Civic Engagement and Democracy in Post-Suharto Indonesia:

A Review of Musrenbang, the Kecamatan Development Programme, and Labour Organising

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Abstract

Drawing attention to the wider literature on the linkages between civic engagement and democracy, this paper starts off by asking the question whether civic engagement beyond formal politics actually serves to strengthen democracy in Indonesia. Noting a contradiction between the literature that proposes that high associational density fosters democracy and recent analysis that highlights that political opportunity structures in Indonesia are unfavourable to popular representation and participation, the paper draws attention to a largely underexplored field within Indonesian democracy studies, namely that of mobilisation and participation by marginalised groups. The paper discusses and analyses strategies for bottom-up mobilisation, specifically the development planning programmes of Musrenbang, the Kecamatan Development Program (KDP), and Indonesian labour organising. The analysis focuses on the democratising aspects of these sectors, arguing that participation and mobilisation lacks the necessary popular foundations as well as organisational capacities that are necessary for participatory

institutions to effectively enhance democracy. The paper thereby hints that associational density in and of itself is a poor indicator for democracy, especially in relation to democratic consolidation in new democracies.

Introduction

Does civic engagement beyond participation in formal politics actually strengthen democracy in Indonesia? Compared to other new democracies, research shows that Indonesia enjoys extraordinary high levels of civil engagement as identified by popular participation in associational life (Lussier & Fish, 2012). According to the Asian Barometer Survey, roughly 84 per cent of Indonesians belong to at least one organisation compared to 61 per cent in Malaysia and 51 per cent in Thailand (Lussier & Fish, 2012, p.74). According to the same survey, the most popular organisations are residential and community associations, religious groups, and trade unions. In addition, civic engagement, including participation in residential and community associations, includes more or less formalised participation at community level in state and donor-initiated participatory development programmes.

Especially the latter has grown in importance since the transition to democracy in 1998, building on models of community participation and participatory budgeting in development. The World Bank reports that by 2009, 60,000 Indonesian villages had taken part in World Bank-supported Community Driven Development (CDD) programmes that used participatory models to identify development needs, distribute funds, and implement development programmes – making it one of the world's largest community-based poverty reduction programmes. In addition, the Indonesian government has launched programmes at the regional and local levels that build on similar ideals for popular participation and budgeting of state-development funds, known as Musrenbang.

Do such high levels of civic engagement enhance popular representation in politics, and thereby the quality of democracy in Indonesia? To what extent do high levels of civic engagement

of the kind described above actually serve as good indicators of a well-functioning process of democratisation? After all, contrary to anticipations that high levels of civic engagement fosters democracy, alternative research on the quality of democracy in Indonesia concludes that "the political opportunity structure remains unfavourable to popular representation and participation" (Törnquist et al., 2009, p.213). Following up on the contradiction, this article is an early attempt to assess the actual structure, working, and content of two arenas of civic engagement – community participation in development and labour organising.

In the following, I first discuss the links made in the literature between civic engagement, including civic engagement through community participation in development, and democracy. By drawing attention to the growing insights on the deficits of Indonesian democracy, the article challenges perspectives that view participation at community level, per se, as an indicator of a well-functioning democracy. Second, the paper focuses on the inner workings and limitations of bottom-up participation and mobilisation in Indonesia by specifically looking into the state-run regional development planning process, Musrenbang, including neighbourhood associations known as Rukun Warga (RW) and Rukun Tetangga (RT), the World Bank's Kecamatan Development Program (KDP)[2], and labour organising in Indonesia.[3]

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2   The KDP is the forerunner to the Indonesian government's flagship poverty reduction program, the National Program for Community Empowerment (Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat, PNPM), first launched in 2008. The PNPM is a direct replication of the KDP and relies on World Bank loans and transfers. Due to availability of reports and data, the focus in this paper is on the KDP, but insights can be transferred to the logic and workings of the PNPM as well.

3   The data for this assessment is gathered through readings of documents and evaluation report commissioned by Indonesian and international NGOs, the World Bank development team, international labour unions, as well as case studies and independent reports. Due to the specific context within which such reports and documents have been written, their role and content merit a brief note. The sources themselves are often reflective of the kinds of political and ideological positions of the institution that commissioned them in the first place. An evaluation report with predefined chapters set in a specific discourse of the donor institution contains different information than those commissioned by NGOs or a journalistic account and analysis. In reviewing documents for this article, this has been predominant in terms of evidence. For instance, the vast majority of reporting on community participation in development focuses not

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The main reason for this delimitation to community participation and labour unions is that they represent both informal and formal arenas through which individuals and communities interact directly with political authorities over budgeting and the use of donor and government funds. Moreover, both community participation and labour organising are considered as indicators for bottom-up participation and mobilisation as well as central for pro-poor empowerment. The conclusion focuses on tentative avenues for further research and directions to take research on the linkages between poverty alleviation programmes and democracy.

Linking civic engagement and democratisation

Recent contributions to the discussion on civic engagement and democracy in Indonesia build on, among others, Almond and Verba's study of civic culture in western democracies (Almond & Verba, 1963; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). This proposed that high levels of civic engagement in associations strengthened and sustained democracy by building a civic culture. Regarding Indonesia, Lussier and Fish (2012) argued that the high level of associational membership in Indonesia strengthened democracy in three specific ways. Firstly, by cultivating efficacy among individuals at the local level that built a perception that the individual could impact change at higher levels of politics. Secondly, by developing civic skills that enabled citizens to participate in politics more effectively. Thirdly, by providing avenues for recruitment into more formal politics (Lussier & Fish, 2012, p.77). This argument also could be extended to the more informal and ad hoc protests commonly associated with student demonstrations and pro-poor protests across Indonesia (Lussier & Fish, 2012, p.78).

The literature on participatory development makes similar kinds

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on the political aspects of the programmes, i.e. how their implementation and adaptation shapes local and national politics and power relations, but rather on their strengths and weaknesses in relation to pre-defined indicators. Yet, through triangulation and readings of multiple sources, the reports and wider readings give valuable insights and indicators of the weaknesses and strengths of participatory programmes ahead of case-oriented ethnographic accounts for future research.

of assumptions regarding the effect of popular and civic engagement on democracy. For instance, a World Bank report notes that villagers' participation in the process of development planning and decision-making provides an arena for bottom-up democratic governance (Guggenheim et al., 2004). Accordingly, there is an expectation that high levels of participation in local associations by ordinary people not only improves the quality of democracy in Indonesia, but also is a central determinant for the building of democratic institutions and the long-term consolidation of democracy. Breaking with technocratic and top-down focus in development work, Putnam's ideas on social capital became a useful tool for turning attention towards society and community, and for thinking about the building of democratic institutions from the bottom up (Putnam et al., 1993). Specifically, the connection between social capital and democracy is that the presence of strong civic associations at the local level nurtures trust and breeds a capacity for ordinary people to engage politically. Civic engagement at the local level will thus enable the creation of trust-networks and cooperation that strengthens a community's social capital altogether and, thus, creates necessary links between people in civil society and people working in government (Putnam et al., 1993).

