories
    - 69 national: 5 cross-national, 27 cross-provincial, 37 strategic
    - 64 local

- **Public Service Board (BLU) organization for financing**
Local level response

- Brantas (East Java) and Jeneberang (South Sulawesi) Basins

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<tr>
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<th>Brantas</th>
<th>Jeneberang</th>
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<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>11800 km²</td>
<td>320 km²</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td>320 km</td>
<td>75 km</td>
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<td>Population</td>
<td>~15 million</td>
<td>~3 million</td>
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Local Level Response: Brantas

- Brantas
Local Level Response: Brantas

- **1961**
  - Large technical developments with Japanese war reparation funds
  - Brantas River Basin Development Project established to carry these out.

- **1990**
  - PJT I established to operate and maintain river infrastructure

- **2006**
  - BBWS established through ministerial decree
Local Level Response: Brantas

- **PJT I vs BBWS (BLU) model**
  - DG Water resources at time viewed PJT I model unfavorably, due to loss of oversight responsibility
  - PJT I disputes BBWS authority and seeks to secure itself through political connections within Ministry of Public Works

- **Use of Task Assistance by BBWS to address human resource shortcomings**

- **Eventual agreement on sharing of tasks**
Local Level Response: Jeneberang

- Jeneberang
Local Level Response: Jeneberang

- 1976: Major flood inundated 2/3 of Makassar
- 1978: Master Plan developed
- 1986: Jeneberang River Project for Operation and Maintenance
- 1992: Jeneberang River Basin Development Project
Local Level Response: Jeneberang

- Decentralization and local interpretation
  - Tensions between Kabupaten Gowa and National level
    - Bili Bili Dam
    - PJT Jeneberang
    - Balai Besar
  - What is happening on the ground
    - Basin management: a new role for BBWS Jeneberang
    - Province as intermediary, as has higher level of capacity
    - Disconnect with district- and in turn village-level strengths
Local Level Response: Jeneberang

- **2003: PJT Jeneberang being developed**
  - Gowa District, comprising 96% of basin, disputes on grounds of decentralization

- **2006: BBWS Jeneberang established through ministerial decree**
  - Coordination difficult on grounds of unclear authority due to varying legal interpretation
  - Caldera collapse at headwaters of basin in 2005, an additional problem for this basin.
**Lessons Learned**

- Decentralization opens up spaces for local level engagement, however these spaces are constrained.

- With regard to policy, important role of implementation phase for policy outcomes (Grindle and Thomas 1991).

- Recentralization as a common Central Government response to decentralization reforms (Ribot et al. 2006).

- Variation in outcomes on the ground very context specific.