

Interactive comment on “Towards systematic planning of small-scale hydrological intervention-based research” by K. E. R. Pramana et al.

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Using the valuable inputs of the three referees, we now propose to focus on the effects of human actions in small-scale water development initiatives and the associated hydrological research activities, how these can be understood, and how they can be anticipated upon when planning field projects.

All referees agree that such a paper is valuable, even though the issues we raise are already recognized in the hydrological community. We argue that more explicit attention helps to design more appropriate answers to the issues of surprise and budget based on better understanding of challenges faced in field studies.

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It is our shared experience in field research that allows us to document our perspectives – including how data are treated and how to make most of scarce funding. It is clear, however, that we indeed have to strengthen the structure make the main point more clearly. We do need details of our cases, but not all the details provided in the discussion paper.

We propose to discuss a more systematic approach that would be useful when designing field projects and for exchanging field experiences between researchers, without our approach becoming highly top-down or time-consuming. Realizing that much hydrological work already includes them, we propose that two sets of questions, on 1) dealing with surprises, and 2) cost-benefits of data gathering, will be exploited more explicitly to facilitate research planning and exchange.

Our specific discussion on human agency itself, and participation theory and approaches, is likely to stay at a rather basic level, but we would propose that we have to provide more contextualization of our experience and suggested approach. We do not want to suggest that human intervention is the same as theft/vandalism. We do acknowledge that local people have reasons to do things that might not support the hydrological research. In order to strengthen this part of our paper, we propose to include more details on community participation in our case studies.

Where we have tried to include many details of three new field-based cases studies, we have overstretched our point and paper. A revised paper – assuming we are invited to submit one – will be more compact, in order to strengthen the reasoning how the diverse outcomes in terms of field realities and their obstacles and challenges can be analyzed with a more generalized framework.

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