The focus on links between civic engagement and democracy as indicators of a flourishing democracy evident in the general and context-specific literature on democracy, is in stark contrast to the scholarly critique of the deficits of Indonesian democracy since the transition to democracy in 1998. It is surprising then that in spite of the high levels of civic engagement, little research has been carried out to assess its role in the democratisation process. Instead, research on democracy in Indonesia has focused on the workings of formal democratic institutions, specifically on elections and electoral mobilisation at the national and local levels, the role of political elites, state institutions, political parties, and civil society. For instance, research on democratic institutions has highlighted the structural and institutional limitations of core state institutions (Hedman, 2005, pp.31-150; Mietzner, 2007; Bünte & Ufen, 2009; Tomsa, 2009). The literature on local politics and decentralisation reforms

has demonstrated the complexities of power, politics, and business in local level politics. In particular, the role of local elites and the emergence of political goons in hampering and shaping democracy at the local level limits not only the quality of democracy per se, but has created a system in which personalised and patrimonial networking is a central feature of local elections, and the inner workings of local parliaments (Sidel, 2004; Nordholt & van Klinken, 2007; van Klinken, 2007; Hadiz, 2010).

Regarding Indonesian political parties, one verdict is that while the Indonesian party system is surprisingly stable compared to that of other countries in the region, it is less efficient in channelling the concerns of poor communities, excluded groups, and minorities. Also, it has proven to be less efficient in formulating a broad reformist, cleavage-based development agenda (Ufen, 2008). Research on civil society shows that while anti-reformist elites are the main force behind a stagnation in democratic progress in recent years, civil society emerges "as democracy's most important defender" (Mietzner, 2012, p.209). As mentioned, research on the aspects of civil society that encompasses the democracy movement has instead showed that civic activists and pressure groups that brought democracy to Indonesia are "floating in the margins of the fledging democratic system being unable to make a real impact" (Nababan et al., 2005; Harriss et al., 2004, pp.17-18). In contrast to what one should expect, while representatives from civil society are able to check anti-reformist elites through protests and political mobilisation, they seem to be rather weak in actually instigating political reform, entering into formal politics by winning elections, or curbing anti-reformist elements (Samadhi & Warouw, 2008; Törnquist, 2009; Mietzner, 2012). Hence, democratisation in Indonesia has come a long way in terms of political freedoms and the role of civil society, but research has showed that the democratisation process has stagnated when it comes to improving representation.

Against this backdrop, attention to the dynamics of civic engagement, associational life, and mobilisation beyond formal politics is an existing gap in the research on democracy in Indonesia. The remainder of this article thus discusses the dynamics of existing

alternative channels of bottom-up civic engagement and mobilisation that one expects to have impacts on the overall quality of the democratisation in Indonesia.

Musrenbang: Community participation and the state

Since the fall of the New Order and the transition to democracy in 1998, community participation in community development, usually referred to as development planning, has evolved in tandem with decentralisation and the strengthening of regional governments, much modelled on Porto Allegre in Brazil. Popular demands for accountable government, combined with a strengthened NGO sector and increased significance of elections, have also brought about shift in the way government has dealt with the demands of ordinary people. Participation in decision making, planning, and budgeting was thus as much a demand from communities and NGOs as a result of shifts on official development discourse away from technocratic top-down implementation of development programmes towards bottom-up participatory models of development.[4]

Formally, budget formulation for development projects at the provincial level has two components: one top-down budget preparation process which is executed through the various departments of the regional government (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah*, DPRD), and a bottom-up planning process called Musrenbang (*Musyawarah Perencanaan Pembangunan*)[5]. Musrenbang is the term used for the development planning and multi-stakeholder consultation forums meant to encourage and promote community participation in development planning at the regional level. The processes are intended to complement strategic plans developed by the local government in the planning and allocation of development funds

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4   The significance of a shift in the development discourse towards participatory models for development is discussed in more detail in section four on the World Bank and the KDP.

5   Musrenbang is the merging of two concepts; *musyawarah*, a term that describes how communities come together to resolve conflicts peacefully, the literal meaning being rule by consensus; and *perencanaan pembangunan* literally meaning development planning. Musrenbang thus combines notions of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms for the purpose of development planning.

8 for development programmes (Sarosa et al., 2008). The structure of community participation through Musrenbang was first formally endorsed by Law 25/2004 on National Development Planning, but builds on a long tradition of community organising in Indonesia.

The foundation for community participation in Indonesia should not be understood as an entirely new trend, however. Formally and organisationally, it builds on a long tradition of community organising, which has also been used politically to structure village life in relation to the state.[6] Under the New Order state, the local community and village in the Indonesian social structure were streamlined and recognised and reinvented to represent 'culture' and 'tradition' (Sidel, 2007, pp.31-32). Notions of *gotong royong* (mutual aid) and *musyarawah* (rule by consensus) not only figure prominently in ethnographic accounts of the Indonesian village (*desa*) and urban neighbourhoods (*kampung*), but were used to streamline the New Order bureaucracy from the state down to village and neighbourhood level (Antlöv & Cederroth, 1994; Pemberton, 1994, pp.238-39).

As a development programme, the process of Musrenbang is in part a continuation of what is known as the programme of Inpres Desa Tertinggal (IDT, the programme for left-behind villages), which was a series of government poverty reduction programmes launched by the Suharto government in the mid-1990s. The blueprint for the original IDTs was to give block grants to poor villages across the country in an attempt to create a more efficient poverty reduction strategy. The IDTs also sought to incorporate new thinking on empowerment of the poor and planning and administration of development projects that ran counter to the traditional view of the Indonesian government of seeing development as primarily a top-down technocratic exercise. It also fitted very well with existing structures of *musyawarah* and *gotong royong.* The IDTs attracted some support from the World Bank and the UNDP and built on an emerging understanding among development specialists that poverty and underdevelopment was not

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6   Several core ethnographies highlight the vibrant associational life and structure of community organising in the post-colonial Indonesian village, see for instance (Koentjaraningrat, 1967). For an analysis on the re-invention of the structure of the Indonesian village, see (Antlöv & Cederroth, 1994).

a result of a lack of skills among the poor, but rather barriers between technocratic government programmes and the real needs of the poor. The notion was that such barriers had blocked the poor from accessing much needed seed capital to launch small-scale enterprises, or micro-schemes, that would help the poor help themselves out of poverty.

While programmes such as the IDT soon became the subject of major corruption scandals, the critique being that village heads too often gave the IDT money to local elites who would spend the money on larger-scale projects rather than the intended micro-schemes, they have served as an administrative platform from which to implement community development programmes in the post-Suharto era. Note that one should be careful in associating New Order programmes that preached pro-poor empowerment and participation directly with the kind of civic engagement and democratic citizenship that by and of itself fosters democracy. To what extent are political capacities fostered or contained by such programmes? The issue thus relates to the extent that such programmes can serve as a platform for empowerment and improved channels for representation in the post-Suharto era.

Musrenbang: Administration and execution

Musrenbang is institutionalised at all administrative levels of the regional government from the village, sub-district (*kecamatan*), district, and at the city/regency, to the provincial and central government level (Ahmad & Weiser, 2006, p.15). In addition, a 2007 Joint Ministerial Decree asserts that results of development planning from the village level should be accommodated forward to the higher levels, ensuring bottom-up development planning.[7]

Formally, Musrenbang is intended to allow citizens to express their aspirations and priorities in terms of development planning and budgeting of development funds flowing from the regional government. The process begins at the village (*desa*) and neighbourhood level (*kelurahan*) with the identification of projects

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7   Joint Ministerial Decree No0008/M.PPN/01/2007

that the village would like to have. Projects are prioritised on a list. Planning is organised around community meetings where community members discuss and prioritise their development needs. The projects submitted by villages are discussed at planning meetings at the sub-district (*kecamatan*) level. Village chiefs, sub-district authorities and the Regional Development Planning Agency at the province and district level, Bappeda, as well as other representatives from the regional government and DPRD take part in the planning meetings. In principle the planning process is for all members of the community, but most case studies report that even at the most local of levels, the process is initiated, organised, and led by community leaders.

The proposals that are collected below district level, i.e. sub-district, village and community levels, are eventually compiled by Bappeda of the district administrative office and discussed at a district meeting along with proposals from the technical departments. A district-level Musrenbang is organised for the preparation of the annual regional development plan (RKPD) by Bappeda (Beleli & Hoelman, 2007).

What are the general experiences and insights from available evaluation reports and studies of the Musrenbang process in Indonesia? The general critique can be summarised as follows. First, several reports question the real participatory aspect of the Musrenbang process emphasising that the process is largely driven by local elites, politicians, and bureaucrats. Second, in contrast to various models of participatory budgeting, Musrenbang does not actually provide opportunities for participatory budgeting, only the early-stage planning identification of development projects. The third critique concerns the limitations inherent in the planning processes in bringing about broader social and political change, especially with regard to the type of projects that are allocation. For instance, the large majority of projects allocated through Musrenbang are small-scale infrastructure projects.

Below, drawing on insights from several case studies conducted by various evaluation teams, I discuss each point of this general

critique, the potential implications of these findings, and some of the noted exemptions to the general critique observed in the case studies.

Bottom-up mobilisation or top-down implementation?

The critique against how the Musrenbang process is carried out resonates with common critiques against participatory planning and budgeting. A first critique of relevance is the critique that participatory designs mandated by a central government do not foster as democratic and distributive participatory institutions as does bottom-up participatory designs (Avritzer, 2009, p.166). Second, in contexts where civil society remains fragmented, political actors are hostile to bottom-up participation, and the institutional set-up for participation is weak, it is less likely that planning processes actually provide better access to public goods or foster enhanced democratic citizenship (Avritzer, 2009, pp.164, 174).

Considering that the Musrenbang process is primarily mandated by the central and local government, a recurring critique is that the even at the lowest administrative level, planning meetings tend to focus more on local leaders' priorities than on enabling debates between community members and representatives of political authorities. In theory, the consultation processes are for all village members, but in practice community leaders tend to have a greater say in the decision making processes than the general public (ADB et al., 2010). From the description above, it is clear that the Musrenbang consultations follow a complex hierarchical structure with meetings at each administrative level to decide the final allocations of project funds at the district level Musrenbang. These district-level meeting are primarily an arena of official participation by members of the DPRD, bureaucrats from Bappeda and the other technical administrative offices of the local government (SKPDs). Formally, the meetings are open to the public, though as passive members. However, there is great variation in the extent that members of the community, village heads, representatives of local NGOs, journalists, and academics are invited to be present in the district level Musrenbang. Presence at this stage of the planning process is to ensure a formal degree of openness rather than a forum for deliberation and discussion.

Considering the political nature of project allocation at the local and district levels, there is no surprise that the process itself often becomes subject to intra-elite competition rather than debates within and between communities. While a general critique has been that political processes of decision making have become de-politicised, leading to exclusion of marginalised groups and little representation, (Harriss et al., 2004; Törnquist et al., 2009), when politicisation takes the form of contestation over votes and support blocks at the cost of inclusion of subaltern and excluded groups, it becomes problematic. While in several of the areas where the Musrenbang process has been studies, such as Batang Hari, Kebumen, Palu, and Poso to mention a few, members of the DPRD are encouraged to attend Musrenbang events at village and *kecamatan* level, usually in the official role as 'advisory personnel' or 'resource persons' (Sarosa et al., 2008). The intention is to encourage direct communication and interaction between decision-makers and communities in order to foster civil-political collaboration. However, instead of creating the desired effect of connecting civil and political society, the planning meetings instead tend to take the form of campaign meetings where DPRD members, mayors and district heads campaign for specific projects, or seek to build voting blocks. Reports describing the dynamics of the Musrenbang meetings in the Sumedang (*kabupaten*) and Bandung also highlight that the political debate occurs among participants from the political elite (Sarosa et al., 2008). The fact that elected members have access to budgets that community negotiators do not further enhances the hierarchical structure of the planning process (Ahmad & Weiser, 2006).

A related critique of the Musrenbang process thus concerns the weak institutional set-up of the planning and budgeting process, specifically related to the lack of openness in budget discussions. There are several formal hindrances to an open budgeting process that reinforce the opportunities for political manipulation of the planning and budgeting process – first and foremost that budget documents are considered confidential documents. It is a general phenomenon that local governments remain reluctant to share information on all types of expenses, but especially on administrative and operating

budgets and expenses. This also accounts for members of the DPRD whom in many areas do not always receive copies of the budget, as distribution among committees is selective and highly influenced by local party leaderships. This means that project affordability is not an issue until the final stage of the process, i.e. when it reaches the district level. In a situation where project affordability is not taken into account in the actual planning process, the actual outcome the consultations that take place at village and sub-district levels result in little more than unrealistic, unfounded wish lists (Ahmad & Weiser, 2006, pp.14-15). Another budget-related critique concerns the observation that there are significant discrepancies in the number of projects that have been planned and those that are eventually budgeted for and thus implemented.

Hence, the Musrenbang process suffers from limitations by formal regulation on the one hand and the persistence of social and political hierarchies on the other. Both factors ultimately reinforce structures of hierarchy and lack of effective channels of representation. In some localities, however, the critique of the budgeting process has been met with local initiatives and more efficient popular participation. As discussed below, such initiatives illustrate the importance of local variation and context in determining the conditions of success in participatory designs.

Bottom-up strategies for improvement

To counter the limitations inherent in the formal and informal set-ups of the Musrenbang process, communities make use of a number of strategies. These strategies concern the expansion and strengthening of civil society's role in the planning process. First, in places where NGOs are actively involved as intermediaries in exerting pressure on political authorities, the planning processes seem to be more effective. Second, by expanding the district planning process to include more stakeholders, it seems that the process becomes more inclusive.

The main avenue for exerting pressure on authorities, politicians, and bureaucracies in this regard is through the NGO sector. Several

14 reports have highlighted local initiatives that have challenged existing limitations in the Musrenbang process, pressuring for increased participation at all levels. Groups of local NGOs, rather than national-level organisations, take on the role as intermediaries between communities and the authorities, pressuring for specific projects to be lifted up through the budgeting meetings. This was evident in *Kabupaten* Jepara and Sumedang in North and Central Java, for instance, where local groups of NGOs pressured for closer collaboration with the DPRD budgeting teams. Their role has been to advice the DPRD Budget Committees and Budget Teams on project allocation prior to the district budget meetings (Ahmad & Weiser, 2006, pp.17-23). Likewise, in Solo, Central Java, NGO representatives have been able to participate in the actual budget formulation meetings (Sarosa et al., 2008, pp.32-34).

Other forms of NGO activities also concern creating space for oversight and lowering the threshold for intervening in the formal bureaucratic process. In places like Kebumen, Central Java, community NGOs specialising in different sectors of development[8] have targeted relevant technical offices and committees of the local government (SKPDs) in order to create dialogue and exert pressure on the formulation of their annual work plan. Following such pressure from NGO coalitions, in Sumedang and some other districts information about budget ceilings for villages and sub-districts has been put forward in the village Musrenbang. There are also several localities where local authorities, NGOs, and governors have sought to enhance the relevance and productivity of the Musrenbang process. The city of Solo stands out as a site in which the process has both received a lot of attention from NGOs and where communities mobilise in order to challenge existing structures (Sarosa et al., 2008).

The second avenue for improvements has been to merge the formal Musrenbang process with already existing consultative processes and structures at the local level. This means that even though Musrenbang itself is highly formalised and bureaucratised, its execution seems to have great local variation. In the city of Blitar in

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8   GAMPIL and FORMASI

East Java, Musrenbang has been accompanied by the implementation of a community block grant system focused on strengthening the Rukun Warga (RW) — the administrative unit at the hamlet level — and the Rukun Tetangga (RT), or neighbourhood associations (Kuznezov & Ginting, 2005). The strengthening of RW/RT was desired in order to secure more direct representation of villagers, given that RW and RT heads were directly selected by members and residents of the RT/RW.

The case study of the community block grant system in Blitar further noted that planning meetings called 'pre-Musrenbang' were held at RT/RW levels before they entered into the formal process. This provided the kind of flexibility in the Musrenbang process necessary for communities to feel ownership of the process. The positive outcome is primarily related to the specific projects that come out of the process, i.e. that they reflect the community's immediate needs. This, however, indicates that whether the process has a more long-term effect on representation remains less clear. Also, how communities evaluate the process also depends on the capacity of community leaders to communicate to villagers their rights vis-à-vis political authorities, the obligations of local governments in providing public services, and community leaders' own ability to negotiate with political authorities and other elites.

The Blitar case shows that there is a value in the learning process in that by participating villagers become more curious as to the role of government in service provision (Kuznezov & Ginting, 2005). Similarly, a survey of their attitudes towards Musrenbang has showed that the sense of project ownership, and thereby also responsibility to see them implemented successfully, had increased by bringing the process down to RW/RT level (Dharmawan, 2005). Moreover, during a five-year period, it became clear that the kinds of projects that were proposed and that received funding had changed. Initially, the vast majority of projects were infrastructure projects, many of which were not seen to directly benefit the community.[9] The

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9   For instance, money was spent on refurbishment and renovation of government buildings and village security posts.

number gradually decreased to include work training programmes, microcredit schemes, and projects that focused on education and women's issues. The shift was in part a result of critique from Blitar communities and in part from greater involvement of NGOs in the process.

Yet, the critique of the pre-Musrenbang in Blitar is similar to the general critique raised elsewhere. There is a lack of accountability of key programme players and a lack of budgetary transparency (Kuznezov & Ginting, 2005). The size of such community projects should not be exaggerated considering that they only amounted to around two to five per cent of the annual city budget. In addition, the expansive use of planning consultants, contractors, and advisors in the project implementation phase has usually gone unchecked in the budgets.

The fact that communities wage critique against existing norms and practices and wage protest on existing bureaucratic practices confirms what is already known of the high capacity for popular mobilisation in Indonesia. It is also an indication that Musrenbang processes may improve channels of communication between communities and political authorities. Yet, it is unclear to what extent that civic engagement in Musrenbang actually serves to improve democratic representation in politics. The role that NGOs in places like Solo, Bandung, Sumedang and Jepara, play as the main intermediaries between poor communities and authorities goes a long way in confirming earlier conclusions that despite high levels of participation and civic engagement, even in such concrete matters as community development, the door to formal politics remains closed (Nababan et al., 2005).

KDP: Donor-funded community-driven development

While Musrenbang is a process of enhancing community participation and transparency in the allocation of the regional government's development funds for improved infrastructure and public services, the Kecamatan Development Program (KDP) has become a key programme in allocating state-funds to development

at the sub-district level, the *kecamatan*. This section first gives an overview of how the KDP, first initiated in 1998, operates. Note that the KDP has been transformed into the National Program for Community Empowerment (Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat, or PNPM), which was launched in 2008 to become the Government of Indonesia's flagship poverty alleviation programme. The rural-based programme, PNMP-Rural, which is a continuation of the KDP, has become one of the world's largest community-based poverty reduction programmes. It has been implemented across the nation in more than 60,000 villages. Since the launch of the KDP pilot project, the KDP has displayed explosive growth, reaching from 25 villages in 1997 to more than 23,000 villages in 2003. In 2009, PNPM-Rural was launched by the President of Indonesia. It has scaled up annually from the 1100 *kecamatan* covered by the third KDP programme in 2006, to 4371 sub-districts under PNPM-Rural in 2009. PNPM-Rural currently covers 76 per cent of Indonesia's *kecamatan*, totally 4791 villages. In June 2011, the PNPM-Rural was extended for another period to run until 2014 (Bank, 2011).[10] Hence, what we are witnessing is an unprecedented scaling up of a World Bank Community Driven Development (CDD) programme into a nation-wide poverty alleviation programme that combines various funding sources, including World Bank loans.

Building on the theoretical notion that civic engagement is a central aspect of democratisation, as a community empowerment project the KDP seeks to empower rural poor and encourage more democratic and participatory forms of local governance. The basic CDD of the KDP is similar to the Musrenbang process in that resources are allocated to villages on a competitive basis for projects that villagers have chosen themselves. The task manager of the KDP, Scott Guggenheim, has noted that "the programme gives power

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10 PNPM includes five core programmes which collectively cover every sub-district in the country. PNPM-Rural is the largest of the programmes. The four others consist of two World Bank-financed projects: *PNPM-Urban* and *Support for Poor and Disadvantaged Areas*; and projects financed by the Asian Development Bank and Japan International Cooperation Agency: *PNPM Rural Infrastructure Support Program* and *PNPM Infrastructure form Socio-Economic Development.*

to communities by placing funds and the planning and decision-making process directly in the hands of villagers" (Guggenheim et al., 2004, p.6).

Both in Indonesia and beyond, the KDP programme has been deemed impressive not only for its role in providing cost-effective infrastructure, including clean water supplies and irrigation systems, but also for strengthening capacities of local communities by restricting the use of outside contractors, a problem associated heavily with weak channels of accountability and high levels of corruption in Indonesia. Regarding corruption, it has been argued that the proximity to communities and ownership to the very process of deciding on, building, and implementing a community project has not only created incentives for curbing corruption, but has also internalised methods that hinder it. Due to its overall structure, KDP has also been successful in increasing the ability of marginalised groups, including women, to access tertiary socio-economic infrastructure and other basic services. The World Bank reports that about 60 per cent of funded village proposals arise from women's special meetings and for which a majority of the beneficiaries are below or at the poverty line (Bank, 2011, p.3).

On that note, while successful with regard to implementing projects, due to its broader mandate as a programme for social transformation the KDP ought also to be discussed in relation to its political prerogatives, specifically the role of the KDP in the Indonesian democratisation process. As a development programme with the interior aim of eradicating poverty, the KDP emerged as a post-Washington Consensus development programme with the ulterior motive of social improvement. In this regard, the KDP has had a defining focus upon creating a type of governance beyond what has been typically linked to the good governance agenda, usually associated with establishing liberal democratic institutions and frameworks for enabling free markets. As mentioned, as a foundation, Putnam's social capital framework has served as a guideline for selling the idea to development technocrats and economists (Guggenheim, 2004). As such, the KDP has sought to change patterns of behaviour at the levels of society in very significant ways. For instance, infrastructure

projects at the local level have created incentives for normalising transparency and accountability towards local authorities. The KDP has also become a tool for assisting in the decentralisation process, shaping its content at the local level (Carroll, 2006). Therefore, the World Bank views the KDP as having the potential to increase more broad and active forms of political participation beyond just the concerns of establishing a market. In this respect, it has been highly ambitious in its goal of reframing citizenship in post-New Order Indonesia.

Framework: Top-down implementation

In contrast to the participatory planning processes on which the KDP is modelled, the KDP model is initiated and structured by the World Bank. This means that the popular foundations that proved so important for participatory planning processes to effectively enhance popular democracy and public service provision in other places such as Porto Allegre and Kerela were less central to the formulation of the programme's content.

Hence, although the KDP aims at building bottom-up participation and empowering local communities to take part in decision-making, it is primarily a top-down programme that bypasses the budgeting allocations of regional governments, which are, as discussed with regard to the Musrenbang process, slow, unpredictable, and often hampered by corruption.[11] Avoiding the chains of local government and associated politicisation, the block grants are transferred down to collective accounts for the villages in three tranches, each being subject to certification and monitoring in the community. The Kecamatan Grants[12] makes up the bulk of the

11 In all of its three stages (KDP I, II, and III) the project derives its funds both from interest bearing funds from the WB Group's International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and non-interest bearing funds from International Development Association (IDA), with varying grace periods of five to 10 years (Carroll, 2006, pp.8-9). Hence, the money supplied for the KDP from the World Bank Group constitutes debt.

12 The Kecamatan Grants of the PNPM amount to a total of US$1097.58 million. As with previous KDP/PNPM-Rural projects, the present project is financed by a Specific Investment Loan (SIL), which allows the Indonesian Government to determine programme financing needs and the amount of foreign borrowing on an annual basis. The money is IBRD loans in US dollars with a variable

project and is meant to support the construction of the economic and social infrastructure needed and requested by communities.[13] The projects covered include: (1) *planning* for community development, including the preparation of sub-project proposals; (2) *training and capacity building* for communities, including in development planning and investment; (3) *investing* in social and economic infrastructure identified through community development planning; (4) *investing* in activities identified through community development planning and using revolving loan funds (RLFs) for women's savings and loan groups that include micro-finance projects; (5) *preparing for and responding to disaster*, emergency or catastrophic events, as needed, through sub-projects. There is also a component that provides Kecamatan Grants to pilot and special programmes (Bank, 2011, p.3).[14]

The actual planning meetings are held at the sub-village and village level, but prior to planning meetings, workshops are held at district and *kecamatan* level to disseminate information about the programme. In order to include a broader spectrum of stakeholders, these workshops involve community leaders, local government officials, local press, academics, and NGOs. In addition, village meetings are held at the village and sub-village level to spread information and encourage villagers to come up with projects and propose ideas for KDP/PNPM-Rural support (Bank, 2011, pp.3-4). The frequency of these meetings varies as villagers become more and more familiar with the programme.

In order to counter the top-down structure inherent in the

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spread, final maturity of 24.5 years including a grace period of nine years, and annuity principal repayment, at a rate equal to LIBOR for the loan currency plus the variable spread.

13 At the national level the Kecamatan Grants are managed by the Community Development Agency within the Indonesian Ministry of Home Affairs, which is also the implementing agency (Carroll, 2006), while Bappenas manages a National Coordination Team whose task is to provide the overall strategic planning and coordination of the project implementation (Guggenheim et al., 2004, p.9).

14 Projects that are not supported are compiled in a negative short list that in addition to illegal activities include the financing of government salaries, and civil works for government administration or religious purposes (Guggenheim et al., 2004, p.8).

KDP, the programme has sought to create more formal avenues for empowerment within its formal execution. For instance the so-called Kecamatan Forum, which is set up to handle the distribution of funds to the village, includes specific leadership figures in the community. The forum consists of village heads, religious leaders, *adat* (traditional) figureheads, and teachers, in addition to three representatives from each participating village in the *kecamatan*. Moreover, empowerment of villagers is formalised through a system of 'KDP facilitators' who are selected from among the villagers themselves. Prior to the planning meetings two or three of these facilitators, of which at least one is to be female, are selected.[15] The aim of maintaining a formal gender quota at the level of facilitators is to enhance female representation and participation at the local level. Their job is to assist villagers in writing up project plans, making decisions on the use of the funds, and play a crucial role in the planning meetings. These facilitators are central for securing local ownership of the process altogether. In this regard, the structure of creating formal avenues for bottom-up decision making implies that the *kecamatan* grant system also seeks to create new avenues of organising that may circumvent existing economic, social, and political organisation at the local level.

It is on this basis, as a social programme, that the KDP designers view the KDP as being substantively different from other standard development projects (Guggenheim, 2004, p.2). By placing emphasis on the process rather than the projects brings into focus an inherent expectation engrained in the KDP that participatory processes can bring about both social and political transformation. The fact that the KDP programme was the first development project funded by the World Bank to draw directly on social theory, and 'in particular on writings from agrarian studies and comparative history' (Guggenheim 2004: 2), marked this ambition quite clearly. Yet, despite deriving inspiration from popular and social theory, there is no mention in World Bank documents or reports on its practical implementation that recognises the centrality ensuring bottom-up mobilisation and

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15 KDP II Operational Manual, downloaded from www.worldbank.org/id on Feb.2, 2011.

the development of broad alliances between civil and political society. The design of the KDP and, ultimately, the PNPM show no effort at building organisations that can actually expand the bargaining power of villagers and marginalised groups in the planning process. Nor is there recognition of a wider understanding that the lack of such a popular basis at the heart of the participatory planning process is precisely what has hampered the potential benefits of participatory planning processes elsewhere (Avritzer, 2009). Instead, as the next section indicates, in the absence of such a popular foundation what is being delivered is a mode of governance that not only leaves fundamental power relations intact (Li, 2007, p.244), but also opens up a new space for top-down government intervention through the formalisation and streamlining of popular participation.

What modes of governance are being delivered?

While a notion of democratic participation is engrained in the overall expectations of the KDP, the programme essentially builds on a notion of achieving market functionality and not on building political or democratic notions of citizenship (Carroll, 2006). This brings attention to the perspective that neo-liberal forms of governance programmes such as the KDP seek to rework state-society relations and the basic notion of citizenship in very specific directions, via providing incentives for the provision of infrastructure and other public goods. The kind of governance that is being delivered by the KDP relates, therefore, specifically to the fundamental role of the World Bank in forwarding social transformation. In her analysis of the KDP and development programmes in Indonesia, Tania Li writes that

> They [the social development team of the World Bank] sought a number of "specific finalities". By optimising social capital or "getting the social relations right", they thought they could supply village infrastructure more efficiently, alleviate poverty, promote economic growth, foster good governance, and enhance local capacities for conflict management –diverse ends that, separately and in combination, they thought would benefit the nation overall, and the poor in particular (Li, 2007, p.244).

Through the KDP, a specific set of institutions and norms— formal and informal — are being created that enhance not only a particular form of development, but also nurtures a very particular brand of participation that remains largely disassociated from its intended popular foundation. Even though the KDP and PNPM are considered World Bank-sponsored government programmes, by channelling these directly to the villages much of the elected government is circumvented. Sub-districts are not fully autonomous units of government, and the administrative heads, the *camat*, are not elected and the *kecamatan* do not have any independent budget and contracting powers. Scott Guggenheim of the World Bank writes that

> *Kecamatans* seemed advantageous for some additional reasons above and beyond their accessibility to villagers. Because they were not a fully autonomous unit of government, they had no budget and contracting powers of their own. This meant that the collection of commercial and political interests that had a stronghold over government in the districts was much weaker in the sub-districts. *Kecamatans* also had a requirement to coordinate village development through a *kecamatan* council that included all of the village heads, but because the *kecamatan* has no budget of its own to invest, most of these councils only met once or twice a year (Guggenheim, 2004, p.21)[16].

In the climate of corruption and illegitimate extraction of state resources associated with local level politics since the fall of the New Order, this perspective makes sense on the level of project efficiency, but less when it comes to enhancing democratic accountability. Hence, the strategy of bypassing existing institutions in its implementation is probably one of the reasons why the KDP has proven so efficient in both implementing and completing projects, but it also raises some important questions regarding the role of the *kecamatan* grant system at reworking state-society relations in a democratic direction. It remains a challenge to investigate both

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16 Accessed in March 2011. This extract has been removed from the current online version of the memorandum, but is also cited in Carroll (2006) and is available in print.

the process in which new social and political institutions are being built and how such institutions operate vis-à-vis local government institutions and bureaucracies. Hinting at one possible result, the bypassing of elected office is likely to weaken and not strengthen the potential for improving and building popular platforms to unite reformist political actors and marginalised groups in civil society. Such unity would, as discussed, increase the likelihood for creating deeper forms of bottom-up participatory designs.

Another factor central to the KDP and PNPM implementation is that social transformation is likely to be brought about through expert design. Li has noted that 'natural communities required expert attention to make them complete' (Li, 2007, p.267). Moreover, Guggenheim adds that "having villagers compete for KDP funds in *kecamatan* meetings would, we hoped, encourage the kinds of direct negotiations and cooperation that would provide a basis for rebuilding the supra-village horizontal institutions destroyed or neglected by the New Order' (Guggenheim, 2004, p.21). Empowerment of marginalised groups becomes, therefore, a product that can be manufactured by technique, in the same way as sequencing theorists have argued that a democracy can be crafted via the introduction of liberal democratic institutions (Carothers, 2007) rather than as a result of prolonged struggles of social forces and interests (Hadiz, 2004, p.702). In sum, the above discussion shows that although the KDP can boast of major successes with regard to project implementation, participation rate, and ultimately poverty alleviation, all indicators of a successful development programme, it remains unclear how the participatory design on which it is built actually enhances democracy. Where the Musrenbang process is hampered by bureaucratic and institutional limitations, the KDP and, ultimately, the PNPM are ambitious in terms of goals, but lack concrete strategies for how to build and strengthen popular and social movement foundations.

Sector participation: The structure and capacity of labour organising

In the same way as pro-poor political mobilisation takes place

within communities through participatory development programmes located outside the formal arena for political contestation, the labour movement in Indonesia also lacks a unified labour-oriented platform to channel and represent labour interests. This means that even though national and regional labour unions boast increasing membership numbers, it is uncertain the extent to which they are able to channel labour interests into the formal political arena. Moreover, in contrast to Latin America and Eastern Europe, labour has only played a marginal role in the democratisation process in Indonesia. As discussed in the previous section on community participation, pro-poor policies in the form of development projects implemented at community level is usually the result of mediation between communities, usually via the NGO sector, civil bureaucracies, and individual politicians rather than of bottom-up political mobilisation by poor communities. In the absence of an effective labour party or platform, how do labour unions and activists mobilise, channel, and bring labour issues into the formal political arena in Indonesia? What strategies are available and what are the main limitations to an effective bottom-up inclusion of labour in politics?

Historically, Indonesian labour organisations were central to the anti-colonial liberation movement. During the anti-colonial struggle and liberation wars of the 1940s, scholars have argued that the combination of workplace struggles with politics was inevitable due to the centrality of state and politics in the primitive accumulation of capital (Törnquist, 2011, p.203). During the Sukarno presidency, the common aim of building a national economy fostered one of the largest popular movements in which the Indonesian Community Party (PKI) was the primary force behind labour issues (ibid). Since the crackdown on the PKI in 1965-66, the union of progressive politics and labour has also broken down.

The weak union between labour and politics in the post-Suharto era should be understood in the context of this crackdown on the popular labour movement and the evolution of the centralist and classic patrimonial New Order state. Within this system, unions and other mass organisations were integrated into the regime's authoritarian corporate structures (Hadiz, 1997; Ford, 2009, p.16).

The traditionally strong areas for organising, such as the public service and state-owned enterprise, were either excluded from the state-owned unions or sidestepped by bureaucrats and business owners. Moreover, in spite of the massive economic changes that took place since the late 1960s, which led to a dramatic expansion in the number of Indonesians employed as wage labourers[17], these changes were strikingly "unempowering for labour" (Winters, 2000, p.140). The way that workers were incorporated into new jobs in many ways subverted their capacity to form independent organisations that could place checks and balances on those who were in control of the state and the economy.

The primary task of unions within the highly patrimonial system of personalised guarantees was to control rather than represent workers. One outcome was that most forms of anti-regime labour activism took place from outside the state-owned unions rather from within (Törnquist, 2004; Ford, 2009). The emergence of an alternative labour movement, which consisted of NGOs engaged with workers' rights, including the NGO-sponsored workers' groups, small ad hoc alternative unions across different sectors, in addition to spontaneous strikes and demonstrations by workers in response to specific concerns (La Botz, 2001; Ford, 2009).

The ratification in 1998 of the Convention on Freedom of association and the protection of the right to organise, and the enactment of the Trade Union/Labour Union Act 21/2000, permitted any group of 10 workers to form a trade union. The current union landscape thus draws on two trajectories – the persistence of major unions that have their roots in the New Order era and new constellations of independent unions and labour NGOs, emanating in part from the former student movement that mobilised for workers' rights in the 1990s. Moreover, since 1998 the major developments in the trade union landscape was characterised by the rapid expansion from a single state-owned union structure to the establishment of dozens of break-away factions and new trade union federations and confederations, as well as thousands of local enterprise-level unions

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17 This includes wage labourers in services, manufacturing, and agriculture.

organised at the provincial level.

Yet, despite these developments in the years leading to the collapse of the New Order and the changes in the legal frameworks for freedom of association since democratisation, scholars have agreed that labour did not play any significant role in the ousting of Suharto, nor has it emerged as a coherent, or as an effective voice or actor in the decade since democratisation (Winters, 2000; Hadiz, 2002; Törnquist, 2004). Where pro-poor mobilisation suffers from a lack of a basic organisational structure and agenda, labour has an organisational vehicle with access to formal politics in-tact, yet its role is limited.

The main reasons for why labour has played only a limited role in the democratisation process in Indonesia are in part structural and historical (Aspinall, 1999; Hadiz, 2002; Ford, 2009), and in part due to insufficient political capacity and perspective on behalf of labour to make use of the political space that has re-opened since the end of the New Order (Törnquist, 2004, p.387). While the former is beyond the scope of this paper, the latter crystallises a point of departure in discussion on the strategies, options, and opportunities for current-day labour activists in promoting political change.

Pressure politics and lobbying rather than mass politics and mobilisation

The issue of organisational structure relates to the fact that in the absence of a coherent union strategy and efficient labour party collective labour organising, electoral advances for union leaders, or any form of policy outcome are dependent on the extent that unions develop support networks (national and international), maintain patrons (corporate and political), and lobby. The fact that national unions retain a hierarchical model based on geography with an executive board at the central level in addition to provincial and district levels means that unions also face a two-level challenge – one local and the other national. A central critique is precisely that this model has created a rigid and over-bureaucratised top-down structure in which concerns at the bottom are rarely tackled at the

top, and where local concerns hinder the formulation of a national agenda (Silaban, 2009, p.8). Similarly, the labour NGOs who also fear and criticise union ties to political goons or the corporate sector are also dependent on personal contacts and networking to survive. Many have chosen to pick their allies, often on an individual basis advocating a system of lobbying and pressure politics. Most recently, this has been evident in Aceh where progressive civil society and reformists fell short of executing their plans of a social democratic alternative to the former rebels' clientelistic and top-down party, Partai Aceh, and instead opted for continuing to work from outside the formal party system (Törnquist, 2010; Uning, 2010).

In Indonesia, the main strategy for political impasse for labour is thus by way of pressure politics and lobbying, which translates into a continued dependency on networking and political clientelism. This structural turn towards pressure group politics and lobbying is an unfortunate departure from the potential that labour could play in forging democracy via mass politics and mobilisation bottom-up.

Role of NGOs

Ford notes that the role of NGOs directly concerned with labour issues seems to be on the demise with the explosion of formal labour unions, many of which have their basis in the NGO sector. Their position has also been challenged by workers' groups that, although previously depended on them, have since been able to form independent and officially recognised labour unions. Yet, as is the case in general pressure politics in Indonesia, NGOs continue to play a crucial role in defining the labour agenda. Labour-oriented NGO activists are especially crucial for promoting and organising grassroots activism in the plant-level branches of trade unions associated with the large confederations. This tendency is in direct response to the criticism that unions are primarily top-down organisations. The main link between NGOs and workers is thus by contributing with assistance and know-how on efficient organisational procedures, labour law, as well as education and training.

One example is the Trade Union Rights Centre (TURC),

which is funded by the Confederation of German Trade Unions to provide trade unions and legal training to trade union members (Ford, 2009). It is also common that NGOs and trade unions are cooperating in public on advocacy campaigns as well as seminar series and workshops, such as those run by the NGO Praxis and the Sedane Institute for Labour Information (Lembaga Informasi Perburuhan), and by international organisations such as the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).[18]

Recent examples of such collaborative efforts that resulted in concrete policy reformulation included the submission of a citizen's law suit against the President for neglecting to protect workers' rights to social security. This was initiated by a collaboration of 65 trade unions, NGOs, and research centres under the umbrella name Komite Aksi Jaminan Sosial (KAJS, the Committee on Social Security Action). The main demand was on health and pension coverage through a new law on social security (the NSSS Law) (Thabrany, 2011). The main strategy of the KAJS has been to be reactive in relation to the government's unwillingness to follow up on policy promises. KAJS has collected workers' signatures to push the President to implement the law to secure social security to all (Ibid;).

Another example is FSP KAHUTINDO (Federasi Serikat Pekerja Perkayuan Perhutanan dan Umum Seluruh Indonesia), in which the Forestry and Timber Workers collaborated with a number of NGOs in conducting training of its workers in the fields of sustainable forest management and UN Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN REDD) (Kleden & Kauppert, 2011). There have also attempts at forming more permanent forums for NGO-union collaboration, such as the Indonesian Labour Movement Syndicate (Sindikasi Gerakan Buruh Indonesia) that has sought to bring together trade unions and worker groups in Medan, Jakarta and Surabaya, along with labour NGOs and people's organisations (Ford, 2009, p.176).

There are conflictive opinions regarding such collaborative efforts, as trade unionists have expressed opinions on NGOs

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18 http://www.fes.or.id/

pushing for their independent agenda of little relevance for workers themselves. The most crucial issues for trade unions revolve around welfare and minimum wages, while NGOs have a myriad of agendas ranging from green jobs, environmental concerns to human rights and gender issues. NGOs have multiple roles depending on their wider agenda. Some have retained resources for improving union capacities, while in other cases NGOs are independent lobbyists seeking to define and determine union activities within their own agenda.

Links to politics

As mentioned, in the immediate years after the fall of Suharto, factionalism was in part a strategic choice made by many pro-democratic activist unionists who wanted to become as independent as possible from the state-controlled unions, regime-affiliated union bosses, and external patrons related to the manufacturing industry. Exit seemed the most viable option in the process of establishing an independent force (Törnquist, 2004, p.388). After the 2004 election there was a remarkable change in union attitudes towards politics (Ford, 2009; Silaban, 2009). Several unions formulated strategies, some of which were quite aggressive towards the 2009 elections, in particular the Federation of Indonesian Metal Workers' Union (FSPMI) and the National Workers Union (SPN).

Political parties began to approach trade unionists to stand as candidates in local assemblies. PKS, PAN, and PDI-P also approached labour NGO activists and other high profile members of NGO-sponsored unions to stand for them in local and national elections in Greater Jakarta, East and West Java, North Sumatra, and Batam – are all major industrial centres (Ford & Tjandra, 2007; Ford, 2008). In the absence of a coherent and representative labour party, union activists stood in the 2009 elections for parties as diverse as Partai Buruh (the Christian Batak-dominated labour party headed by a long-time union leader), PDI-P, PAN, PS and Partai Golkar. Even Partai Gerindra, the party of Suharto's former son-in-law General (ret) Prabowo, and General (ret) Wiranto's Partai Hanura, received support from prominent union leaders and activists (Ford, 2009,

p.180).

The diverse motivations for running in elections and the lack of a unified platform among union members in choosing specific party platforms has rendered the prospect for a special-issue party in the near future very unlikely. Still, "regardless of the success or failure of their political ambitions, the very fact that some mainstream unionists have seriously considered politics represents a sharp departure…from the position taken by the overwhelming majority of trade unionists in the early post-Suharto period" (Ford, 2009, p.180).

Cross-union collaboration

The turn towards pressure group politics and lobbying has resulted in the dominant approach to politics primarily being reactive rather than proactive. Both FES and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) have noted that this meant they did not have the organisational capacity to mobilise issues, and instead have waited for the government to issue a policy to then react. This is also reflected in a weak ability to propose viable political alternatives once a policy is put on the table (Silaban, 2009, p.93).

Collective politics within this reactive strategy builds collaboration on specific issues. Union confederations have, for instance, sought to foster cooperation on particular issues such as preparing responses to government proposals on new legislation on minimum wages with assistance from international union organisations. At the local level, coordinating groups and bodies are set up, for instance, in Semarang where the local coordinating group includes organisations such as the KSPSI, KSPI and SMSI (Quinn, 2003, p.9). Such coordinating bodies form in place of any formal collaboration and are, from the perspective of the national unions, informal and temporary. According to representatives from the ILO in Indonesia, these have proven important in terms of formulating more coherent responses to government proposals that concern labour.

32 Collective bargaining

With the support of international labour associations, efforts have been set in motion to mobilise and organise collective bargaining. Observers have noted that where collective bargaining exists, the agreements are often not very different from the minimum conditions required by law. An ILO consultant who carried out a programme for training on collective bargaining wrote that:

> It is common practice in Indonesia for collective agreements to carry benefits already provided by labour laws…Since these benefits already exist in law why should they be carried in collective agreements? The practice of including normative provisions in collective agreements reflects a soft area in collective bargaining that needs to be addressed by the Indonesian trade unions. Incorporating benefits that already flow from legal enactments or decrees…crowds out advancement of other benefits that otherwise could be obtained through the bargaining process.[19]

An analysis of 109 collective agreements collected in five districts by the ILO confirms that many companies use the collective agreements simply to codify obligations under the law. This observation does not only reflect the weakness in collective bargaining frameworks, but perhaps, more importantly, demonstrates inability of labour unions to adequately formulate demands and mobilise on specific issues that concern their members.

Alternative strategies

Pro-women unions have been particularly vulnerable to political and economic pressure. More recently, however, there has been a dramatic increase in women workers' activism on their own behalf. This new wave of activism presents a dilemma for feminists of the international movement because it is not always framed in feminist terms. The middleclass feminist activists in the international union movements and NGOs tend to view female factory and migrant labourers as women first and then as workers. In contrast, many union women believe the international feminist agenda is secondary,

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19 Internal ILO document, Manuel Dia, Consultant. Cited in Quinn (2003).

or even irrelevant, to their struggles for better conditions at work (Ford, 2008). Hence, also here there is an important distinction between the discourse, goals, and strategies of the international labour movement and affiliated NGOs, and the localised strategies and agendas.

In her study of women unionists' strategies for strengthening their position within the Federation of Metal Workers Unions, the national-level federation incorporating the female-dominated electrical and electronic workers' union, Ford notes that women have followed different strategies for strengthening their position within the union movement. One key strategy has been that of separate organising by developing women's departments or other forms of women-only structures within an otherwise mixed-gender trade union. Another key strategy has been for women workers and women activists to create 'non-union vehicles' for representing their interests.

Conclusion

Coming from a legacy of authoritarianism and low civic engagement, today's Indonesia is known for its high associational density, i.e. the number of associational connections among the population including several participatory and mobilisational initiatives among marginalised groups.

This article has shown and, in part, confirmed the notion that despite the introduction of participatory institutions by the government and donors, most notably the World Bank, opportunity structures favouring enhanced popular representation into formal politics have remained weak (Törnquist et al., 2009). Participatory institutions, such as the Musrenbang process and the KDP/PNPM umbrella are both examples of development programmes that are mandated and implemented by the central government, and thus lacking an initial popular base. Contrary to participatory designs that have proven successful in bringing citizens to the centre of the democratic project, such as Porto Allegre and Kerela, participatory institutions mandated through the Musrenbang, for instance, often suffer from rather weak and fragmented popular foundations,

low organisational capacities on behalf of civil society, a hostile political environment, and weak and unpredictable institutional frameworks. In its place, deeper forms of bottom-up participation would require a strengthened and improved institutional framework. More importantly, they would require a strengthened civil society that was able to seize the opportunities for participation, combined with enhanced unity in political society toward the need for participation. As Avritzer has noted, the success of civil society in creating viable bottom-up institutions has remained dependent on political coalitions with political society both to enhance bargaining power and to break down predatory elite patterns. The workings and intentions of KDP/PNPM make this disjunction in the Indonesian context particularly clear. The technocratic and programmatic design of the World Bank-driven programmes serves to streamline popular participation within a specific institutional design. Not only does the institutional design of bypassing the electoral channels serve to weaken democratic accountability, but is may also open up space for a new form of top-down government intervention.

Although there is an inherent expectation that participation per definition will build political capacity and democratic citizenship among marginalised groups, it remains unclear exactly how the participatory model on which it is built actually enhances democracy. As the analysis has hinted at, the very design of such programmes as Musrenbang and the KDP/PNPM shows no recognition of the need for building organisations that actually expand the bargaining power of marginalised groups. That said, by broadening the discussion to include the Indonesian labour movement, a segment of associational life that historically has built its capacity and bargaining power on bottom-up mobilisation by marginalised and excluded workers, the analysis has complicated the picture. Weak representation is merely seen as due to poor institutional design and the persistence of predatory local elites and corrupt officials. The way civil society is organised, its capacity to make use of available political space and institutions and the extent that it is able to build strong cross-sectoral coalitions is also central to the success. As shown, in the absence of a coherent trade union strategy and efficient labour party

collective labour organising is dependent on the unions' ability to develop support networks, maintain patrons, or lobby from outside the formal political arena. Seen in connection with the participatory institutions of the Musrenbang and the KDP/PNPM, a multifaceted problem is revealed –although the poor and excluded, alongside reformists NGO activists (Mietzner, 2012), are active 'participants' per se, as a group they remain fragmented and marginalised in formal politics, optimising pressure from outside of formal channels rather than instigating change from within.

From the discussion of two arenas for mobilisation and participation of marginalised groups in Indonesia, participatory development and labour organising, one can draw the important conclusion that associational density is indeed a poor predictor and indicator of democratisation. What the discussion shows is that it is not in fact the number of associations that generates democratisation, but that democratisation depends on the capacity of bottom-up associations, the type of actors they bring into politics, and as well as how formal and informal institutions adapt such incorporations.

Against this background, the Indonesian case should remind foreign aid officials as well as democracy theorists of the vulnerability inherent in the early stages of democratic consolidation, in particular in relation to the process of creating avenues for improved representation of marginalised and excluded groups and distributing power between central and local authorities. As this article has shown, strengthening the capacities of associations rather than streamlining institutional frameworks should become a central concern for policymakers. After all, the government apparatus, still dominated by anti-reformist elites (Mietzner, 2012), is less likely to encourage the strengthening of collective bargaining powers of marginalised groups and a reformist civil society. The result of this strategy may be the provision of effective and successful development projects, but also continued fragmentation, social exclusion, and ineffective local institutions.

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